

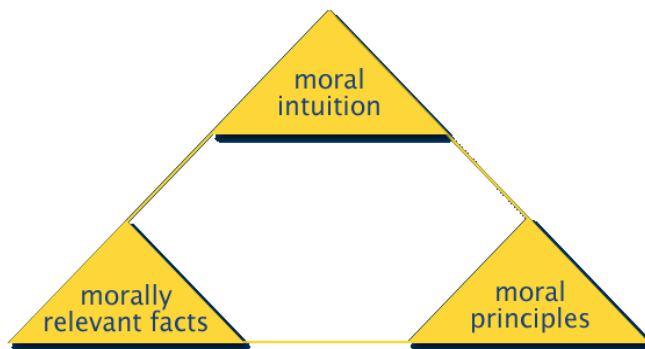
A different version of this exercise was developed for the course Ethics in the Health and Life Sciences (VU University Amsterdam)

Also based on: Daniels, Norman, "Reflective Equilibrium", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.)

URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/reflective-equilibrium/>

This tool helps to differentiate between moral intuitions, moral relevant facts and moral principles at stake. It helps to structure the preparatory exploration of the case, before coming to a balanced and nuanced judgment. The exercise works best in a group of people (3-8)

1. Draw this triangle. Preferably on a white board or large screen so that people doing the exercise can fill it in together.



2. Introduce a statement:

Is it morally just to ..?

E.g. genetically modify crops to resist certain diseases; introduce self-driving cars in society; allow for euthanasia of people suffering from dementia; ..

3. Explore all intuitions among the group. This phase is very important and can take some time. You only continue to the next step if everyone feels that he or she has expressed all intuitions.
4. Use WHY-questions to trace the deeper lying arguments. Why does something give you an uncomfortable feeling? Why is something important? All intuitions will be harvested and placed in one of the lower corners of the triangle.
 - a. Morally relevant 'facts': regarding arguments referring to estimations and hypotheses – things that can be, in principle, verified.
 - b. Moral principles: regarding arguments that refer to virtues, desired states (consequences), moral rules (respect of autonomy, freedom of choice, etc.), and (un)fairness (proportionality, balance of cost and benefits)

5. Now you can find out which lower corner arguments are important to justify or counter the given statement. In exercise you could mark the most important justifications and counters: they are the building blocks for a morally sound argument.
6. **Construct a morally sound justification** (in favor of against the statement) by means of the following structure:

Acknowledging our duty to follow (principle(s) X) and our estimation of (the facts Y) it follows that .. is (not) morally allowed.