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## **Chapter 7: The Categorical Imperative**

**Amazon Reference:** <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0534584306/>

**Quote:** "It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world or even out of it which can be taken as good w/o qualification except a good will."

### **What I expect to learn:**

I expect to learn what categorical imperative is.

### **Review:**

According to Immanuel Kant, our moral duty can be formulated in one supreme rule, the categorical imperative, from which all our duties can be derived. He also mentioned hypothetical imperative. What is the difference between the two? For Kant, "when a person conceive a hypothetical imperative, he do not know beforehand what it will contain until its condition is given. While if a person conceive a categorical imperative, he know at once what it contains. According to Kant, "there is only a single categorical imperative and it is this: "Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law."" As for hypothetical imperative, it compels action in a given circumstance. Example would be if you want to pass the exam, you should study hard. At the last part of the article, Immanuel Kant mentioned something about practical imperative he said that "act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means but always at the same time as an end. I think what it means that when we do something we should always think of that people that are involve in all our doings whether it is someone we know of or a stranger as long as they are involve in the act.

### **What I learned:**

- categorical imperative
- hypothetical imperative

### **Integrative Question:**

1. What is categorical imperative?
2. What is hypothetical imperative?
3. What is Immanuel Kant's point of view regarding hypothetical imperative?
4. What is good will?
5. What is duty?

## Chapter 8: Happiness and Virtue

**Amazon Reference:** <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0534584306/>

**Quote:** “Moral virtue comes from training and habit and generally is a state of character that is a mean between the vices of excess and deficiency.”

### What I expect to learn:

I expect to learn what happiness and virtue is.

### Review:

According to Aristotle, “happiness is an activity of soul in accordance with perfect virtue; we must consider the nature of virtue; for perhaps we shall thus see better the nature of happiness.” “Aristotle argues that all human beings seek happiness and happiness is not pleasure, honor or wealth, but an activity of soul in accordance with virtue.” For me, happiness depends how people define it. If for them, to get pleasure, wealth and honor makes them happy then so be it. But happiness for me is something that could make me feel better. Example would be, my mother bought me a new cell phone because I graduated with honors. I would feel very happy because I got a new cell phone because of hard work.

According to Aristotle, there are 2 kinds of virtue, moral and intellectual. Moral virtue comes from training and habit and generally is a state of character that is a mean between the vices of excess and deficiency. It comes about as a result of habit. While intellectual virtue produces the most perfect happiness and is found in the activity of reason or contemplation. It owes both its birth and growth to teaching.” Virtue means goodness and righteousness. So how is this related to happiness? For me, to become happy should do something good or right. So in short to be happy, we should consider virtue.

### What I learned:

- Happiness
- Virtue
- Kinds of virtue

### Integrative Question:

1. What is happiness?
2. What is virtue?
3. What is Aristotle’s point of view regarding happiness?
4. What is Aristotle’s point of view regarding virtue?
5. What are the kinds of virtue?

## Chapter 9: The Nature and Value of Rights

**Amazon Reference:** <http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0534584306/>

**Quote:** “Try to imagine Nowheresville—a world very much like our own except that no one or hardly anyone has rights.”

### What I expect to learn:

I expect to learn what the nature and value of rights is.

### Review:

Joel Feinberg started the discussion by letting us imagine Nowheresville—a world very much like our own except that no one or hardly anyone has rights. At first I don't know any country called Nowheresville or if it is a country or not. Second, I can't imagine or I don't know if there really is a place where there is no right. When I research the net, I found out 3 meanings. First, it is a remote or isolated town or village. Second, it is a job, position, rank, etc., completely lacking in status, recognition, or a chance for advancement. Third, it is anything unrealistic, impractical, or useless. Imagine a world where you can't claim what's rightfully yours. And you can't do anything about it because there is no law that would help you claim it. He tries to make the human beings in Nowheresville as attractive and as virtuous as possible. He said that, “Fill this imagined world with as much benevolence, compassion, sympathy and pity as it conveniently hold w/o strain. Now we can imagine men helping one another from compassionate motives.” He also gives duties in Nowheresville. Joel Feinberg introduces 2 practices. First, personal desert, I think what Joel Feinberg mean by personal desert is that a person deserve a good thing if he does a good job or presents a good personality and a person deserves a punishment if he does a bad job or has a bad personality. Second, sovereign right monopoly, what Joel Feinberg means by this is that a person has a duty to do something to other people but this duty is not owed to other people but to the law.

### What I learned:

- nature and value of rights

### Integrative Question:

1. What is the nature of rights?
2. What is the value of rights?
3. What is Joel Feinberg's point of view regarding the nature and value of rights?
4. What is personal desert?
5. What is sovereign monopoly of rights?