

# How do we develop ethical principles?

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Drawn from Philip Bitar, *Why? In Pursuit of the Ultimate Answer: Abridged* (2008)

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## ◆ What are ethical principles?

- ◇ Principles for relating to other people
- ◇ Isolation scenario

## ◆ Where does knowledge come from?

- ◇ Reason applied to experience

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- ◇ Reason applied to experience

## ◆ Examples

- ◇ Reckless driving
- ◇ Murder
- ◇ Adultery

## ◆ What is human life fundamentally about?

- ◇ Would you like to provide all the necessities of life?
- ◇ Would you like to live alone on the planet?

## ◆ Relational duality

- ◇ Interdependence — mutual need
- ◇ Intimacy — mutual meaning

## ◆ Most fundamental ethical principle

- ◇ Symmetry — simplicity implies symmetry. Simplest model is most symmetric.
- ◇ Put yourself in another's place. Walk in another's shoes.
- ◇ Golden rule
- ◇ Equality clause of declaration of independence

## ◆ Ethical duality

- ◇ Symmetry and asymmetry
- ◇ Employ asymmetry only as needed