

8 Ethical Tests

The following 8 questions can help us make a good ethical decision in any situation:

1. **The Golden Rule Test:** Would I want people to do this to me?
2. **The Truth Test:** Does this action represent the whole truth and nothing but the truth?
3. **The What-If-Everybody-Did-This Test:** Would I want everyone to do this (lie, cheat, steal, litter the school, etc.)? Would I want to live in that kind of world?
4. **The Parents Test:** How would my parents feel if they found out I did this? What advice would they give me if I asked them if I should do it?
5. **The Religion Test:** If I have religious beliefs, how do they apply to this action? What would a respected member of my religion advise? Are there any religious texts that I could draw on for guidance?
6. **The Conscience Test:** Does this go against my conscience? Will I feel guilty afterwards?
7. **The Consequences Test:** Might this action have bad consequences, such as damage to relationships or loss of self-respect, now or in the future? Might I come to regret doing this?
8. **The Front Page Test:** How would I feel if my action were reported on the front page of my hometown paper?

—Dr. Tom Lickona, *Character Matters* (www.Amazon.com)