

# Example of moral integrity argumentative essay

[Sociology](#), [Ethics](#)



The dictionary definition of moral integrity is “steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code” (American Heritage Dictionary, 2009). To my mind, that speaks primarily to a sense of ethics; people have to decide upon what they believe is right and wrong, and style their life after that definition. For the most part, that dictionary definition is correct, as there is no one universal sense of morality – one simply has to act on what they believe is right. To that end, I would revise the dictionary definition of moral integrity, appending its existing definition with the phrase “without conscious betrayal of said code”. The emphasis must be placed on avoiding knowing betrayal of the moral framework by which you live.

One of the most important elements of that is to avoid hypocrisy; one cannot, for example, espouse the need for people to reduce their carbon footprint yet do nothing to limit their own consumption of fast food and waste materials. This shows a reticence to practice what you preach, as you are telling others to be conspicuous consumers yet doing none of that lifestyle changing yourself. When making decisions about one’s life or choices, one has to take that moral framework into account first and foremost; being consistent with one’s principles is the hallmark of integrity. Granted, of course, as human beings we are entitled to a bit of hypocrisy; the key, however, is being self-aware enough to minimize it as much as possible. One can have moral integrity while still accidentally betraying one’s principles, if one is not knowingly doing that. Moral integrity is not objective, either; there is no overarching set of principles people have to adhere to in order to have moral integrity – it just has to be their own. Even people who do demonstrably terrible things, like assault or deceit, can have moral

integrity if those actions are at piece with what they believe to be right. The goal is not to be a good person, necessarily; the goal is to be a consistent person with one's own morality.

For example, a very interesting case study for an objectionable person who still has moral integrity is Hannibal Lecter. He has no deceptions about what he does; he is a serial killer and cannibal. However, in light of that, he does so because he believes what he is doing is morally right - he values human life so little that he sees no moral problem with killing people. As opposed to people who pretend to value human life above all else, but actually kill in secret, Hannibal is upfront and honest about what he does - to that end, he has moral integrity. It may not match up with the rest of the world's idea of morality, but his integrity is sound.

In conclusion, the revised definition of moral integrity should read, "steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code, without conscious betrayal of said code". People with moral integrity have a specific idea of what moral or ethical behavior is, and they behave that way without fail. It does not matter strictly what those morals are, as long as they are consistent with the person's actions in their life. As long as the person is not knowingly betraying their ethics, and making their life choices based on their own personal code, that person has moral integrity.