

The ethics of lying

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The Ethics of Lying Table of Contents The Ethics of Lying References 2 The Ethics of Lying Bullet Point On whether lying is ever permissible morally, the answer lies in whether the ethics of lying is absolute or relative to some mitigating circumstances. In the case of a person on his death bed for instance, concerned about whether his loved ones are taken care of when he dies, a person may lie that they are fine, even though it may be the case that they will get into debt from having to pay his hospital bills, or that a loved one has cancer. This lie will allow the dying person to be more at ease and more at peace, but it is a lie. From a Kantian perspective this is morally wrong, but a utilitarian perspective, where the peace of the dying person is seen as contributing to the well-being of the whole family or community, would be able to justify this as moral (Mazur, n. d.; Plante, 2011; Anscombe, n. d.; Johnson, 2008).

Bullet Point 2: Kant would say, with regard to the ethics of lying, that in essence lying is wrong in all cases, and that the ethics of lying is not hinged on circumstances, but on its being always wrong regardless of the external factors. Even in the case of say, a man with a weapon asking where a person is, with the intent of killing that person, one is compelled by Kantian ethics to say where the person is. Yes the person will die in the hands of the man with the weapon, but to lie about where the person is hiding, or where he went, would be wrong according to Kant (Mazur, n. d.; Plante, 2011).

Bullet Point 3: Deontological theory in essence weighs the ethics of actions based on certain rules or categories of judgment. One can say for instance that Kant's ethical precepts rest on the application of certain rules, and falls within the realm of deontological ethics. This is in opposition to

consequentialist ethics, where in essence the ethics of actions depends not on some universally applied standards but on circumstances, and the consequences of actions. This is the case for instance with utilitarian ethics (Alexander and Moore, 2011; Mazur, n. d.; Plante, n. d.).

References

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