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**CT800: Week 13 Assignments**

**3) Key ideas learned:**

a. The main ideas I have internalized are that ethical principles are derived from the human capacity to empathize with others (meaning that we can put ourselves in the position of others; intellectually, viscerally, and emotionally). Furthermore, I found it really helpful that several sociocentric counterfeits of ethics were pointed out and that those counterfeits diverge while ethics converge.

b. These ideas are important because they give me a sound reason for why ethics have their place. In Dostoevsky’s Crime and Punishment, the author constructs a story in which one could argue that everything is justified if it’s rational (in this case murder). However, the figure doesn’t get away with murder mentally. This might be due to our capacity to put ourselves in other people’s shoes. There are many people arguing that ethics are a man-made result of moralistically disguised cowardice. And while that might be true for some sociocentric counterfeits, it doesn’t seem true to me given the fact that we can very well put ourselves in the position of others and ask whether any behavior directed to them is just or unjust.
Furthermore, I am really glad that the material has pointed out several sociocentric counterfeits of ethics which I was aware of, but never really capable of articulating. This knowledge in particular is very powerful as it arms you against people who’ll potentially attack you for anything you’ve done unethically from their perspective.

c. My life should be different in the future in the following ways…

I will try my best not to let myself succumb to any behavior that’s unnecessarily hurtful towards others. Of course, there is a degree of leeway for that as certain social interactions demand you to act superficially unethical in order to be functional. I think that “100%” ethical behavior all the time would actually backfire as other people just don’t understand. Therefore, functionality must be placed as a number one priority for me. However, “functionality” doesn’t mean at the unequivocal expense of others. It’s just that I think that more damage is being done via stupidity than evil. And stupidity here means dysfunctional behavior. I like that the text encourages us to see things and people as they are. And one aspect of human nature is definitely that there are concealed and unspoken social games being played. Therefore, it’s only logical to play these games as well without being cynical about them.

I’ve got a lot out of this chapter as it clarifies many terms that I didn’t have clarification on before. It arms me, especially against counterfeits of ethics.

d. Ethical reasoning in my current daily life can be described as restrained. I’m currently in the process of figuring out how to deal with other people in different environments effectively. Therefore, I don’t want to make too many claims that my ethical reasoning is complete yet. There are definitely some blind spots that need to be covered – but I know which sources to consult.

However, reading through the ethical reasoning chapter and the chapter about Intellectual Traits has made me much more empathetic toward others and therefore socially much more capable as I don’t dismiss anything others say that is obviously wrong. I’ve developed much more patience.