

Kohlberg Application

The Heinz dilemma is followed by a series of possible pro and con responses. For each response, decide which stage it best exemplifies and briefly justify your answer. (HINT: You may find it easier to sort out the stages if you first separate out the pro and con responses.)

Heinz Dilemma: In Europe, a lady was dying because she was very sick. There was one drug that the doctors said might save her. This medicine was discovered by a man living in the same town. It cost him \$200 to make it, but he charged \$2,000 for just a little of it. The lady's husband, Heinz, tried to borrow enough money to buy the drug. He went to everyone he knew to borrow the money. But he could borrow only half of what he needed. He told the man who made the drug that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell the medicine cheaper or let him pay later. But the man said, "No, I made the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz broke into the store and stole the drug. Should Heinz have done this?

_____ 1. He shouldn't steal the drug. It's a big crime. He did a lot of damage, stealing a very expensive drug and breaking up the store too. He'll be caught and sent to jail.

_____ 2. He should steal the drug. He was only doing something that was natural for a good husband to do. You can't blame him for doing something out of love for his wife; you'd blame him if he didn't love his wife enough to save her.

_____ 3. You can't completely blame someone for stealing, but extreme circumstances don't really justify taking the law in your own hands. You can't have everybody stealing whenever they get desperate. The end may be good but the ends don't justify the means.

_____ 4. He should steal the drug. It isn't like he didn't ask to pay for it first. The drug he takes is only worth \$200. He's not really taking a \$2000 drug.

_____ 5. It is a natural thing for Heinz to want to save his wife, but it's still always wrong to steal. He still knows he's stealing and taking a valuable drug from the man who made it.

_____ 6. You should steal it. If you did nothing you'd be letting your wife die; it's your responsibility if she dies. You have to take it with the idea of paying the druggist.

_____ 7. He shouldn't steal it. The druggist isn't wrong or bad; he just wants to make a profit. And if Heinz goes to jail his wife will probably die before he gets out, so it wouldn't do him any good anyway.

_____ 8. The law wasn't set up for these circumstances. Taking the drug in this situation isn't really right but it's justified to do it.

_____ 9. Heinz is faced with the decision of whether to consider the other people who need the drug just as badly as his wife. Heinz ought to act not just according to his particular feelings toward his wife, but considering the value of all the lives involved.

_____ 10. It's all right to steal the drug because she needs it and he wants her to live; he'll be very lonely without her. It isn't that he wants to steal but it's the way he has to use to get the drug to save her.

_____ 11. He shouldn't steal. If his wife dies, he can't be blamed. It isn't because he is heartless or he doesn't love her enough to do everything that he can. The druggist is the selfish or heartless one.

_____ 12. This is a situation which forces him to choose between stealing and letting his wife die. In a situation where the choice must be made, it is morally right to steal. It doesn't make sense to respect property more than life.