

This Page:
Medical Ethics

- | Introduction
- | World Views
- | Views of Human Nature

Mind Games Survival Course Manual



Table of Contents

Medical Ethics

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I. Introduction

A. *Disagreements about areas of medical ethics often result from fundamental differences in perspective concerning underlying issues.*

2. *Fundamental areas of disagreement in medical ethics.*

1. Philosophical perspectives and world views
2. Views of human nature
3. Medical perspectives

2. World views

1. *Three major world views*

1. Theism (Christianity, Judaism)
2. Naturalism/Humanism
3. Pantheism (New Age Movement)

2. *Philosophy of humanism (5 basic tenets)*

1. Naturalism--God is irrelevant (atheism or deism)
2. Evolutionary--progress and evolutionary change is inevitable
3. Autonomous--man is autonomous, self-centered, will save himself
4. Human reason--education is the guide to life
5. Science--the ultimate provider for knowledge and morals

3. *Philosophy of pantheism (6 basic tenets)*

1. Monism--no distinctions, "all is one"
2. Pantheism--spark of divinity, "all is god"
3. Human divinity--therefore "we are gods"
4. Cosmic consciousness--suffer from metaphysical amnesia
5. Reincarnation--cycles, work off bad karma
6. Moral relativism--deny the law of non-contradiction

3. Views of human nature

A. *Different views of humanity result in different medical treatments.*

1. Biological view--electrode implants, prefrontal lobotomy
2. Behavioral view--behavior-modification therapy
3. Humanistic view--transactional analysis, group therapy
4. Transpersonal view--meditation, visualization

2. *Modern medicine fails to make a sharp distinction between humans and animals.*

1. Genetic engineering--Scientists may argue that if we use artificial insemination on animals, then why not on humans? If we use genetics to improve the genetic fitness of animals, why not on humans?
2. Death and dying--Using the same line of reasoning, physicians may advocate active euthanasia. If we put an animal "to sleep," why not put humans "to sleep"? Advocates of physician-assisted suicide tend to blur these distinctions.

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[Table of Contents](#)



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