



Case Study - 23: Personal relations vs Ethical values

Pawan is pursuing MBA and shares a room with you in the private hostel. He desperately needs a job after completing his course because of educational loan and weak economic background. In his last two semesters, he couldn't secure good grades due to serious illness. In current semester he has to secure good marks at any cost to satisfy minimum criteria for placements.

Few days before the final semester exam, he comes to you and asks for money. He is stressed and nervous. He tells you about his plan to purchase semester papers to clear the exam and convinces you for the same by giving reference to his bad health, family status and his education loan.

In such circumstances, would it be right to lend money to him?

(a) Identify the moral dilemma faced by you.

(b) Analyse your role and duties as a friend, also suggest your course of action.

Solution

The given case tests the ability of a person to stick to the **right means** even in difficult circumstances in life. One needs to balance his role as a true friend by making Pawan realize his mistake and simultaneously helping him in other ways.

| Facts of the case | Stakeholders involved | Values involved |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Pawan's weak economic background, bad health and family responsibilities.▪ Good grades needed to satisfy minimum criteria for placements▪ Asked for money to purchase semester papers.▪ Stress and nervousness due to fear of failure. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Pawan▪ His family▪ College staff (faculty, placement committee, etc)▪ Self (Pawan's roommate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Integrity▪ Honesty▪ Fear▪ Courage▪ Fortitude▪ Empathy▪ Moral righteousness |

a) Moral dilemmas faced:

- **Means v/s Ends:** Taking incorrect means of giving Pawan the money to buy the semester papers to attain the ends of getting good grades which would allow him to sit for placements.
- **Social obligation v/s moral righteousness:** Supporting one's friend in need or adhering to one's conscience by not giving him money.

b) Roles and duties as a friend:

- A true friend is one who **shows the right path**. He is one who not only tells 'what is' rather 'what ought to be'. Hence, he is a true friend, philosopher and guide for lifetime.
- He shows the **emotional support, empathy, trust, and mutual cooperation** in the hardest of times.
- **He encourages and motivates** others and imbibes **confidence** in them so that the hidden talent and capabilities can be revived.

| | Course of action | Merit | Demerit |
|----|--|--|--|
| 1. | Knowing and understanding Pawan's condition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It will help him chance to explain his situation. ▪ He may even realize his own mistakes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It will give him o facts. |
| 2. | Denying him money to purchase papers and motivating him to study hard. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ His fear of failure can be removed. ▪ Upholding his moral conscience will make him more productive at work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He may flunk in job. ▪ He may not be a |
| 3. | Helping him in studies by making available required notes, books, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It may imbibe confidence in him that he can pass without cheating. ▪ Relieving him nervousness and pressure. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He may not cope ▪ He may become ease of access to |
| 4. | Taking help from faculty, placement committee, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers may provide him extra classes considering his situation. ▪ Placement committee may relax the minimum criterion for all students, once majority of candidates are placed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting wrong pr ▪ College staff may |

Conclusion

- As suggested by Gandhiji, we always have control over the means but not over the end. As quoted in his book 'Hind Swaraj', "*one should not expect rose flowers by sowing the seeds of Babool.*" Hence, Pawan should adhere to the correct means by not cheating for the sake of passing the exam.
- Also, one can only expect short term gains by following incorrect means. But in the long run, it is always one's righteousness, ideal conduct, and truth which lead to a successful life.
- Hence, Pawan should be made to realize that excellence is a way of life and in his long career ahead, it will always be his 'ethical conduct' which would allow him to steer the path towards success.