Abstract: This essay is about how morality and ethics affect my life now and later in the business world. I have given examples of making the “right versus wrong” decision and how it has helped me become a better person and build stronger relationships with the people around me.
As business students, we are constantly learning what is right and wrong in the business world. The main question is, how students can use ethics and morality to live a fulfilled and happy life? If you look around at the world today, there are many obstacles for the youth of this generation to living a moral life. Greed and power strikes are replacing friendships and partnerships to destroy the past model of ethics and morality in our lives. Through my experiences in life, I believe that ethics and morality are extremely important to leading a fulfilled and happy life as well as creating strong relationships with people in your life.

People think that understanding the phrase “right from wrong” is easy, however it is surprising how many people do not know what is right versus wrong. Maybe that person was not brought up in a home that taught morals and ethics. Other people just choose the wrong option, even while understanding the moral and ethical consequences. As a youth, almost every person participates in some organized sports team and sometimes games can become intense. In the sixth grade, I attended a special soccer tournament in the summer for my travel team. We went to Rutgers University and played teams from across the Northeast region throughout the week. Our team was very successful and made it to the championship game on the last day of the tournament. For the final game, the referee did not show up and the camp director was forced to referee the game. However, he had an injured knee and it was tough for him to move up and down the field consistently. Before the game, the director called us over and said, “Do not argue with any of my calls, and we will operating on the honor system for all questionable calls that I cannot see.” This meant that if there was a call to be made across the field, out of the director’s sight, it was up to the players on the field to tell the truth about what happened. The game went on and both teams played tough but each time a questionable call arose, each player would disregard the honor code and always sway the director to have the call to go for their respective
In the final minutes of the game, the score was tied one to one and the ball was crossed in by my teammate on the other side. The ball took a funny hop off the defender’s foot and bounced up into my hand. My hand knocked the ball right down to my foot and I kicked in what seemed to be the winning goal. While the other team screamed at the director for the illegal play, he said it was a good goal. My body was blocking the director’s view and he could not see me make the illegal movement of trapping the ball with my hand, also known as a hand ball. Hundreds of parents were watching on the sideline happily screaming and my teammates all ran towards me in celebration.

It would have been very simple to turn the other cheek and allow the goal to count, thus giving my team the winning goal and the championship of the tournament. As I started to hear the congratulations, I started to realize that I could not accept a championship trophy and live with myself knowing that I had not properly won. Therefore, I walked over to the director and told him of my illegal hand ball and how the goal should be disallowed. He then disallowed the goal and my teammates and parents on the sideline were furious. In overtime, our team ended up losing the game and the championship. My friends on the team would not even look at me and I felt as if I was ostracized to my own little island for days. During the trophy presentation, the camp director presented me with the Sportsmanship Trophy. At the time, I was so embarrassed that I did not even want to accept the award. However, to this day that award still sits on my nightstand as a reminder of what true ethics and morality stand for. After a few weeks, my friends completely forgot about losing the championship and I was able to feel happy about myself knowing that I had done the right thing by disallowing the goal. What made me even happier was the fact that my mother and father sat me down and told me how proud they were of the actions I had taken, and that I was starting to turn into the man they hoped I would be. The
simple act of telling the truth when no one else around me wanted to helped me understand what it means to live a fulfilled and happy life.

The soccer camp experience was just one of many that showed me the necessity of morality in ethics in all facets of life. In the spring of my 8th grade year, my basketball coach framed a poster for us that hangs in my room at college and at home. The poster is a quote from an unknown author that states, “Watch your thoughts, for they become words. Watch your words, for they become actions. Watch your actions, for they become habits. Watch your habits, for they become character. Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.” Looking at this quote everyday gives a constant reminder that you need to try and perform ethically and morally even when no one is watching. You may dip your hand in the cookie jar and steal the cookie when no one is looking and probably get away with it. However, greed will take over and you feel that you are invincible and dip your hand in the cookie jar again and again because it becomes second nature to you. Eventually, someone will see you dipping your hand in the cookie jar and you will be punished. Worse than being punished for your wrongful actions, people that commit unethical and unmoral actions lose the respect of their peers. It is hard for people to live a happy life if they walk around each day losing the respect of family, friends, and their peers.

Losing the respect of your peers, family members, and friends is devastating because of the difficulty it takes to gain that respect back. The training of ethical and moral teaching starts at a very young age. Growing up, I saw different situations in which my father could have “gotten ahead” but he would have had to bend the rules or break relationships along the way. Every time one of these situations arose, my father chose the ethically and morally “right” decision. I believe that he can honestly say he has led a fulfilled and happy life because he has created great relationships through strong ethical and moral conduct. Now, before each situation in my life I
judge the “right versus wrong” options of each decision I make. The decision is usually quick because I am knowledgeable on the aspects that make up “right versus wrong” decisions. Whether it is a sportsmanship trophy on a nightstand or a poster with a quote above my bed, I am constantly reminded of the importance of using ethics and morality in all facets of my life. I have learned that I have a responsibility to myself along with the people close to me to be the best person I can possibly be by trying to live a fulfilled and happy life. Studying at a Jesuit University and being a Catholic, God is a big part of my everyday life as well. As my high school principal said, “Be all that God calls you to be, not because you will be rewarded, but because it is right.” Each day I want to make decisions based on my good morals and ethics because living the ethically and morally “right” way will help strengthen my relationships with peers, family, friends, and God. These relationships will help me grow stronger as a person, while leading me towards a fulfilled and happy life in any path I choose.