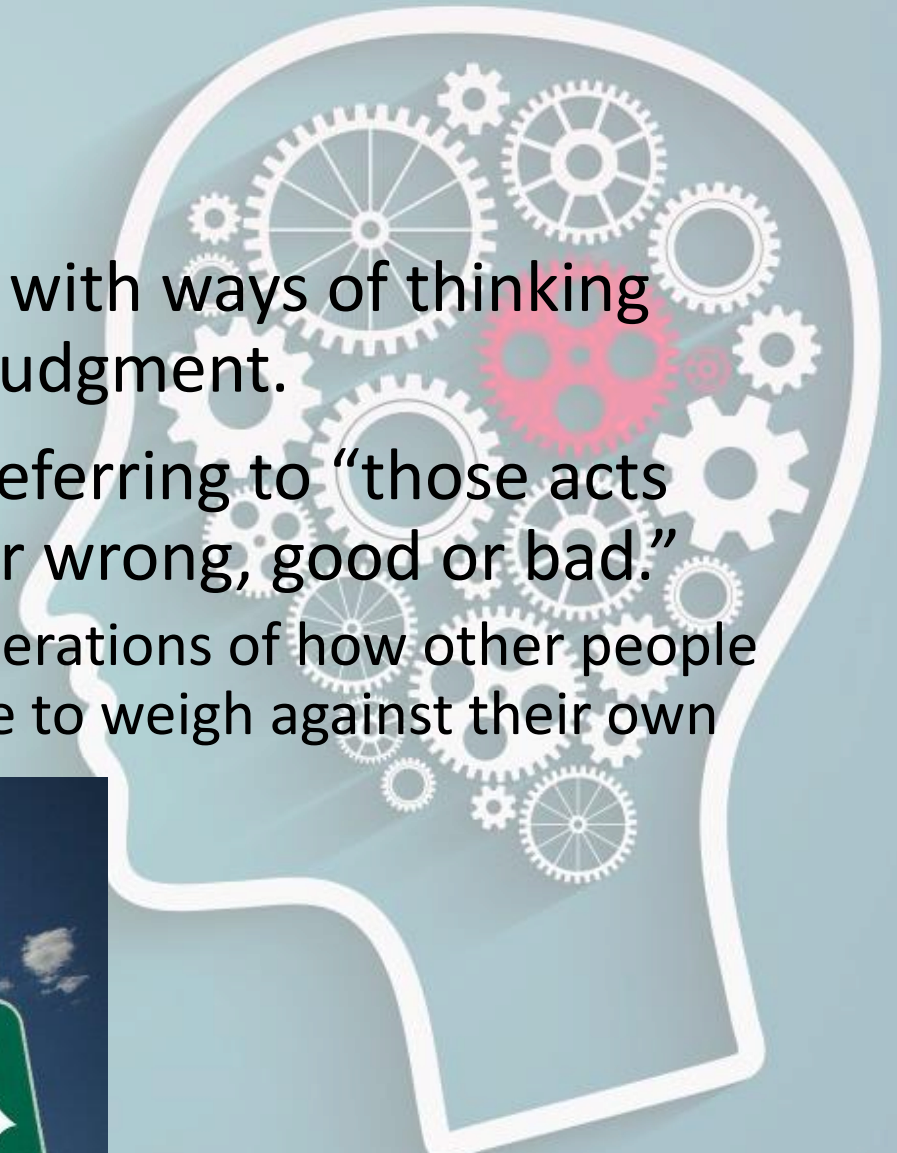# Ethics and Morality

Development of Identity

Defining Ethics and Morality

- Ethics – A branch of philosophy concerned with ways of thinking philosophically about morality, and moral judgment.
- Morality – Human conduct and character referring to "those acts which it makes sense to describe as right or wrong, good or bad."
  - Moral Judgment – Judgments based on considerations of how other people are to be treated, and how others interests are to weigh against their own

Development of Ethics

- Understanding of right and wrong come from a variety of different sources
  - Parents
  - Religion
  - Peers
  - Technology
- Understanding of ethics changes over time

Influence of Parents

- Parents instill ethics and morals in children.
  - Example: A child yells at their friend – calling them a name.
    - How does the parent respond?
    - Other ways?
- Most basic morality develops from parents starting early on
  - Ex. Don't hit, bite, etc…

Influence of Religion

- Most religions set guidelines on how to make moral judgments
  - Example: In the Christian religion the ten commandments serve as guidelines for making ethical and moral judgments.
- Religions often have clear distinctions of right and wrong
  - Adherence to morality often integral part of observation of religion

Influence of Peers

- Friends effect your moral judgments.
  - Example: A friend or acquaintance might coax you to use drugs.

- Peer pressure can sometimes cause people to make moral and ethical decisions
  - Pressure to fit in and be accepted can lead to people ignoring their morals

Influence of Technology

- Technology provides many opportunities to make moral and ethical decisions.
  - Example: Copying computer games and violating copyright laws.
- People often mold their ideas of morality about what seems to be socially acceptable
  - Ex. Seeing celebrities smoking on tv makes it seem like it is socially acceptable and encourages others to smoke