# THE ROOTS OF MORALITY

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It is anathema for many psychoanalysts to talk about morality. This is in part because psychoanalysis has probably been the most liberalising force of this century. Freud, like Pinel, struck the chains off our minds freeing us to think about ourselves as we never have before. One of these chains was morality, or so it has been generally assumed. However, 1 hope to show that for morality has been with us and remains a valuable part of human experience. Many psychoanalysts would also say that morality is not their domain and are indeed opposed to it. After all does not the psychoanalytical process break talion morality, exchanging not eye for eye and tooth for tooth, but as Racker (1966) points out, offering an interpretation for the eye and an interpretation for the tooth, psychologically speaking of course. Part of the discomfort of psychoanalysts with morality might also be a residual of a long conflict with religion. The latter in it's retreat from astronomy, evolution and biology stumbled over Freud and his new psychology. Now religion makes a last fierce stand at this bastion of Morality, which psychoanalysts with the deference of embarrassed victors, in the main, skirt around.

Dictionaries generally define morality as something that enables us to distinguish right from wrong and ethics as being the science of morals. To clear our field of investigation it needs to be clarified what is the nature of this right and wrong and what is the relationship with ethics. All right and wrong or good and bad decisions are not moral decisions. For instance if you are traveling on a country road and come to an unmarked cross road, if you go in one direction you will be headed in the right direction and if you go in the other, you will be going in the wrong direction. Yet this decision can not be considered a moral one. If, while you stand pondering you decide to munch your way through some of the apples that you happen to have with you, and in the process discover that some of the apples you possess are bad and others good then you would not be considered to be making a moral decision. If on the other hand you meet a man at the crossroads and ask him which is the way to your destination and he knowingly tells you the wrong direction then he has made a moral decision. Likewise if you should discover that he has lied to you and you get so enraged that in the ensuing altercation you hurt or even kill him, then you have done something morally wrong. What is the difference between the first two decisions and the second two that make the latter moral decisions? I will investigate this shortly.

Ethics is generally a code of conduct derived from morality. One continually hears that it is ethically correct or incorrect to do such and such. Ethically correct behaviour is thus generally morally correct behaviour, but not necessarily so. There may occasionally be a situation where a decision is ethically correct but morally wrong. Take the example of charging for missed sessions. This is common practice, has a background rationale and would fairly universally be considered completely ethical provided the analysand knows about it. However in some situations it might be ethically correct but morally wrong to charge a fee that the analysand could clearly not afford to pay. An example of a morally right but ethically wrong decision might be lending an analysand money to get home on a stormy night when his car has broken down for it is generally agreed that to offer analysands financial assistance is ethically incorrect. This is a murky area and my examples not terribly lucid. 1 wish only to make the point that because ethics is a fairly defined code of conduct, derived from, but one step removed from morality there is room for disjunction between the two.

Perhaps the most basic kind of morality is that based on an external prohibition. When the external prohibition is attributed to divinity it is encompassed in the moral codes of religious organisations. When the prohibitions are part of an occupational or professional code of conduct then it is generally called ethics. This externalisation of what is wrong and right is both the strength and weakness of this form of morality, for it stands as relentlessly as a rock in the shifting tides of human emotion. If you are on the right side of it you are safe and on sound footing. But if you should be so careless as to slip or be one of those that bob helplessly in a frothing sea of uncertainty, you are in mortal danger of being crushed or damned. It is a simple and defined kind of morality so long as no attempt is made to analyse or question it.

Once the external set of criteria is removed then morality becomes an extremely complex problem. For how is one to determine from within ones self what is right and wrong, good and bad? Yet it seems important to do so. The ancient Greeks believed that a man could not be truly happy unless he behaved in a morally good way. The problem of course was to work out what was morally good. It has been said that the Greeks attempted to resolve this problem by trying to emulate good men for the deeds of good men must show the general direction to be pursued. This gave rise to a circular argument - good men doing morally correct things and morally correct things are the things that a good man does. But 1 do not believe this is an entirely fair or complete assessment. Socrates, the first moral philosopher, for instance believed that morality could be deduced by discourse. Not being satisfied with externally determined codes of conduct he introduced the idea of using questioning and argument as a tool to determine the truth. He believed that once the truth or rightness of a course of action had been determined one could not knowingly act in a contrary manner. By such a process of self examination one became a good man and acted in a morally correct way. So with him the focus of morality had already shifted from something external to something internal but Socrates is not very clear on how one determines good from bad or right from wrong. It is agreed by most scholars that Plato accepted Socrates' ethic that morality is based on knowledge. However, Plato extended the basic thesis to account for some of the problems inherent in Socrates' formulation. Plato's extension is basically in two directions a) accounting for some of the problems of Socrates' ethic and b) adding the dimension of his "Ideas".

a) One of the problems with Socrates' idea that correct knowledge must produce the right action is that this was probably true for Socrates, who we know was an exceptionally strong willed, clear headed individual, the likes of which most ordinary people are not. So that we find Plato finding it necessary to make an allowance for passion, such that even though a man might know what is "good", this knowledge is either overpowered or swept away by passion. Secondly Plato attempts to account for the fact that many people seem to know what is wrong or evil but still seem to choose it. This he does by explaining that even though a man might know that something is evil, he chooses to fix his attention on some associated aspect of it that he perceives as good, and convinces himself that it is good that is guiding his action. So that by saying "Evil be thou my good" he is regarding what is evil, basically as good.

b) Plato's theory if Ideas or Forms attempts to account for the essential essence of anything. For example if we think of the term "goodness", we can cite many instances where this term might be appropriately used. They will all have in common something called "goodness", or as Bertrand Russell (1912) puts it "The word will be applicable to a number of particular things because they all participate in a common nature or essence. This pure essence is what Plato calls an "idea" or "form". The idea... is something other than particular things, which particular things partake of. Not being particular, it cannot itself exist in the world of sense. Moreover it is not fleeting like the things of sense: it is eternally itself, immutable and indestructible.. Thus Plato is led to a supra-sensible world, more real than the common world of sense..."

So it can be seen that Plato's ideas lend themselves to a spiritual interpretation. For our purposes here it might be said that Plato adds an extra sensory or spiritual dimension to Socrates' essentially rationalistic morality.

Aristotle's contribution is a much more pragmatic one. He believed that one's guiding principle should be moderation for in the extremes resided the vices of excess and deficiency. The right moral course lay as a mean between them. For example courage, lay as a mean between the extremes of foolhardiness in the one hand and cowardice on the other. Likewise selfrespect between vanity and humility, wittiness between buffoonery and boorishness, modesty between bashfulness and shamelessness and so on. This very practical approach to morality occupies an intermediate position between morality as an idea and morality as something that has a utilitarian function, This latter view of morality was developed by the Utilitarians.

The Utilitarians, Bentham. and J. S. Mill rejected the idea that one could "intuit" good from bad, as if there was something intrinsically good or bad in whatever we did. They start off from the premise, similar to Freud's, that man is motivated most basically by the twin principles of pain and pleasure. Now since it is not only the individual person that is so motivated, but the whole of mankind, it follows that mankind too will be motivated by these twin principles of pain and pleasure. Quite clearly, if one were concerned only with one's own pleasure, it could be to the detriment of others. So the guiding clause in that what determines good and bad, is the so called "greatest happiness principle". This principle states in essence that what is

right, proper and universally desirable of all human action, is the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. Bentham argues that even those who intuit good from bad, when asked to expand and explain why they think an action to be good or bad, will eventually come to the same conclusion i.e. what produces the greatest amount of happiness in the greatest amount of people is what is good, or vice versa.

John Stuart Mill's special contribution to Utilitarianism was his suggestion that some kinds of pleasure were more desirable and more valuable than others. This introduced a qualitative difference in the pleasures i.e. there is something intrinsically different between the different pleasures, for instance mental over bodily pleasures. Further he concludes that one's greatest happiness is not attained by seeking it directly, but by seeking some other goal or ideal, in the course of which one finds one's greatest happiness. Moreover he placed a greater emphasis on the emotional life of man, on art and poetry which could hardly be accounted for by Bentham's principle of greatest happiness. That is why it is often said that Mill introduced a qualitative element to the utilitarian philosophy, and was concerned with the harmonious development of the individual, in all aspects of his life. However, in the main Mill remained utilitarian in that he rejected any idealist or abstract concept of good, which for him could only be determined by practical outcomes.

Freud also describes a type of morality that can be called utilitarian. In "Totem and Taboo" he describes the most basic form of human morality , that concerning murder and incest. After the slaying and cannibalising of the primal father, if the horde was to survive, there had to be a prohibition against murder and another against incest. The development of religion, with it's fear and love of a personal God, Freud links to the murdered primal Father, and the ambivalent feeling towards him. So that he is here showing the link between utilitarian morality and that imposed by religion and in addition opening room in our minds to think of the development of morality both in mankind's and every human's ancient past. But before going on to examine the psychoanalytic insights into morality it might be worth mentioning two other philosophers that have made significant contributions on morality, Hume and Kant.

David Hume is generally regarded as the father of British Empiricism. But there is another, perhaps less well known, side to Hume's philosophy. This is his "emotive" philosophy. Put very simply he maintained that man's reasoning does not, and can not motivate his actions. All that reasoning can do is to judge matters of fact or matters of relations i.e. comparing matters of fact. Hence, after being motivated in a particular direction by ones emotions, one's reasoning may decide which of several possibilities one may decide to take. As far as morality is concerned it is not our reasoning which determines what we consider to be morally correct, but our feelings, though we may then use our reasoning to support our beliefs. He gives as example the case of murder "Take an action allow'd to be vicious: Wilful murder, for instance. Examine it in all lights, and see if you can find that matter of fact, or real existence, which you call vice, In whichever way you take it, you find only certain passions, motives, volition's and thoughts. There is no other matter of fact in the case ... You can never find it, until you turn your reflection into your own breast and find a sentiment of disapprobation which arises in you towards this action. Here is a matter of fact; but 'tis the object of feeling, not of reason. It lies in yourself, not in the object." (Emphasis mine)

What he means is that the act is no different in wilful murder than what it is in justifiable homicide or state execution, yet we judge all three differently because we feel differently about them. Likewise the act of incest in animals versus the act of incest in human beings is exactly the same, yet the way we judge it is certainly not identical. Hume's position is thus different from the idea that morality is rationally determined. Yet he is unable to tell us why we feel differently about different acts. Nor is it clear from him that even if we do feel differently, is a state execution morally different say from wilful murder.

Any moral philosophy must at some point address what is meant by "good". Now for Kant it was important not to define good in terms of its effects, like the utilitarians, for that means that a particular action is good, not in its own right but because of a secondary order effect. He wanted to define good that was good intrinsically. But to define a good will as being a will that was good, is a tautology. So he defined good in terms of an internal sense of duty. A will that acted in the service of this inner sense of duty, was a good will. But he made a distinction between acting in accordance with duty and acting for the sake of duty. For instance if one acted in a way that was expected of us, or in a way that was designed to produce short or long term benefits, then the action would not have moral worth in Kant's terms. for the action to moral worth it must obey universal moral laws. The test for this universal moral law is that one has to determine whether that particular action would be considered good if it were followed universally by everyone.

For instance a person might undertake and action which was quite understandable in the circumstances, yet if he were honest, he would find it difficult to maintain that such an action be mode Into a universal law for all people to act in that way. Here Kant makes a distinction between universal principles and personal maxims. If we were all perfect beings our personal maxims would automatically be universal principles, but since that is not the case, we have to determine when our personal maxims are such as could be made into universal principles. "Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a Universal Law of Nature." When a maxim can in such a way become a universal moral law, it is called a "categorical imperative". It is categorical because it is purged of any utilitarian or secondary motive of gain, and it is imperative because from a moral point of view, it can not be diluted, diverted or distorted, for then it would no longer be a universal law. A categorical imperative is thus is thus not only good in its own right, but it is also an end in itself. This leads to the conclusion that "rational nature exists as an end in itself.. The practical imperative will thus be as follows... to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of any other, always at the same time as an end, and never merely as a means." This is a very significant statement as we shall see later.

We have seen the utilitarian side of Freud's ideas on morality. But his predominant views about morality were those associated with the super ego. his views on the super ego constituting an internal agency distinguishing good from bad is expressed most clearly in Civilisation and its Discontents:

"We may reject the existence of an original, as it were natural capacity to distinguish good from bad. What is bad is often not at all what is injurious or dangerous to the ego; on the contrary, it may be something which is desirable and enjoyable to the ego. Here, therefore, there is an extraneous influence at work, and it is this that decides what is to be called a good or bad. Since a person's own feelings would not have led him along this path, he must have had a motive for submitting to this extraneous influence... therefore, what is bad is whatever causes one to be threatened with loss of love ... [that is] why it makes little difference whether one has already done the bad thing or only intends to do it... A great change takes place only when the authority is internalized through the establishment of a super-ego."

Freud's model thus bears similarities to morality being determined by an external set of criteria. The difference is that these rules are internal. In fact it is these very internal rules which when projected to the outside world constitute "external" morality, hence the two are identical from that point of view. A major difference is that religious morality or a professional code of ethics ensures compliance by threat of punishment, whereas for Freud it is a loss of love that is the driving force. By describing the development of the super-ego Freud is also able to offer a utilitarian explanation of morality. Since we keep coming across utilitarian morality it might be worth examining it a bit further.

Outside the psychological field (and in many cases within it too) a utilitarian explanation of morality seems to offer the most sensible and practical explanation of morality. Man being the rational animal he is, has developed a system which is designed to preserve his species. While it maybe right to state that various codes of ethics ensure proper behaviour and hence the preservation of various groups of people, their practices and eventually the human species, the reverse might not be true i.e. that it is this end result that determines morality. Let us take an example in the spirit of the greatest happiness or greatest good for the greatest number of people. Suppose in this age of organ transplants we soon become able to virtually eliminate the problems associated with tissue rejection, such that new organs can be reliably exchanged for old and damaged ones. If this happens then there will be an even greater pressure to find transplantable organs. Since our guiding principle is the greatest good for the greatest number of people, might it not be a good idea to use the most undesirable members of our society for their spare parts, provided they are in good health? It would save the enormous costs of incarceration, give considerable satisfaction to large sections of the community and directly benefit many far more worthy members of society. Such action, from a utilitarian point of view, would be quite justified but it could never be morally right. The very thought repulses us. Is this because we would be interfering with divine external laws or breaching internal codes of conduct, or does this illustrate the truth of Hume's emotional morality, or Kant's categorical imperative that insists on treating humanity, ones own or another's always as an end and never as a means? An example such as. this brings home to us that there is something of value in all the views described. But the views are so divergent that it seems unlikely that there could be any factor common to all. Yet there is a thread that runs through all of them, making them all correct, for they are all aspects of the one missing ingredient that

we have not so far discussed. Without this missing ingredient all the above explanations must remain incomplete. This vital missing link is "the other".

Before going on to talk about the other, it might be worthwhile saying a few words about the idea of a universal morality. It is well known that certain kinds of behaviour are considered immoral in certain cultures but not in another and this gives rise to the impression that the moral impulse is influenced both by the culture and the period in which it occurs. In a somewhat similar vein, but much more tenuously, it might be argued that definitions of morality vary with the individual, for some people consider some acts to be immoral that others do not i.e. the moral impulse is relative. However, in spite of this apparent relativity, it is also agreed that some things are categorically immoral i.e. they are immoral regardless of the person, culture or period in history. This can give rise to an impression that a certain part of morality is universally determined and another part that is relative. Such a proposition creates a myriad of problems but first let us examine the idea of a universal morality.

If a moral impulse in universal then by definition it transcends the individual, his culture and his age. It is thus apparently determined by something outside of him and it is this characteristic of the moral impulse which has been used to secure it a firm place in religious doctrines. But this is also an argument that now starts to have a resemblance to Plato's Forms mentioned earlier. We could posit the idea of a universal morality and cite the particular instances of it that we come across, as being variable manifestations of it, much as we can have an idea of green but any greens that we come across in the real world will vary from instance to instance. There will be some greens that all would agree were definitely green on all occasions, while there will be others that will appear green against a certain background or under certain lighting conditions. But beyond them would be the essence of the idea "green". Could it be the essence of morality that gives rise to a universal morality? This is the problem of universals which has occupied philosophers since the time of Plato.

It could be argued that there is such a thing as "goodness" which is present in, but which transcends all particular instances of goodness and hence is a universal given called goodness. This goodness is thus distinct from our perceptions of goodness. However, I do not believe this to be possible. I think it is a fallacious argument for two reasons. First, the goodness that is common to all things good is a feature of our definition of goodness, whether this definition be ostensive or nominal (Russell 1948). What is common to various instances of goodness lies not in the essence of goodness but in our minds which "give" to the various instances the feature of goodness. The fact that certain things are called good regardless of culture of period, is because there is something about us as human beings that transcends culture or period, not because of something outside ourselves. The second reason is a further development of the latter point, namely that the idea of goodness is put in the mind by the mind. There is no other way for it to get there and without the human mind there is no such thing as goodness. It might be said that one can have an idea of goodness that one can then perceive within one's self and think about and that this idea might be imbibed in complete form from another person or from a book i.e. it is not a feature of one's perception or thinking. But at some point, some one must have perceived the goodness, or some mind must have created something that was called goodness, even if this person was not ones self. And for it to become part of our conceptual vocabulary, we have to "metabolise" it in our minds, in our own particular way, using our minds. So that we are again drive to the conclusion that goodness is a product of the human mind and cannot be extraneous to it.

The apparent relativity of the moral impulse is an illusion which is created by the mind for the mind's own purposes. I will return to this when talking about the ways the mind has of creating certain kinds of "goodness" and "evil".

Having placed morality as being located in and as a product of the human mind, we need to describe what are it's essential features and how it gets there.

Even when we talk about morality as being a product of the human mind we often seem to regard it as an abstraction, as if there were some things that are of themselves good or bad. I do not think this is possible. As Kant so famously put it 1t is impossible to conceive of anything in the world, or indeed out of it, which can be called good without qualification, save only a good will." Now what is a "good will"? A will suggests an intention and a direction towards someone or something. In fact it covers a complexity of

emotions and intellectual processes. all directed towards some aim. From psychoanalysis we learn that this aim, is always another person, in whole or in part, conscious or unconscious. Thus what 1 am suggesting is that the term morality, is a relational term, essentially and invariably. This might not always be apparent, but it is always there. This certainly does not mean that everything right or wrong, good or bad is relational. Only that if it is morality we are thinking about, then it has to be relational. If we go back to our crossroads, the decision to turn right or left is not relational nor is distinction between good and bad apples. Hence these are not moral decisions. Lying to someone or hurting them is clearly relational and hence moral. Apparently victimless acts such as shoplifting is morally wrong, because even though there is no one individual as such involved, it is nevertheless a relational act against a departmental store. More than that, the act is always in phantasy against some loved one. This might sound far fetched for the strangers one meets at the various crossroads of one's life are hardly loved ones, nor are departmental stores or tax departments. And yet they always are. If Oedipus had treated the man he met at the crossroads as if he were his father and not a stranger, then the outcome might have been different. It is because he did not recognise him as being his father, that the tragedy took place. Each time he do not recognise our actions towards them, then we commit the same error. 1 will in a moment take up the essential part played by love in the moral impulse, but having established I think, that moral means relation to another, we must now describe the nature of this relationship. Roger Money-Kyrle (1955) describes two kinds of morality which he calls a) "super-ego morality" or "morality of fear" and b) "morality based not on fear but on love". The first is the earlier, based as it is on feelings of persecution and retaliation and is the one described fully by Freud. The second is later, is related to the depressive position and is described by Melanie Klein. MoneyKyrle says that there is a qualitative difference not only in the type of guilt (persecutory or depressive) but by the reaction to it. "Those with predominantly persecutory consciences react by propitiation. Those in whom the persecutory element is slight and are in consequence relatively more sensitive to the depressive element react by reparation." He thus bases the second type of morality on feelings of guilt and indeed defines morality in such terms:

"A moral impulse may be defined as an impulse to do, or to refrain from doing, something because to refrain from doing, or to do, it would arouse a sense of guilt"

However, if guilt is the determining feature of morality, then the "moral impulse" cannot exist till the establishment of guilt. Indeed Racker (1966) says that at the earliest part object relationship "A moral problem does not exist here as yet: the good object is loved and the bad one is hated". In his view morality does not arise till there is the ambivalence of the depressive position.

What then is to be made of MoneyKyrle's initial or persecutory morality? As stated earlier. I believe morality to be a relational term, and since from the earliest days the infant can be said to distinguish pleasurable experiences from painful ones, collecting the former under "good" and the latter under "bad" can we not say that some kind of morality exists right from the start? 1 think it is mistaken and confusing to say so. It is confusing because the same words "good" and "bad" are used to describe experiences on both the pleasure-pain and virtuous evil continuums which have little to do with each other. It is mistaken for while morality implies an object relation, it is not just any kind of object relation. The relationship must be to whole objects. It could he argued that the initial "good-bad" experiences are the precursors of what will eventually become a moral impulse, much as an acorn is the precursor of the oak tree. This is undoubtedly true, except that when we are hard pressed detailing a magnificent oak, and comparing it to other vegetation, talking about the characteristics of the acorn tends to confuse the discussion. It is important to keep in mind that when talking about morality, we are always talking about whole object relationships. This is difficult to maintain and even in our thinking about the problems associated with morality, as 1 shall show later, we keep slipping into part object relationships and so exit the field of morality.

Amongst whole object relations morality is most closely associated with the emotion of love. If there is an absence of love, explicit and implicit, then the problem of morality does not arise Guilt, is the emotion most frequently associated with the moral impulse and there can be no guilt unless there is an underlying love. This is very clearly stated by Freud (1930). He is talking of the aftermath of the slaying of the ambivalently loved father (including his installation within in the form of the super-ego) when he says "Now... we can at last grasp two things perfectly clearly: the part played by love in the origin of conscience and the fatal inevitability of the sense of guilt." (p. 132)

However, to base the moral impulse on feelings of guilt, as it usually is poses two problems:

1. Guilt generally refers to something that has already been done, while the moral impulse is, at heart, prohibitive rather than punitive or restitutive. That is not to say that one can not make a moral judgement about something that has already been done, for clearly we can and do. It is more a question of purpose. The main purpose of the moral code is to guide prospective behaviour, though it can of course also be used to judge past behaviour. Now it may be said that there is such a thing as prospective guilt. For instance one might not do something in order to avoid the feelings of guilt. Which gives rise to the second problem.

2. The moral impulse is said to be guided by attempts to avoid feelings of guilt- this is implicit in Money-Kyrle's definition of the moral impulse. But is that what the moral impulse really implies? Is it that we do not do such and such to avoid feelings of guilt? Such an attitude is generally associated with psychopathy, the very opposite of a moral impulse. We are stopped from doing something immoral because the prospect of doing it causes pain now in anticipation, not because we are worried about how we might feel later. The emotions associated with the moral impulse need to be better delineated.

Thus though guilt is associated with the moral impulse, it is not what guides or determines it. The moral impulse is motivated by pain. We desist from a certain action because it would be painful to somebody. If we did not restrain ourselves it would cause pain to somebody we care about and that in turn would produce a feeling of pain in one's self. the currency of morality is thus pain and the sense of accepted agency is unmistakable. Hence the relevance of guilt. However, it would be more accurate to say that it is not out of guilt that we do not do something, but out of feelings of concern.

Winnicott (1963) says "The word ‘concern' is used to cover in a positive way a phenomenon that is covered in a negative way by the word 'guilt'. With this statement Winnicott indelibly established what he believed to be the main relationship between guilt and concern. Bion has warned us. once a word has been saturated by a certain meaning, it cannot carry the burden of any further meaning. Such seems to have been the fate of the term concern. Mention it and Winnicott and his use of the term comes to mind. So that it becomes hard to imagine that concern is linked to guilt not only in positive-negative but also prospective retrospective connotations. We are guilty about what we have done and are concerned about what we might do. Or if we have done something, we might still be concerned if we are not aware of the consequences of our actions. We are generally not concerned about what we have done and know the consequences of (except when we use the term "concern" meaning "worried") and are generally not guilty for something that has yet to be done.

The relationship between concern and guilt might be a bit clearer in the social sphere where it is the link between legislation and punishment. Legislation is proactive and seeks to prevent something socially undesirable from being undertaken. However once the deed has been done and is known about, then the matter moves out of the realm of legislature into the field of criminality and the associated punishment.

This mirroring of concern-guilt with legislation-punishment brings us to a very interesting facet about morality. It is difficult to dispute that the moral impulse aims to aims towards some kind of "good", "good" being defined in terms of what is good for the person towards whom the impulse is directed. But the moral impulse has nothing to do with evil. This may seem strange for evil is generally considered the obverse of good. Let us examine the situation in greater detail. I have said that morality is essentially relational, hence it is easy to think that out of bearing good will towards a person one wishes not to harm them. If one therefore bore ill will towards someone then it follows that we would wish to injure them, and our intention towards them would be destructive or evil. This is true, but only partially true. An evil object can only be produced by the process o splitting. This is because the term "evil" is unequivocally bad and perhaps for this reason it carries within it a connotation "worthy of destruction". Hence evil or the intention to destroy can only occur when all good has been removed from it. If this goodness has not been removed then the consequences are the same as a attacking and hurting an ambivalently lived object i.e. guilt. If one is not to feel guilty then the object of our hatred must be unequivocally bad, and if worthy of our remorseless destruction, evil. We have no problem destroying what is evil. In fact it is felt to be justified to do so in order to preserve the good. This is of course the nature of split object relations, destroy the bad to preserve the good. In whole object relations the destructive desire is as active as ever, but it is held in check by the moral impulse, which to be present must of necessity retain perception of some good. Hence too the

essential emotion of love mentioned earlier. If the moral impulse can not hold in check the destructive desire then it becomes a matter for the courts, for guilt, to adjudicate. The moral impulse can therefore never judge anyone as evil and can not deliberately hurt or maim anyone, not even a Hitler responsible for the deliberate murder of millions. For the moral impulse is not about numbers but about object relations. It is possible to deliberately murder millions (or one) only by a process of splitting, calling the victim(s) evil and hence worthy of destruction. The moral impulse, being about whole object relations, can never permit such action. Capital punishment is thus definitely out, to be replaced not only by safe removal, but ideally by a system which allows the appropriate experience of guilt, remorse and with any luck, a rejuvenation of the moral impulse.

Here then is the reason why morality gives an illusion of being relative. It is relative only when we do not wish to see what we are doing. And we do not see what we are doing or the consequences of it, by splitting our objects. We learn from psychoanalysis that some part of our mind always knows or is perpetually in danger of knowing. Sometimes we unknowingly do terrible things to our minds (eg. Symington 1993) in order for this knowledge to remain inaccessible, but the potential for it is always there. From psychoanalysis too we learn that we avoid psychic pain only to pay dearly for it in other ways. Thus rather strangely, the potential arbiter of morality is always the individual, but only when seen in his entire complexity. There are certain immutable laws about human behaviour that transcend any particular individual, much as the laws of physics transcend any human. One day we might be clearer what these laws are but for the present the one about not hurting another, is central to our discussion. No matter how frequently we disguise it, subvert it, deride it, destroy it, it remains universal and immutable.

A second way in which we seem to keep slipping into split object relations is when we talk about morality in absolute terms. There is an aspect of morality that is absolute, mentioned above. But it is easy to misunderstand this absolutism. It is the law about not hurting another that is absolute, not that we are or ever can be perfect human beings. Who amongst us does not lie or cheat in a myriad of petty ways as we muddle our way through life. These actions do of course hurt someone, so why are such actions not immoral? They are and we pay for them, but there must be a normal degree of immorality, even if it is hard to define. To refrain entirely from such actions results in a "model" child that lives in dread of a teacher or parent. Being based on terror it is a split persecutory object relation, and not one that can properly be called a moral one. The moral relation is not one that is absolutely good, but one that is relatively loving. For it is not the goodness of the action that defines it's moral worth, but the general intention. It is the intention that persuades us to treat others always as an end and never as a means. It is the intention that distinguishes playful from criminal " getting away with it". And it is this general intention towards someone, Kant's "good will", that binds together the many roots of morality.

**Summary**

It is argued that morality or the quality of goodness does not lie in objects, but is given to them by the individual. Further that the term "morality" is a relational one and describes a certain type of object relationship. This relationship is essentially to whole objects and is characterised by the emotion of concern. Concepts of a relative morality, evil and justified destruction in defence of good are all features of part object relations and take no part in constituting the moral impulse.

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