**Your preferred ethical lens is: Reputation Lens**

*Intense Sensibility and Considered Equality (ISCE)*

You listen to your feelings (sensibility) to determine what virtues you should develop to demonstrate ethical excellence in community (equality).

**Your Primary Values show how you prioritize the tension between rationality and sensibility as well as autonomy and equality.**

*Your primary values are Sensibility and Equality*

You *intensely* prioritize the value of sensibility (IS)—following your heart—over rationality—following your head. As an IS, your keenly felt passions and emotions provide powerful energy as you seek your heart's desires. You consistently frame the narrative of your life in terms of being all you can be as you strive to embody the ideals of your roles.

You have a *considered* preference for the value of equality (CE)—respecting the community—over autonomy—giving priority to the individual. As a CE, you are committed to supporting the institutions of your community to make sure that those in authority do not abuse their power and those who are on the margins are not forgotten. You expect others to be accountable for living into their roles for the betterment of the community as a whole.

**Know Yourself**

*Pay attention to your beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.*

The first step to ethical agility and maturity is to carefully read the description of your own ethical lens. While you may resonate with elements of other lenses, when you are under stress or pressure, you’ll begin your ethical analysis from your home lens. So, becoming familiar with both the gifts and the blind spots of your lens is useful. For more information about how to think about ethics as well as hints for interpreting your results, look at the information under the *ELI Essentials* and *Exploring the ELI* on the menu bar.

**Understanding Your Ethical Lens**

Over the course of history, four different ethical perspectives, which we call the *Four Ethical Lenses,* have guided people in making ethical decisions. Each of us has an inherited bias towards community that intersects with our earliest socialization. As we make sense of our world, we develop an approach to ethics that becomes our ethical instinct—our gut reaction to value conflicts. The questions you answered were designed to determine your instinctual approach to your values preferences. These preferences determine your placement on the *Ethical Lens Inventory* grid, seen on the right side of this page.

The dot on the grid shows which ethical lens you prefer and how strong that preference is. Those who land on or close to the center point do not have a strong preference for any ethical lens and may instead resonate with an approach to ethics that is concerned with living authentically in the world rather than one that privileges one set of values over another.

Each of the paragraphs below describes an ethical trait—a personal characteristic or quality that defines how you begin to approach ethical problems. For each of the categories, the trait describes the values you believe are the most important as well as the reasons you give for why you make particular ethical decisions.

To see how other people might look at the world differently, read the descriptions of the different ethical lenses under the tab *Ethical Lenses* on the menu bar. The “Overview of the Four Ethical Lenses” can be printed to give you a quick reference document. Finally, you can compare and contrast each ethical trait by reading the description of the trait found under the *Traits* menu. Comparing the traits of your perspective to others helps you understand how people might emphasize different values and approach ethical dilemmas differently.

As you read your ethical profile and study the different approaches, you’ll have a better sense of what we mean when we use the word “ethics.” You’ll also have some insight into how human beings determine what actions are—or are not—ethical.

**The Snapshot gives you a quick overview of your ethical lens.**

*Your snapshot shows you building an ethically excellent community.*

This ethical lens is called the Reputation Lens because people with this focus value having others who are important to them in their various communities think highly of their expertise and character—their reputation. They care about working with others to define ethical excellence in the various roles they have as humans.

The Reputation Lens represents the family of ethical theories known as virtue ethics theories, where to determine what actions are ethical, you consider what habitual qualities of being—virtues—are required to demonstrate ethical excellence in the various roles you have in your community.

**Your Ethical Path is the method you use to become ethically aware and mature.**

*Your ethical path is the Path of the Saint.*

On the ethical Path of the Saint, you follow community sensibilities and wisdom to embody the virtues that count for excellence in your community. The list of desirable virtues is shaped in conversation between those who take on specific roles in a community and the rest of the members of that community. What does it mean to be a good parent? A good executive? A good member of the community? A good worker? Conversations about virtue ethics focus on character—habits of being that define who you are as a person.

As you walk the Path of the Saint, you conscientiously pursue a vision of yourself that exemplifies these virtues. Based on the wisdom of the community and your own sense of how to serve others, you determine what is expected for someone in the roles you have. Your roles include your profession as well as broader roles like citizen, friend, student, or parent. As you seek to fulfill the expectations of these roles, you develop the dispositions and character that are the hallmarks of excellence.

**Your Vantage Point describes the overall perspective you take to determine what behaviors best reflect your values.**

*The icon that represents your preferred vantage point is a camera.*

Just as you use a camera to frame a subject, hoping to capture the picture in its best light, the Reputation Lens helps you focus on the here and now and make choices that will help you live into the standards of ethical excellence that are expected of your role.

**Your Ethical Self is the persona the theorists invite you to take on as you resolve the ethical problem.**

*Your ethical self is a particular person with particular roles in the community.*

Using the camera of the Reputation Lens, you think of your ethical self as someone living in a very particular place and with a specific role. Some people make ethical decisions by removing themselves from the equation and using abstract hypotheticals—not you. Your ethical self is an ideal version of yourself, or someone you look up to, and you ask, “What would this person do?”

Looking forward in time, you seek to make choices that will strengthen your legacy and develop a strong individual character. You overtly expect others to live into the virtues of their roles as well. If someone is virtuous, you happily defer to their leadership. As you develop your character over time, you become defined by your narrative—the “story” you tell about your place in the community and your important and defining values: the self you see in the lens of your ethical camera.

**Your Classical Virtue is the one of the four virtues identified by Greek philosophers you find the most important to embody.**

*Your classical virtue is fortitude—bearing hardship and uncertainty with courage.*

As you seek ethical maturity, you embrace fortitude, facing hardship with courage, even if your empathy for others can make some choices difficult. Noticing the problems caused by hard-heartedness and self-righteousness, you wisely use the tools of sensibility to show compassion as well as courage.

**Your Key Phrase is the statement you use to describe your ethical self.**

*Your key phrase is “I make wise choices that lead to a virtuous character.”*

Because you intensely value a strong community, you strive to make choices that are not only wise but that also develop your character and prove your worthiness to the community. You care about what others think of you—not out of self-aggrandizement, but out of a desire to be your best self. You are motivated by the community’s opinion of you and validation of your character, which allows you to find happiness and fulfillment in serving others.

**Using the Reputation Lens**

By prioritizing sensibility and equality, the Reputation Lens provides a unique perspective on what specific actions count as being ethical. This lens also has its own process for resolving ethical dilemmas. As you translate your overarching values into actions—applied ethics—each perspective provides a specific nuance on what counts as ethical behavior. This next section describes how you can use the Reputation Lens to resolve an ethical dilemma.

**Deciding what is Ethical is the statement that describes your preferred method for defining what behaviors and actions are ethical.**

*Members of the community in dialogue rely on their passion and commitment to agree upon character traits required for virtuous living.*

With a considered preference for equality, you listen intently to other members of the community to determine their expectations for your role. You believe that an action is ethical if it embodies those virtues, and you are happy when you hear the community sing your praises when you do right or let you know if you fall short. The community’s reaction informs your future decisions, and the conversation continues.

**Your Ethical Task is the process you prefer to use to resolve ethical dilemmas.**

*Your ethical task is to embrace virtues, the qualities of character that let you be an effective community leader.*

Your primary focus is seeking that which is Good. As you gaze through this lens, you follow your heart to identify what kind of person you want to become and what you want your reputation within the community to be. As you consider how to live into the values of a life in pursuit of an ideal character, you passionately feel called to act as a servant leader, generously moderating your own desires to help others in the community improve and ethically excellent their own roles.

**Your Analytical Tool is your preferred method for critically thinking about ethical dilemmas.**

*Your preferred analytical tool is tradition.*

Learning from respected role models in the community is quite helpful as you determine what behaviors are good and demonstrate excellence. The interplay of personal reflection and community conversation allows you to craft a coherent narrative about what you do and why. Your actions can then fit within the long view of your life as you test options for action against your understanding of who you are and what you want to accomplish within your community. In this way, you can meet your fervently held goal of helping to write the community’s narrative as a role model for others.

**Your Foundational Question helps you determine your ethical boundaries.**

*Your foundational question is “What action will set a good example?”*

As you ask “What action will set a good example?” you follow the stirrings of your heart as you and others define and virtuously live into the competencies required of your various roles as well as the associated virtues. As you follow the lead of your role models, you can identify the best ethical practices. Any path forward has to meet the ethical minimum of being something you’d be willing to do in full view of the community.

**Your Aspirational Question helps you become more ethically mature.**

*Your aspirational question is “How can I courageously be a servant leader?”*

And then, as your perspective expands to include yourself as well as others and seek a greater purpose in life than only reflexively meeting other people’s expectations, you begin to temper and enrich your value preferences as you ask, “How can I courageously be a servant leader?” Asking this question allows you to embody the virtues of your role in service to your community, leading with humility and compassion.

**Your Justification for Acting is the reason you give yourself and others to explain your choice.**

*Your justification for acting is “It was a hard call, but as a leader I had no choice.”*

You like to explain your choices by explaining that your position left you with only one ethical option. As a leader, you evaluated the situation, took stock of all the options, and then did a final gut check to make a choice that not only embodies the virtues required by the role but supports others in the community as well.

At your best, your decision will be thoughtful and consider the expectations of everyone involved. You’ll also embrace the responsibilities of your role as you make decisions and take action. If you are not reflective, you may take on the language of leadership but not consider those outside of your circle of influence, giving an aura of authority to your actions—when you really acted to take care of yourself and your friends.

**Strengths of the Reputation Lens**

The ethical perspective of the Reputation Lens has been used by many over thousands of years to provide a personal map toward ethical action and personal fulfillment. Using this perspective, each person is expected to be in active dialogue with others to determine their shared ethical commitments. Striving to embody the agreed upon competencies of excellence provides a strategy for energizing action, finding a purpose in life, and getting along well with others.

**Your Gift is the insight you provide yourself and others as we seek to be ethical.**

*Your gift is compassion.*

As you reflect on the traits of those who are ethical role models, you are able to cultivate your personal virtues while being an effective part of the community. In the process, you bring balance and perspective to your decisions. As you fold empathy into your understanding of your role, you become compassionate and develop a sensitive conscience. You are able to articulate options for action that support both the community and individuals. Finally, as you gain ethical maturity, you bring gentleness and fortitude to the conversation. You know the world will not change overnight and patience will win out.

**Your Contemporary Value is the current ethical value you most clearly embody.**

*Your contemporary value is a life well-lived.*

You are strongly committed to identifying and embodying the virtues of your role. That commitment, however, privileges equality—the right of people to live in a community that holds shared standards of what a good life entails. You highly value the virtues and character members of the community expect from someone in your role.

As you move from private action to public policy, you begin to question traditions that have become outdated and don’t reflect the virtues in the new circumstances of the community. As you consider others, you participate in the shaping of community expectations, no longer following unquestioningly but bringing your own wisdom to the fore. At your best, you lead your community to an ever-greater understanding of good character and virtuous living.

**Your Secondary Values are those that logically flow from your primary values.**

*As you harmonize equality and sensibility, your secondary values focus on embracing virtuous living to support a life of service.*

For you, walking the Path of the Saint involves wholeheartedly embracing *integrity* and *civility*. You tell the truth and respect the inherent dignity of others. You are *courageous*, adhering to your virtues even when doing so isn’t easy and holding others accountable for the expectations of their roles. Finally, you strive to *be a servant leader*, giving the interests the community and others priority over even your own needs and desires, for you know that a community is only as strong as its weakest member.

**Challenges of the Reputation Lens**

One of the greatest challenges of the Reputation Lens is recognizing that you can never be perfect. The ideal vision of your role is something to aspire to, but as a human, you regularly make decisions that fall short of living into those virtues.

Those who have an intense preference for sensibility and a considered preference for equality, are particularly vulnerable to the ethical blind spots of the Reputation Lens that come from relying too strongly on community consensus and seeing people only as the roles they inhabit, not as human beings.

Using the camera of the Reputation Lens to honestly examine how you are living into the virtues of your role helps avoid ethical blind spots that come from a lack of compassion.

**Your Blind Spot is the place you are not ethically aware and so may unintentionally make an ethical misstep.**

*Your blind spot is unrealistic role expectations.*

Because you are committed to living into the community’s definition of a virtuous citizen, you can all too easily become overwhelmed by the expectations of your various communities and set unrealistic role expectations for yourself. Believing you can solve everyone’s problems, you risk forgetting that others are responsible for their own choices.

Without clearly looking at the benefits that come solely because of your role, you might think you deserve special treatment. Without clear thinking, you also may not accurately assess your effectiveness in your various roles. Finally, as you identify yourself more as an embodiment of your role and reputation and less as a person who may make mistakes, you may become afraid someone will discover you’ve been faking it the whole time.

**Your Risk is where you may be overbearing by expecting that people think just like you.**

*Your risk is being tempted to play the martyr.*

Without a clear understanding of your role, you may be strongly tempted play the martyr by talking about how much you have sacrificed your own desires to meet the perceived needs of others, even in seemingly small ways. This seeming self-effacing behavior is a form of self-righteousness, where you expect accolades for every accomplishment. Believing yourself to be responsible for everyone who makes a demand of you, you may ignore gentle prompts to thoughtfully consider how people are responsible for themselves.

Effectively living within the value priorities of the Reputation Lens requires a measure of humility as you engage in conversation with others about what counts for excellence as a human person within your chosen roles, while being ever mindful of the interplay between being an individual within a community.

**Your Double Standard is the rationalization you use to justify unethical actions.**

*Your double standard could be entitlement, where you believe that your status entitles you to perks not available to others.*

Humans are skilled at deflecting blame if caught being unethical—taking actions that do not live into their own stated principles and thus eroding trust in the community. As you view the world through the Reputation Lens, you unthinkingly respond to others by how well they meet the virtues of their role and standards of ethical excellence as determined by the community.

When you are tempted to be unethical, you will use your role as a means to get ahead, considering yourself *entitled* to benefits based on your position. Puffing yourself up, you believe you *are* your position. In the process, you risk losing your personal authenticity as well as the respect you crave from the community.

**Your Vice is the quality of being that could result in you being intentionally or carelessly lured into unethical action.**

*Your vice could be becoming hard of heart and running roughshod over individuals.*

While unethical action can come from being unaware, humans also have moral flaws that, if not acknowledged, may turn unethical choices into habits. Because you intensely prefer sensibility, you are particularly susceptible to the vices of arrogance and hardness of heart. Without humility and compassion, you can become convinced that you are more virtuous than others.

With a considered preference for equality, you risk falling prey to the vices of cowardice and a lack of integrity. Without awareness and reflection, you can seek to avoid the hard demands of your role instead finding reasons that others in the community must do the job instead.

**Your Crisis is the circumstance that causes you to stop and evaluate your ethical choices.**

*Your crisis could be confusion, precipitated by trying to be all things to all people and losing your own ethical center.*

Not only can unethical behavior come from a lack of personal awareness, but stress and pressure can also contribute to bad choices.

As you continue to walk the Path of the Saint, you will at some point face a personal crisis as you acknowledge your inability to demonstrate excellence in the many roles you've taken on. Passionately feeling that all things are possible if you try hard enough, you run the risk of turning your commitment into an overwhelming responsibility. As you become more and more frazzled, you fail to make or follow through on your commitments, greatly diminishing your effectiveness.

With your effectiveness in question, the community may start removing you from those roles—you might lose a job or alienate a friend. With each role taken away, part of your ethical core is lost in the process.

**Strategies for Ethical Agility and Ethical Maturity**

Resolving ethical conflict is an ongoing as well as challenging task. Because our personal morals and community ethics come from our deeply held values, we must approach the problems mindfully. Great self-knowledge helps us identify the values that are in conflict. Listening respectfully to others as they express their preferred course of action based on their core values also helps. Seeking harmony between our personal expectations and the behavior that the community rewards enhances ethical effectiveness and leads to ethical maturity, the ability to live in personal integrity while respecting the value priorities of and caring for both other individuals and the community as a whole.

Ethical agility is measured by our ability to use all four ethical lenses effectively. We develop ethical agility as we practice looking at the world through different ethical lenses, become more aware of the places where we are tempted to be unethical, and remember to ask the core questions that define each ethical perspective.

**Follow the checklist for action**

Ethical courage involves not just analyzing and reflecting—but also taking action. Pausing to check a proposed action against the value priorities of Reputation Lens is a good final step for people from every ethical perspective. Using the checklist from each lens ensures a balanced decision, one that considers the core values and commitment of each lens.

* Be compassionate as you align your actions with your core virtues. Being ethical means embodying your core virtues as you serve others.
* Consider the roles of individuals as well as the reputation of the larger community. The goal is to make sure each person’s role is respected, their mandate for action is clear, and they are equipped to fulfill their role with excellence.
* Seek excellence in all you do. Entitlement is the enemy of ethical action. By consistently working to improve, you will develop the habits of excellence leading to a good character.

As you become skilled at using your ethical camera to create the perfect images of yourself and others, you will find yourself in good company with others who follow the Path of the Saint on their journey through life.

**Develop ethical agility**

Ethical agility is the ability to use all four ethical lenses—and the center perspective—effectively. You become more ethically agile as you practice looking at the world through different ethical lenses, become more aware of the places where you are tempted to be unethical, and remember to ask the core questions that define each ethical perspective.

**Recognize the language of the different lenses**

As you read about different approaches to ethics, you can pick up the subtle clues to other people’s ethical perspectives by the words they choose to describe the problems and the reasons for their proposed course of action. To learn more about the other ethical lenses, read the information about each ethical lens under the tab *Ethical Lenses* on the menu bar or review the descriptions of the ethical traits for each lens under the tab *Traits.* You can also print the document “Overview Four Ethical Lenses” found under the *Ethical Lens* tab to have a quick reference guide to all four ethical perspectives.

**Use all the ethical perspectives**

Each ethical lens has a unique perspective on both the way to solve a problem as well as the specific characteristics of the most appropriate solution. To learn more about how each ethical perspective approaches ethical dilemmas, click Lens in the top navigation bar and read through the descriptions of each ethical lens.

Ethical agility is the first step towards ethical maturity, a life-long process of becoming ever more self-aware and learning how to move with dignity and grace in our community. As we move from fear into confidence, from thinking only of our self to considering others and the community as a whole, we gain ethical wisdom—a primary task of life as we seek that which is True and Good to find the Beautiful.

If you want to learn more about the how to understand and effectively use your ethical profile, please refer to *The Ethical Self,* by Catharyn Baird and Jeannine Niacaris (2016).

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