Morals for your story

The Oredigger, vol. 91, issue 21 (Apr. 4, 2011), p. 10

Written by Shira Richman

Dilemma
My roommate snores. As you might guess, this leads to many sleepless nights for me. I know we have lived in the same room for several months now, but it has just gotten to be too much. I even have tried to go to bed earlier to accommodate for the hours of sleep I lose per night. I wish I could say something to her, but she has made comments about how well she has been sleeping, and I would hate to ruin that. Should I confront her and jeopardize our friendship or stick to the earplugs while I sleep?
--Sleepless Roommate

Responses
According to David Hume, your gut instincts will tell you what the right action is. The fact that you feel uneasy when you think about confronting your roommate indicates that you probably shouldn't let her know that the snoring is bothersome. She would most likely feel embarrassed and guilty if you told her she snores so loudly that it disrupts your sleep, and you might feel bad about making her feel that way. However, if you wear the earplugs and sacrifice a little sleep, you'll feel good about protecting your friend's feelings. From experience (I dealt with this my freshman year as well), the discomfort is temporary, but this experience will make you grateful to have your own room in the future.
-Sara

I would confront your roommate. If it is affecting your sleep, then it is affecting your study habits and grades. To quote Ayn Rand, "I swear, by my life and my love of it, that I will never live for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live for mine." You shouldn't have to suffer just because you think your roommate will feel bad that she snores, besides it's not even her fault she snores, so she shouldn't feel bad. If you tell your roommate to go get some nasal strips because she snores loudly and keeps you awake, she should have no problem doing so. And if she does have a problem, talk to your RA and settle it, you only have to live with her for a few more months anyway, so a little awkwardness won't be too bad.
--Eli

According to deontological ethics, you should not confront your roommate about the snoring. Deontology aims to preserve human dignity. If you confront your roommate she will probably be embarrassed and apologetic, thus decreasing her dignity. Even if she isn't embarrassed, there aren't a lot of proven over-the-counter options to "treat" snoring. Therefore, her snoring is not something she can change without seeing a doctor. The best way to preserve human dignity in this case is to just use earplugs, which are a much easier solution and one that saves embarrassment.
--Silence: The Best Way to Treat Snoring

In order to ensure your friendship is not jeopardized, you should tell your roommate of her snoring in a kind way such that you do not insult her. In this way, you will not cause a greater unhappiness for both of you because you will be sympathetic. Inform her of some possible alleviation products for snoring so you both can get a restful night's sleep. Also, you could be creating a better future for a future roommate of hers by finding preventions for the snoring now. Therefore, you will not only be generating a greater happiness for you and her, but also other people she will come into contact with in the future. By notifying her, you will fulfill the standards of utilitarianism and thus create a greater happiness for both of you overall.
--David

First off I suggest that you purchase a fan, specifically one that makes a lot of noise. We have two fans in our room, one for noise and one for moving air. You may not think that they make that big of a difference but they really do. If that doesn't work or if you think that it won't help, then you could always suggest breathe right strips to your roommate. Suggest that they may help her sleep even better. If that doesn't work then you should confront her. You pay too much money to go to school here and not be able to get a good night sleep. If she's respectful of your needs then she should be considerate and try to work something out with you, in any way possible. I hope you get this resolved.
--The Swimmer, "Helping you to stay afloat"

What I would suggest is that you talk to your roommate and see if she knows if there is anything that triggers her snoring, such as sleeping on her back or side. If she doesn't, then one thing you could do is get some noise canceling headphones and listen to some soft music.
--Ray

This week's dilemma presents a very tough and touchy subject. It's never fun to try and fall asleep when there is someone snoring and keeping you awake. However, you don't want to risk the friendship that you have built from the beginning of the year either. Your decision must come down to how bad the snoring is and how you think your roommate would react if you told her. If she would be ok with it and try some method of reducing her snoring, then try that approach in the kindest way you can. On the other hand, if she would overreact and think you were trying to hurt her feelings, it would be a safe bet to just stick to the ear plugs since there is only a month and a half left of school. I hope this helps.
--John
**Next Week's #1 Dilemma**

While I was driving back from Christmas break I encountered an icy spot and accidentally slid into a guardrail. At the time I was OK, and so was the guardrail. When I checked the damage it was minimal, however, the dent has gotten a lot bigger recently. I don't know what happened to make the dent bigger, but I want it fixed. Like many students who live in the dorms, I park my car for a week or so at a time. In that time frame it would be easy to be hit in the parking lot. If I were to tell my insurance company that someone hit me but didn't leave any contact information, they would cover the cost of repairing the dent. Would it be morally permissible for me to tell a white lie, especially since I've paid enough in insurance bills to cover the cost of repair on my own?

--Dent Out of Shape

**Next Week's #2 Dilemma**

I have a problem that I need help with: it has to do with academic honesty and what would be considered cheating. I am in a programming class which generally has weekly assignments due. I also have a friend who took this class previously, who offered me his versions of the programming assignments, some of which are being repeated this semester. I turned him down at first, figuring it out for myself, but as the difficulty in the course ramps up, I am considering seeking help from this peer of mine and seeing how he went about creating his code. It wouldn't be unlike having the answers in the back of the book, like in calculus, so I'm wondering if it would be ethical to accept his copies of the programs and swear not to just copy. With that in mind, though, would it really be ethical for me to accept these solutions? Is it technically a breach of academic honesty/cheating? I'm hoping outside opinions will help me solve this dilemma.

--Struggling Programmer