



# UNIT-11      Understanding Moral Development

## Learning Outcomes

**By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:**

- ✓ Discuss the stages of moral growth in children.
- ✓ Evaluate the stages of moral reasoning: Preschool to Adulthood.
- ✓ Describe Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

## Unit 7

# Understanding Moral Development

### Introduction

As children develop their normal thinking skills, they are expected to follow the usual rules that the world sets. Psychological studies of moral development differ in great deal on how moral development happens. Freud suggests that the quality of relationship the child has with their parents has a huge effect about the way the child grows mentally as a person. However, the Social Learning Theory implies that children first learn how to behave in the right way by modelling (copying acceptable adult actions). Cognitive- Developmental Studies suggest that a child's ability to reason in the correct way depends upon their basic thinking skills. All of the studies, although they are quite different from each other, help us in our ability to understand moral development.

### Stages of Moral Growth of Children

In Moral Development, children go through five stages. Moral growth does not take place without some guidance from parents, which differs from physical growth. To develop into a morally good person, a child has to be provided a decent foundation at every stage.

#### Stage 1: Infancy

An infant does not have the space to moralize, apart from having a feel of good or bad as those feelings apply to them. After nine months of being looked after inside the womb, a baby comes into the world waiting for nurturing to continue. Never having been hungry, the baby understands that hunger is wrong; it is not pleasant. Never having been not looked after, the baby finds loneliness to be wrong; it is frightening. The baby feels that being ignored is wrong. Being held, at the breast, and responded to, feels right! The baby feels that they have the parents' full attention and they form a feeling of rightness, which should become their 'norm'.

#### Stage 2: Toddler Years

By eighteen months, a realisation of 'being around others' starts. Toddlers realise that everybody shares the world; other people have things they need and opportunities too. The house they live in has 'rules', which they have to learn to be moral, which can be frustrating. The child does not have the knowledge to judge something as right or wrong; they are only guided by what people tell them, which challenges with their mental ability to do what they want. A child does not notice that they hurt someone if they hit them at this stage. Hitting is bad because their parents tell them so, or because there is a consequence for the action. Providing on how parents put across the behaviour they want, the toddler realises that obedience to adults is needed.

### Stage 3: Pre-Schoolers (Children from Three Years Old to Seven Years Old)

A big change in moral development takes place around this time; the child starts to learn family values. What is important to the parents becomes important to them. The six-year old might say to a friend, "In our family, we do ..." These are the child's benchmarks. Once these norms are installed in the child's mind, the child's behaviour can be enforced by these internal rules, with some reminding from their parents. Later, in the third stage, children start to understand the thought of the Golden Rule and to take into account how their actions affect other people and that others have rights and opinions too, and how to be considerate. Children from three to seven years of age expect older people to be in charge. They understand the portrayal of child and adult, and need to observe sensible behaviour from adults. They grasp consequences and can understand the when-then connection: when I misbehave, then this occurs. The bonded child has good behaviour because they have had several years of positive guidance. The unconnected child might work from the thought of "Whatever I do is okay as long as I don't get caught."

### Stage 4: Seven Years Old to Ten Years Old

At this stage, children start to question whether parents and teachers are correct. They think that these people in charge do not know everything. They have the most respect for people who are decent and know how to take control. Power is not threatening to the child, but needed for social living. They think that children should listen to parents. School-age children think that if they break a rule they should be put right. This strong feeling of "should do" and "should not do" sets some children up to gossip. Seven-to-ten-year-olds have a good feeling of fairness, understand the importance of rules and want to take part in making the rules. They start to think that children have opinions too, and they begin to pick up on which values suit those most - a sort of 'what is in it for me' stage. Parents can use this feeling of equality and campaign for equality to their advantage: "Yes, I'll drive your friends to the movie if you agree to help me with the housework." These deals make sense to this age of child. This also starts the stage where children are able to understand religious morals.

### Stage 5: Pre-teens and Teens

Most pre-teens and teenagers try to be popular. They are prone to peer pressure and peer values. As they continue to pick out which values develop into part of themselves and which they will dismiss, they might try out different value systems to see which ones fit. This child is more capable of complex reasoning about moral values and starts to be captivated in what is good for society. Children might see parents more as consultants than as powerful authority figures.

## The Stages of Moral Reasoning: Preschool to Adulthood

The Stages of Moral Reasoning start in the pre-school years and might still be growing in adulthood. The table (on the next page) provides a summary of these stages. These sections are studies of right and wrong that we take around in our minds as children, teenagers, or adults. Each stage or study has a different concept of what is right and a different thought of the explanation of why a person should be good. Every new stage of moral reasoning brings a person one step closer to a completely formed morality of respect.

For every stage, the table also implies general fair developmental goals: that is, the approximate age period when children of standard intelligence, growing up in a caring and enjoyable moral environment, have a great chance of getting a particular stage.

Look at this chart for a minute. You are a massive section of your child's moral environment, but you are not the only influence on your child's stride to success through these stages of moral reasoning. Your child's general brightness and variety of social interaction (friendships, participation in groups) are important as well. As children age, the social and intellectual experiences past the family are especially vital in forming the society-wide big picture that is a part of stage 4, as well as stage 5.

What do these sections of moral reasoning mean? They tell us, first of all, that children are not young adults. Their thoughts are different from our thoughts. They do not view the world as the same world as the adults do.

### The Stages of Moral Reasoning

*(Ages provide acceptable developmental expectations for a child of standard intelligence developing in a caring moral environment.)*

STAGE 0: EGOCENTRIC REASONING (preschool years – around four years of age)	What is Right:	I should get what I request.
	Reason to be good:	To get treats and not face consequences.
STAGE 1: UNQUESTIONED OBEDIENCE (around kindergarten age)	What is Right:	I should do what I am requested to do.
	Reason to be good:	To make sure I do not get into trouble.
STAGE 2: WHAT'S-IN-IT-FOR ME FAIRNESS (early elementary grades)	What is Right:	I should do what is best for me but be respectful to those who are respectful to me.
	Reason to be good:	Self-interest: What do I get out of this?
STAGE 3: INTERPERSONAL CONFORMITY (middle-to-upper elementary grades and early-to-mid teenage years)	What is Right:	I should be a good person and live up to the requirements of people I know and look out for.
	Reason to be good:	So that other people will think well of me (social approval) and I can think I am doing good things (self-esteem)
STAGE 4: RESPONSIBILITY TO "THE SYSTEM" (high-school years or late teenage years)	What is Right:	I should complete my responsibilities to the social or value system I belong to.

	Reason to be good:	To stop the system from collapsing and to keep self-respect as somebody
		who meets my expectations.
STAGE 5: PRINCIPLED CONSCIENCE (young adulthood)	What is Right:	I should show the as much possible respect as I can for the rights of every human being and I should care for a system that protects people's rights.
	Reason to be good:	The responsibility of moral feelings to respond in accordance with the action of respect for every individual person.

**Table: 11.1** - \*Stages 1 through 5 are adapted from Lawrence Kohlberg's *Stages of Moral Reasoning as described in Kohlberg(1975, 1978, and 1981)*; Stage 0 is adapted from William Damon(1977) and Robert Selman(1980).

## Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

### Biographical Introduction

A great piece of research in the Piagetian tradition is the work by Lawrence Kohlberg. Kohlberg has worked on moral development and he designed a stage theory of moral thinking was much more developed by Piaget's first ideas.

Kohlberg was born in 1927. He grew up in Bronxville, New York and he went to the Andover Academy in Massachusetts. This was private high school for intelligent and normally rich students. He did not attend college straight away, but he went to help the Israeli cause instead, in which he was shaped into a Second Engineer role on an old truck, transferring refugees from places in Europe to Israel. After this, in 1948, he registered at the University of Chicago, where he achieved incredible results. This meant that he did not have to take a lot of units in order to get his bachelor's degree. He got his degree in one year. He enrolled at Chicago for to study psychology as a post-graduate. He originally wanted to become a clinical psychologist. However, he became interested in Piaget and began questioning children and adolescents about moral issues. This work resulted in him obtaining his doctoral dissertation in 1958, the first part of his new section study.

Kohlberg is an informal, modest man who also very clever. He has thought long and deeply about a large amount of problems in psychology and philosophy. He has done a lot to help others respect the insight of many of the 'old psychologists', which includes: Rousseau, John Dewey, and James Mark Baldwin. Kohlberg has taught at the University of Chicago for six years, from 1962 to 1968. He then went to teach at Harvard University, where he has been present since 1968.

### Piaget's Stages of Moral Judgment

Piaget learned many parts about moral judgment, but many of his results fit into a two-stage suggestion. Children younger than ten or eleven years of age think about moral problems as one way, whereas older children think of them differently. Younger children think of rules as solid and complete. They think that

rules are passed down by adults or by God, and that nobody can alter them. The way the older child looks at rules is more realistic. They understand that it is fine to alter rules if everyone agrees. Rules are not fixed and complete but are principles that people use to get along with everyone.

At around the same time, 10 or 11 years of age, children's moral thinking changes in different ways. Younger children especially, base their moral thoughts more on punishment, whereas older children base their thoughts on intentions. For example, when a young child listens in about one boy who broke 15 cups trying to assist his mother and another boy who broke just one cup attempting to take cookies, the young child concludes that the first boy did worse. The child thinks about the number of things broken, whereas the older child judges wrongness of why the act occurred.

There are several details to Piaget's work on moral judgment, but he essentially discovered a combination of differences that take place between the ages of 10 and 12, just when the child starts to go through the normal stage of serious processes.

Intellectual growing, nevertheless, does not stand still in this section. This is just the start of formal processes, which consistently develop the age of 16 and beyond. You might expect thinking about moral issues to consistently develop throughout adulthood. Kohlberg, therefore, questioned children and adults about moral problems He did find sections that are much more developed and advanced than Piaget's. He came up with six sections .Only the first three stages are somewhat similar to Piaget's stages.

### **Kohlberg's Method**

Kohlberg's (1958) sample was made up of seventy-two boys, from both middle and lower class families in Chicago. They were ages ten, thirteen, and sixteen. He later added to his sample younger children, juveniles and males and females from many American cities and from other countries (1963 and 1970). The interview is made up of a group of problems including the following:

#### **Heinz Steals the Drug**

In Europe, a woman was close to passing away from a very rare form of cancer. There was one type of medicine that the doctors thought may save her. It was a type of radium that a medical researcher in the same place had found not too long before. The drug was expensive to manufacture, but the researcher was wanting ten times what the medicine cost him to make. He paid \$200 for the radium and wanted

\$2,000 for a small amount of the medicine. The patient's husband, Heinz, went to everybody he knew to borrow the money, but he could only gather around \$ 1,000. He told the researcher that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it for less or let him pay another day. But the researcher said stubbornly: "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." Heinz felt had no other option but to rob a store to steal money for the drug. Should the husband have done that?

Kohlberg is not concerned about whether the person says "yes" or "no" to the problem but he cares more about the explanation behind the answer. The questioner wants to understand the answer the person thinks about whether Heinz had the right to steal the medicine or not. The interview order of

questions then asks new questions to help the interviewer understand the child's explanation. For example, children are questioned if Heinz had a right to take the drug, if he was not taking into account the researcher's rights and what time in jail the judge should sentence him to once he was found. Once again, the main interest is with the explanation behind the opinions. The questioning then goes on to give more problems to get a good idea of a person's moral thinking.

Once Kohlberg had sorted out the variety of responses into sections, he wanted to find out whether his classification was *reliable*. In particular, he wanted to find out if others would score the answers in the same way. Other people independently scored a set of answers, and he worked out the degree to which all raters concurred. This procedure is called *interrater reliability*. Kohlberg saw that these agreements were high, as he has in his study, but whenever investigators use Kohlberg's interview, they also should check for interrater reliability before rating the whole sample.

## Kohlberg's Six Stages

### Level 1. Pre Conventional Morality

#### Stage 1: Obedience and Punishment Orientation

Kohlberg's stage 1 has similarities to Piaget's first section of moral thought. The child suggests that people in power hand down a solid group of rules which they must follow. To the Heinz problem, the child usually says that Heinz was wrong to steal the medicine because "It is against the law", or "It is bad to steal", as if this were all there were about it. When asked to further explain, the child usually says in terms of the punishment involved, explaining that stealing is bad "because you will get punished" (Kohlberg, 1958).

Although most of children at section one oppose Heinz's theft, it is still possible for a young person to support the display and still give stage one a sense of explanation. For example, a child might say, "Heinz can steal it as he asked first and it is not like he stole something massive; he will not face consequences" (see Rest, 1973). Even though the child concurs with Heinz's display, the reasoning is still stage one; the worry is with what the police permit and punish.

Kohlberg calls stage 1 thinking 'pre-conventional' because children do not yet talk as members of society. Instead, they view morality as something outside to themselves, as that which the grown-up people say they have to do.

#### Stage 2: Individualism and Exchange

At this stage, children realise that there is not just one correct opinion that is thought of by the police. Different people have different opinions. Heinz said they might suggest, "I think it is right to take the drug, the researcher would not." Since everything is *relative*, each person is free to pursue their *individual* interests. One boy stated that Heinz may steal the medicine if he wanted his wife to stay alive, but that he does not have to if he desires to marry somebody younger and more attractive (Kohlberg, 1963, p. 24). Another boy said Heinz may steal the medicine because maybe they had children and he may need someone at home to nurture them. However, maybe he should not steal the medicine

because they may lock him up in jail for more years than he can take.

What is right for Heinz, then, is what matches his personal self-interests.

You may have realised that children at both stages one and two both discuss the subject punishment. However, they take it in differently. At stage one punishment is connected in the child's brain with wrongness; punishment says that disobedience is not right. In contrast, at stage two punishment is something nobody wants to get into.

Although stage two children sometimes sound unfair, they do have some sense of right action. This is an explanation of *fair exchange* or fair deals. The philosophy is returning favours - "If you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours." To the Heinz story, people say that Heinz was right to take the medicine because the researcher was not making a fair deal; he was "trying to rip Heinz off", or they may say that he should steal for his wife "because she might return the favour someday".

People at stage 2 are said to reason at the pre-conventional level because they talk as trapped individuals rather than as members of society. They see humans returning favours, but there is no coming together with the morals of the family or community.

## Level II. Conventional Morality

### Stage 3: Good Interpersonal Relationships

By this section, children, who by now are normally starting their teenage years, view morality as more than just basic deals. They think that people should meet the responsibilities of the family and community, and behave in an acceptable way. People often argue that Heinz was right to steal the medicine because "He was a good man for wanting to save her", and "His motives were decent because he was saving the life of his partner." Even if Heinz did not love his wife, people often respond with "I do not believe any husband should do nothing and watch his wife lose her life".

If Heinz's motives were right, the researchers were bad. Stage three subjects emphasize that the researcher was selfish, greedy, and only interested in himself, not another life. Sometimes the people get so angry with the researcher that they say that he should be put in jail.

A normal stage three response came from Don, who was thirteen years of age:

"It was really the researcher's fault, he was not fair, attempting to charge too much money and letting somebody lose their life. Heinz adored his wife and he desired to stop her from dying. I believe any individual would. I do not think they would put him in prison. The judge would look both sides and realise that the researcher was asking for a lot.

We see that Don explains the problem in terms of the actors' personality and motives. He talks about the loving husband, the unreasonable researcher and the fair judge. His explanation deserves the label 'conventional morality' because it suggests that the feeling conveyed would be mutual with the entire community - anybody would be correct to do what Heinz did.

As we stated earlier, there are similar features between Kohlberg's first three sections and Piaget's two sections. In both theories there is a movement from unquestioning obedience to a realistic view and to a concern for good reasoning. For Kohlberg, however, these movements take place in three stages, rather than two stages.

#### **Stage 4: Maintaining the Social Order**

Stage three reasoning is most effective in one-to-one situations with family or friends, where an individual can make a big difference to understand the other person's emotions. In contrast, at stage four the person becomes more engaged with society as a whole. Now the main focus is on following laws, respecting people with high status and carrying out responsibilities so that the social order is consistent. In relation to the Heinz story, many topics say they understand that Heinz's reasoning was right, but they cannot forget the robbery. If everybody started breaking the law because of good reasoning, the world would be full of madness and nobody would cope with themselves.

As one subject explained:

"If everybody did whatever they want, you would have chaos. The only factors we have to be civil with one another is the law in which people need to stay in certain boundaries. Society needs basic rules to lay the foundations of what behaviour is expected."

You will remember that stage one children also normally oppose robbing because it breaks the rules in society. Apparently, stage 1 and stage 4 people are giving the same answer, so we see here why Kohlberg requests that we must look into the reasoning behind the definite answer. Stage one children imply that "It's wrong to steal" and "It's against the law", but they cannot make any further judgment, apart from to say that stealing can get a person jailed. Stage four people on the other hand, have an idea of the laws for society as one thought which is more in-depth than a younger child.

### **Level III. Post-Conventional Morality**

#### **Stage 5: Social Contract and Individual Rights**

At stage four, individuals want to keep society working. Nevertheless, a nicely running society is not always a great one. A society may be efficient, but it misses the moral point. At stage five, people start to question, "What makes a great community?" They start to consider society in a very deep way, taking their eye off their own society and taking into account the rights and morals that a community should consider. They then evaluate current communities in terms of these pre-considerations.

Stage five people believe that a good society is best understood as a social idea into which people enter to work to benefit themselves and many others. They understand that different social groups within a community will have different morals, but they think that all normal people would concur on two points. Firstly, they would all want standard *rights* to be protected. Secondly, they would like to have some democratic steps for changing unreasonable law and for making the community a better place.

In another response to the Heinz problem, stage five respondents make it clear that they do not normally favour breaking rules in society; laws are social deals that we follow with no arguments until we

can alter them. However, the wife's living rights is a moral right that has to be protected. Therefore, stage five people sometimes defend Heinz's robbery in strong language:

"It is the husband's responsibility to save the life of his wife. Life means more than an object."

Stage five people, then, talk about values and opportunities that take some priority over some rules. Kohlberg insists, however, that we do not look at people to be at stage five over their articulation. We need to look at their social viewpoint and explanation. At stage four, people sometimes talk about the right to live but for them this right is solidified by the power of their social or religious belonging. If their group considered objects over life, they would as well. At stage five, in contrast, people are making more of a single effort to think out what any community should accept. They often answer that having no objects has a small meaning without life. They are trying to determine logically what a society ought to be like.

### Stage 6: Universal Principles

Stage five respondents are working for an idea of the decent community. They suggest that we need to:

- a. Protect rights of everybody
- b. Work out disputes through democratic ways

Kohlberg's idea of punishment follows that of two researchers Kant and Rawls, as well as role model moral leaders such as: Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King. Punishment of living people requires examining the actions of all parties involved, respecting the simple manners of all people as individuals. The procedures of law are therefore worldwide; they apply to everyone. We would not appeal for a rule that helps some people but harms other people. The procedures of law direct us towards decisions related to an equal friendliness for all.

In the real world, Kohlberg says, we can reach decisions by viewing a situation from another person's position. In the Heinz problem, this would result in all parties - the researcher, the wife and Heinz - taking the characters of the other people. To do this people can assume a lack of knowledge, acting as if they do not know which character they will eventually get. If the researcher did this, even he would realise that living must take first choice over property. Therefore, they would all agree that the wife must be saved - this would be the fairest solution. Such a solution, we must note, requires not only impartiality, but the principle that everyone is given full and equal respect. If the wife were considered of less value than the others, a just solution could not be reached.

Kohlberg had been rating some of his topics at stage six, but he has for the time being halted doing so. He and other psychologists had not been looking for people who consistently developed at this part of life. Also, Kohlberg had come to an overall conclusion that his questioning problems are wasteful for looking at the difference between stage five and stage six thoughts. He thinks that subjects at stage six had a better understanding and wider idea of world morals but feels that his questioning fails to bring out this wider understanding. As a result, he has for now, dropped stage six from his rating procedure, citing it as 'theoretical stage' and rating all post-conventional answers as stage five.

In theory, one problem that changes stage five from stage six is not obeying others. Stage five people would be shakier to show civil disobedience because of the social contract, and to modifying rules through agreements. Only when a personal right is easily seen at stake does harming the legal rules seem right. At stage six, in contrast, following a law makes the cause for civil disobedience heavier and wider. Martin Luther King, for example, stated that legal rules are valid only for so long as they are rooted in justice and that a following of justice comes with a right to not follow unjust laws. King also stated that the normal average need for legal rules and government actions (stages four and five), and he was therefore fine about the consequences of his actions. Martin Luther King said he thought that the higher basis of justice needs civil disobedience.

## Introduction to Theories of Child Development

The stages of life have been researched from psychological viewpoint, each related to a particular theoretical opinion. We have chosen to apply these well-known theories to the topic of child moral development.

Here are the theories chosen:

### The Social Learning Theory

Social learning experts (Bandura is one example) state that children first study how to behave morally through a model, such as a teacher or an older sibling.

Social learning experts think that children's moral development can be helped by making sure that:

- the children's acceptable behaviour is rewarded by positive reinforcements (praise or treats)
- the children's unacceptable behaviour is given by punishment (a ten minute time out or banning of using certain things)

### Modelling

Modelling is when children copy suitable adult behaviour.

Children are most likely to imitate models that are:

- kind and attentive
- authoritative (children often imitate older people because they look to have a lot of power)
- willing to do what they say

### Punishment

Tough punishment, such as shouting, should only be used for immediate obedience. This could be used to stop a child going near boiled water, for example.

Punishment works best when it is:

- consistent
- accompanied with rationale

## The Cognitive Developmental Theory

Cognitive Developmental experts suggest that a child's skill to agree morally depend on their intelligence of normal thinking capacities.

Piaget studied moral development in two different ways:

- He offered moral issues to children and studied their answers
- He viewed how children used rules in the games they played

Piaget claimed that children start an interest on rules in different times of the game:

- Pre-schoolers play for fun and do not care about rules
- Six year olds think that rules are fixed and that you cannot change them
- Ten year olds recognise that rules can be altered

Piaget states that children change in answer to moral problems depending what section of moral development they are in.

- Children, who are younger than the age of ten, are at the section of growth is known as moral realism. They make a decision on whether an action was right or wrong depending on how much was wrecked regardless of the motives behind the action.
- Furthermore, children move onto a section of moral reasoning called moral relativism. Moral relativism considers motives and does not think that every bad action should be punished or negatively reinforced. For example, if a girl broke her sister's toy she should only face consequences if she broke the toy on purpose.
- Kohlberg questioned males, between the ages of ten and sixteen, about moral problems to study moral development. Through studying the findings, Kohlberg determined that there were three different stages of moral reasoning.
- The first stage, called the Pre-Conventional Level, is when the child's acts are done in order to gain a treat or to not receive punishment.
- At the second stage, the Conventional Section, children's moral decisions are made by imitating society. The child desires to be an important figure and therefore wants to follow the laws of the country.
- Finally, at the Post-Conventional Stage, the child is more open-minded. They are able to decide which rules can be altered, but the child also takes into account morals such as human dignity to be important.

## Freud's Theory of Psychosexual Development

There are two big sections to Freud's Theory of Child Development. These are answered and then, the enquiry of moral development is answered.

### Freud's Organisation of the Mind

Freud suggests that the mind has three sections:

### The Id

- works by gut instincts
- first part to grow
- works on what feels nice
- the Id works on wishes and hopefulness
- deals with anger and sexual behaviour
- encourages the thought of dreams

### The Ego

- works on the basis of the real world
- the area which makes direct contact with reality
- looks to find normal ways to solve things
- works on second thoughts
- sensible

### The Superego

- thoughts of morals and values in society
- looks for the most ideal action
- looks out for conformity
- has the conscience
- the 'Ego Ideal'

### The Stages of Development Simplified

Age in years	Stage	Characteristics
0-16 months	oral	Id is made Ego is made later Behaviour: sucking, biting. conflict: biting against the fear of punishment
6 months - 4 years	anal	Ego is much stronger Superego begins to be made behaviour: conflict brings anger
3 years - 6 or 7 years	phallic	Ego continues to be made Superego is completely made at the end of the stage Behaviour: pleasure is localised to external genital areas, Oedipal behaviour (feeling attracted to the opposite sex parent is began)
6-12 years	latency	Little sexual actions Repression begins to settle cruelty and aggressive behaviour kicks in
12 and onwards	genital	Consistency of adolescence behaviour, solving of problems at past stages

Table: 11.2

In each of his sections, Freud included sub-sections, modes of pleasure finding, cathexes personality structure, anger, problems, fixations, and adolescence features resulting from fixation at that section.

### **What did Freud believe about Moral Development?**

Freud thought that the Moral Development starts in the phallic stage. The child wants to have their opposite sex parent all to themselves and feels annoyed by the same sex parent. This is known as the Oedipus/Electra conflict. To cope with these uncomfortable feelings and avoid negative consequences, the child develops the superego through aligning themselves with the parent of the same sex. They copy their parent's behaviour, thereby coinciding with the community's normality. Finally, the children turn the annoyed emotions towards themselves, which results in feeling bad every time the superego is ignored, and the child follows their id values.

Freud believed that children learn their morals and values from their parents, in the attempt to stop bad feelings from their superego. However, according to research his theory does not make sense.

### **Further Reading:**

- ✓ *Empathy and Moral Development: Implications for Caring and Justice, (2001), By Martin L. Hoffman*
- ✓ *Democracy and Moral Development, (1991), By David L. Norton*
- ✓ *Moral Development: Caring voices and women's moral frames, (1994), By Bill Puka*