

**‘Consequentialist’** theories of ethics hold that no action is wrong merely because of the nature of the action in-itself or the motive of the actor. The **ONLY** thing that makes an action morally wrong / prohibited would be the bad / worse consequences of the action and the **ONLY** thing that makes an action morally right / required are the good / better consequences of the action.

Hence, it could be morally right or required to lie or to break a promise if the consequences of doing so would be good / better than telling the truth or keeping the promise.

**Consequentialist theories:**

**Ethical Egoism**

**Utilitarianism**

**‘Deontological’** theories of ethics hold that actions are morally right / required or wrong / prohibited because of the motive (duty) behind the action or *the nature of the action in itself* (as one’s ‘duty’). An action with bad / worse consequences could be right / required and an action with good / better consequences could be wrong / prohibited because the action is judged to be your duty or “right / wrong in itself.”

Thus Immanuel Kant, for instance, held that one should always tell the truth – even to an ‘inquiring murderer’ who would use that truth to murder an innocent person.

**Deontological theories:**

**Divine Command**

**Natural Law**

**Kantian Ethics**