Chapter 11

1. A moral statement is a statement asserting that an action is right or wrong (moral or immoral) or that something (such as a person or motive) is good or bad.

2. At least one premise is a moral statement that asserts a general moral principle or moral standard. At least one premise makes a nonmoral claim. And the conclusion is a moral statement, or judgment, about a particular case (usually a particular kind of action).

3. Consistency with our considered moral judgments; consistency with our experience of the moral life; workability in real-life situations.

4. By trying to think of counterexamples to it.

5. No.

6. Of course we should have offered protection to the Kurds. They were in grave danger and they asked for our help. And it is our duty to offer protection to people if they are in grave danger and they request our help.

7. The supplement manufacturers knew that the herb ephedra was dangerous. If a company is aware that its product is dangerous, it is obligated to remove it from the market. So they should have removed it from the market.

8. The Democrats insulted the president. Insults to the president should never be allowed. They should have never been allowed to do that.

9. The Smiths were consenting adults who were having sex in the privacy of their own home. Sex between consenting adults in the privacy of their own home is morally permissible. These actions by the Smiths are morally permissible.

10. Randi killed his neighbor, and the killing was not in self-defense. Killing someone except in self-defense is morally wrong. He should not have committed such an act.

11. Lying is wrong under all circumstances. Counterexample: Lying to save the lives of a thousand people.

12. People who commit crimes should not be punished—they should be retrained to act legally. Counterexample: Adolf Hitler committed massive crimes against humanity. Wasn’t he deserving of punishment?

13. All humans, whatever their circumstances, have full moral rights. Counterexample: Do insane individuals have full moral rights? Murderers? People in comas?

14. All creatures that are alive and sensitive to stimulation are equally valuable and should be accorded equal respect. Counterexample: Is it just as wrong to kill a goldfish as it is a horse? Should we give turtles the same respect we give to children?

15. The morally right action is the one that produces the most happiness, everyone considered. Counterexample: Is it morally right to arbitrarily imprison and torture an innocent person if doing so will produce the most happiness for the most people?
16. Right actions are those that are in one’s own self-interest. *Counterexample: Murdering a friend could conceivably be in your own best interest—would it therefore be morally permissible?*

17. Medical experimentation on a patient without her consent. *Defense: If the experimentation could save hundreds of lives and would have no major negative consequences for the experimenters or for society, it would be justified.*

18. Taking food, shelter, and other resources from rich people and distributing them equally among poor people. *Defense: A more equal distribution of resources would result in greater happiness for a greater number.*

19. Any form of expression or speech that offends people of faith should not be tolerated. *Penthouse magazine definitely offends people of faith. Ban it!* *Evaluation: The first premise is dubious, for it would have us violate the autonomy of persons—by, for example, dramatically curtailing freedom of speech.*

20. Anyone who disagrees with the basic moral dictums of the prevailing culture should be censored. Dr. Tilden’s graduation speech clearly was inconsistent with the prevailing moral opinions on campus. She should be reprimanded. *Evaluation: The first premise runs counter to several plausible moral principles, including respect for autonomy, freedom of speech and conscience, and tolerance.*