

Resumen

La bioética se ha presentado como un sistema práctico de principios y normas que pueden utilizarse para resolver problemas éticos en la atención sanitaria. Se basa en la reflexión racional, que da lugar a argumentos y justificaciones de las decisiones, y sigue procedimientos claros de toma de decisiones. Cada vez más es criticada por ser abstracta y deductiva, por descuidar contextos y situaciones concretos y variables, y por no tener en cuenta las emociones, los sentimientos y la experiencia moral. En este contexto, la deliberación se propone como un método más apropiado de análisis ético.

Se requiere también una visión amplia de la deliberación que no sólo se centre en el razonamiento moral, sino también en los procesos intuitivos y emocionales del juicio moral. La deliberación es un proceso social que asume que la ética es un proceso dialógico en el que las intuiciones y razones morales se discuten críticamente en busca de lo común.

El entrenamiento de la deliberación en la enseñanza de la bioética debe tener en cuenta las sutilezas del proceso deliberativo: alimentar la sensibilidad moral; estudiar historias para adquirir “competencia narrativa”; desarrollar el punto de vista moral, etc. El razonamiento moral en la deliberación no consiste simplemente en aplicar principios y normas, sino en una interacción social e interpersonal en la que los juicios intuitivos de los participantes se confrontan con razones morales post hoc aportadas por los demás.

Palabras clave: deliberación, sensibilidad moral, imaginación moral, competencia narrativa, toma de decisiones, principios, valores, emociones.

Abstract

Bioethics has presented itself as practical system of principles and rules, that can be used to solve ethical problems in healthcare. It is based on rational reflection,

resulting in arguments and justifications for decisions, and following clear procedures of decision-making. It is increasingly criticized for being abstract and deductive, neglecting concrete and varying contexts and situations, and disregarding emotions, feelings, and moral experience. Against this backdrop, deliberation is proposed as a more appropriate method of ethical analysis.

A broad view of deliberation is also required that not only focused on moral reasoning but also on intuitive, emotional processes of moral judging. Deliberation is a social process that assumes that ethics is a dialogical process in which moral intuitions and reasons are critically discussed in search of commonality.

Training of deliberation in bioethics education should take into account the subtleties of the deliberative process: to nurture moral sensitivity; to study stories to acquire ‘narrative competence’; to develop the moral point of view, etc. Moral reasoning in deliberation is not simply applying principles and rules but a social and interpersonal interaction in which the intuitive judgments of participants are confronted with post hoc moral reasons provided by each other.

Keywords: deliberation, moral sensitivity, moral imagination, narrative competence, decision-making, principles, values, emotions

■ What is deliberation

When we are confronted with health problems, disease, disability or pain we face different options: whether to seek help, when, by whom and what kind of assistance. The decision to consult a healthcare practitioner is not impulsive, although it can be influenced by fear and anxiety. It is a deliberate action after considering the various options. The consulted practitioner is exploring what is bothering us, and will discuss with us potential remedies and treatments weighing the advantages and disadvantages of various courses of action, exploring what we prefer and what will be the best action for us. In everyday life, we cannot avoid making choices because there are always different things we can do. Not all choices are deliberate; we do many things auto-

matically or because we are used to do them. But at least more important choices demand deliberation, for example because our normal routines are disturbed or the consequences of inaction can be serious as is the case when we do not feel well. We then deliberate with ourselves, considering and weighing various alternatives, and justifying a decision made. We also deliberate with others such as family members or friends, and with consulted care professionals about what will be the best to do.

Deliberation is regarded as typical for human beings; they are “deliberating animals” (Gracia, 2016, 813). The above example highlights the characteristics of deliberation. It is the careful weighing of reasons for and against an act or decision. It can be done in dialogue with ourselves (our conscience) and with others, exchang-