

**COMMUNICATION  
ETHICS  
ACROSS CULTURAL  
DIFFERENCES**

# THE NATIONAL COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

## Credo for Ethical Communication

- ⊙ - truthfulness, accuracy, honesty are essential to the integrity of communication;
- ⊙ - endorse freedom of expression, diversity of perspective, and tolerance of dissent to achieve the informed and responsible decision making fundamental to a civil society;

- ⦿ - strive to understand and respect other communicators before evaluating and responding to their messages;
- ⦿ - access to communication resources and opportunities are necessary to fulfill human potential and contribute to the well being of families, communities, and society;

- ⊙ - promote communication climates of caring and mutual understanding that respect the unique needs and characteristics of individual communicators;
- ⊙ - condemn communication that degrades individuals and humanity through distortion, intolerance, intimidation, coercion, hatred, and violence;

- ⊙ - commit to the courageous expression of personal convictions in pursuit of fairness and justice;
- ⊙ - advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings when facing significant choices while also respecting privacy and confidentiality;

- ⊙ - unethical communication threatens the quality of all communication and consequently the well being of individuals and the society in which we live;
- ⊙ - accept responsibility for the short- and long-term consequences for our own communication and expect the same of others.



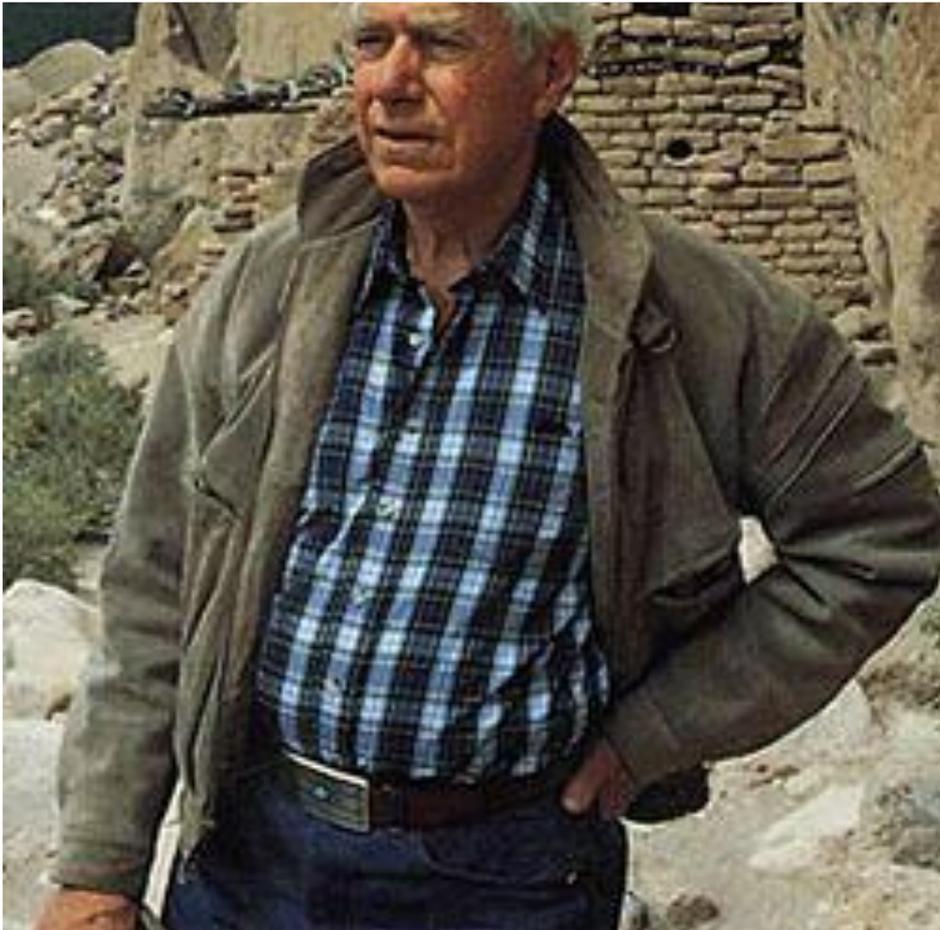
## **Shuter's types of ethics:**

Communicator ethics.

Message ethics.

Receiver/audience ethics.

## “FIVE GOLDEN APPROACHES” TO ETHICS



**The golden purse (ethical egoism):** this approach is based *on what works best for me or my group* (organization, country).

◎ **The golden consequence (utilitarianism):** if something has “utility” that means it is “useful” or “pragmatic”. The difference between this and egoism is that this approach is focused on what works for the most people involved. That is, it seeks *the greatest good for the greatest number of people*.

◎ **The golden law (categorical imperative/divine right).** This approach suggests that there is *a single right or wrong that does not differ by context or situation*.

◎ **The golden rule.** It states: *do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*

***The platinum rule***

Rather than treating others as you want to be treated, treat them *as you think they would want to be treated.*

◎ **The golden mean.** Aristotle believed that the best choices *lie between extremes in any situation*, and that extremes should be avoided. The “golden mean” refers to the “average” or “mean” between extreme behaviors.

# DAVID KALE'S PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS

## ⊙ *Principle 1.*

“Ethical communicators address people of other cultures with the same respect that they would like to receive themselves”.

## ⊙ *Principle 2.*

“Ethical communicators seek to describe the world as they perceive it as accurately as possible”.

◎ ***Principle 3.***

“Ethical communicators encourage people of other cultures to express themselves in their uniqueness”.

◎ ***Principle 4.***

“Ethical communicators strive for identification with people of other cultures”.

**JUDITH N. MARTIN  
PRINCIPLES FOR  
ETHICAL  
COMMUNICATION**



**The Humanness  
Principle.** It means –  
*“Treat others as  
humans – that is,  
respect as persons”.*

- ◎ **The Dialogic principle.** The point here is *to understand other persons' perspective from their point of view, from their power position, and from their contextual perspective.* This can only happen through dialogue with them.

◎ **The principle of speaking “with” and “to”.** The main point here is for scholars who write about other cultures. Scholars must not simply “represent” others, but speak with them, to be “critical” about what they write, realizing their role in their writing. This principle deals with *self-reflexivity, listening, and dialogue.*

## CONCLUSION

- ◎ **Carl Wellman:** “An ethical system does not solve all one’s practical problems, but one cannot choose and act rationally without some explicit or implicit ethical system. An ethical theory doesn’t tell a person what to do in any given situation, but neither is it completely silent; it tells one what to consider in making up one’s mind what to do. The practical function of an ethical system is primarily to direct our attention to the relevant considerations, the reasons that determines the rightness or wrongness of any act.”