

QUEST

Sunday, June 29 at 9:15 in Dobkin Hall
Childcare Provided

Losing Our Practical Wisdom?



with Heidi Kaufman

We are often taught that good behavior is dependent on the following rules and if those don't work, punishment or incentives are our best option. But, what about practical wisdom when dealing with real life problems and people? Barry Schwartz makes the case that by being so overly focused on using rules and incentives to encourage good behavior or a successful outcome, we may be missing the wisdom and moral skills needed to bring out the best in all of us.

Please see one or both of the following TED talks with Barry Schwartz to prepare for the discussion

[Barry Schwartz: Our loss of wisdom | TED Talk](#)

https://www.ted.com/talks/barry_schwartz_using_our_practical_wisdom

Questions to Consider

What do you think about Barry's statement, "Rules and incentives may make things better in the short run, but they create a downward spiral that makes them worse in the long run. Moral skill is chipped away by an over-reliance on rules that deprives us of the opportunity to improvise and learn from our improvisations."

In both talks Barry provides many examples and stories of how critically important it can be to have moral skill, flexibility, and the ability to "bend the rules when finding the best solution to a problem or to help another human being."

- Did any of those examples especially resonate with you or have a meaningful impact on you?
- Have you also had similar experiences where it was clear that the rules and/or incentives were not enough and greater wisdom was called for?