

# Does the philosophy change you?

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 16, 2023 at 9:01 AM

[Quote from Eoghan Gardiner](#)

My problem is I really can't escape Catholic guilt. I wish I could.

I was raised Protestant, and wrestled with some guilt. Guilt in some situations can be good, such as if you say or do something by mistake to harm a friend, neighbor, or community member, then your conscience kicks in to help you think of how you can restore your inter-connection and the relationships.

But the unnecessary guilt you were brought up with is a by-product of an ethical system which takes there to be hard and firm rules of conduct across the board, without any way to judge things according to unique situations. This kind of strict ethical thinking is what brought about the [Prohibition](#) in the US. It is a simplified way of determining what one should and shouldn't do, but is not the most wise way of functioning in the world because some entity (or religious authority) is deciding for everyone, rather than letting each person decide for themselves. And this would fall into [Kohlberg's level of Conventional Moral Reasoning](#).

Here are some ideas of how to deal with guilt...Perhaps the practice of noticing the guilt but then replacing it with positive thoughts, such as talking to it and saying that you are free to choose what is good for you. And you may benefit from contemplating a personalized list of what you consider "natural and necessary" for the health of the body, and "natural and necessary for happiness" (on this list of necessary for happiness remembering that you won't die if you can't have everything, but that it is perfectly natural to desire it) and third category of "natural but potentially harmful" (this would be things like sugar and alcohol so you want to close pay attention to the outcomes in this category) and a fourth category "unnatural and unnecessary" (grandiose desires for money and status). --Notice here that I have redefined the categories (and made 4 of them). And then remember to ask yourself: "What will happen to me if I get this or do this?, and what will happen to me if I don't get this or don't do this?"