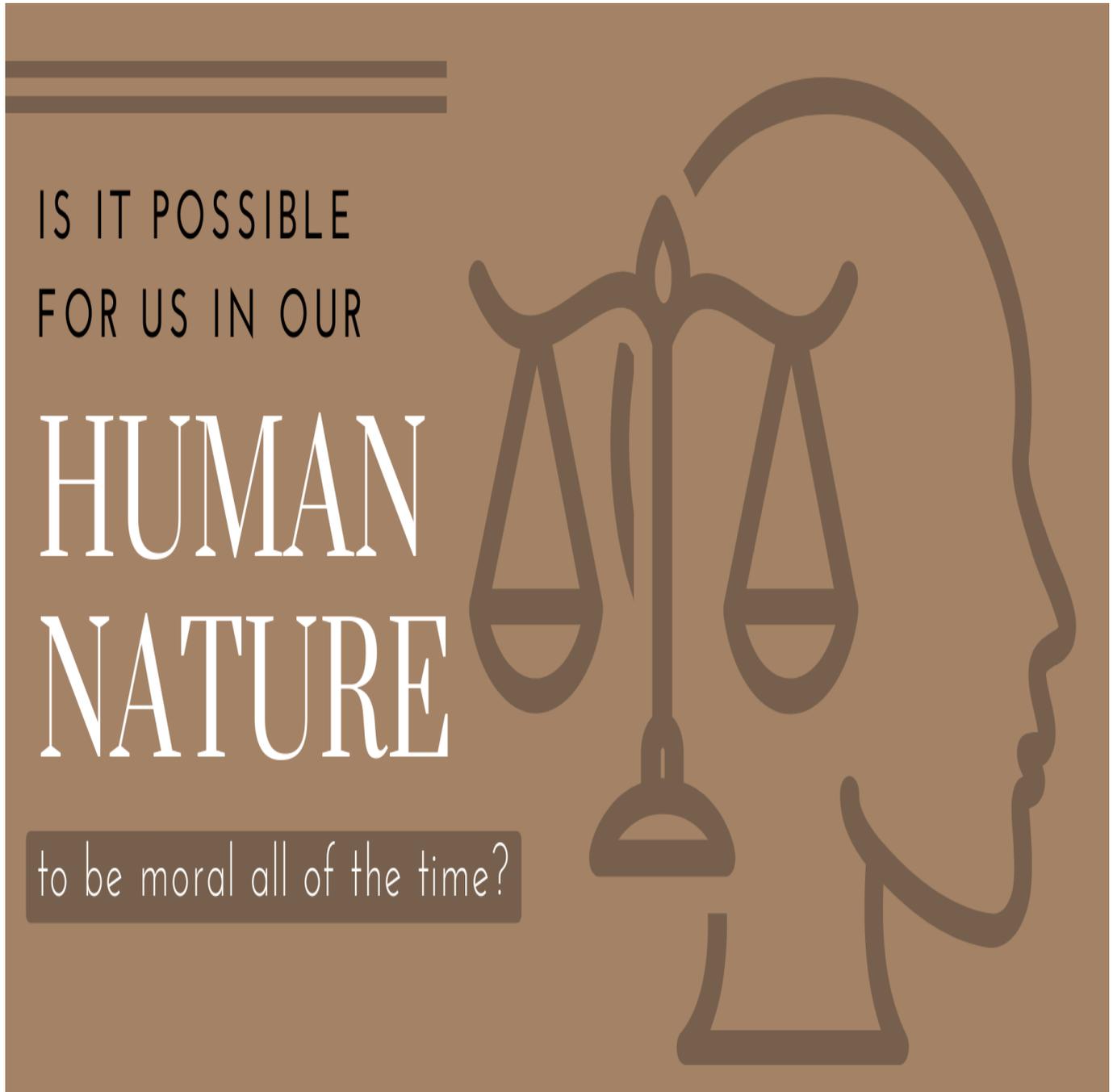Is it Possible for us in our Human Nature to be Moral All of the Time?

Description

Question:
Yes, we can be moral *some* of the time, but is it really possible to be moral *all* of the time?

Answer (by Melissa DiLernia):
This is a great question, and the answer holds so much promise for the futures of both you and me, as well as the whole entire world! While one hundred percent morality is generally thought to

be unattainable, let's look at that idea and see if it holds any truth.

We'll begin by considering two elements that the term "moral" entails:

1. Refraining from doing the wrong thing
2. Doing the right thing

Most people would agree that we can be moral (do the right thing and refrain from doing the wrong thing) some of the time, but most people would also say that there are times when we just can't help it, and we mess up! In those times when we do "mess up," it's often said, "Well, that's just human nature! Since we're human, we can't possibly do the right thing all of the time." This way of thinking is widespread. A common argument for the state of our immorality is based on the idea that sin (or wrong-doing) is in the nature of each and every one of us, stemming all the way back to Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden. Not only is it thought that humans are morally corrupt if we don't receive any help from God to be otherwise, but the argument goes even further by saying that despite all the help God could give us, humans are still doomed to sin at least once in a while. This idea has been so prevalent that it has even influenced those that are non-religious, as well. This influence has led many to the mindset that, in our human nature, we have no choice but to be sinners, and alas, we have an apparent lack of free will to do anything about it. This mindset steers us to deny responsibility for our own actions and behaviors, or, at the very least, influences us to deny the possibility that we could be moral all of the time. Blaming human nature for our struggle with morality is a cultural norm, whether we are religious or not. But what if we take a closer look; is this a logical way to think about the possibility of being moral all of the time? Does human nature actually necessitate immoral actions?

To begin, let's address the first element of the term "moral" – refraining from doing the wrong thing. I'd ask you to think about this: Is it possible for us as humans to stop doing certain things that we think are wrong? Can you think of a time when you or someone you know overcame a harmful habit or thought pattern? I'm sure we all can. And while it may not have been easy to do, overcoming was possible. If we can think of one instance in the past that we know overcoming was possible, what keeps us from overcoming in another instance? Are we, in our human nature, limited to overcoming only one singular harmful habit, trait, or thought pattern? Have you known anyone to ever overcome more than one of these? I hope we can all agree that we are not limited to overcoming only once in our life and/or in only one area of our life. When we really examine it, surely it is obvious that it really is possible to overcome an endless number of things. Consider this: every immoral act ever shunned by any human must be an act that is not compelled by human nature.

Now, let's take a look at the other component of morality – doing the right thing. For this one, can you bring to mind a time when you or someone else acted morally even in spite of pressure to not do so? You might be able to think of a time when someone you know sacrificed something for an undeserving person or maybe a time when someone went above and beyond the status quo. It can be easy to act morally in situations that seem to benefit us or when things are in our favor, but it can be more challenging at times when things are not. Does our human nature stop us from choosing to do something that may be a little more difficult? I think the answer is obvious: No, we are actually able to override our seemingly automatic tendencies and choose to take action in a direction that we consciously decide. And just as in the case of overcoming a harmful habit or thought pattern, if we can act morally one time in an unfavorable situation, what is stopping us from acting morally in another unfavorable situation? And another one after that? As we look at it this way, it seems that what is really keeping us from being moral all the time is not actually human nature, but the false idea that we, in our human nature, are not capable of overcoming in all areas

of our lives or being moral all the time, in every situation. Clearly, every moral act ever done by any human must be an act that human nature allows.

I hope it is plain to see that any moral act that has been done by a human is allowed by human nature and any immoral act that has been resisted by a human is not required by human nature. In other words, it actually *is* possible for us in our human nature to be purely moral all of the time. All of our acts can be moral acts; none of our acts have to be immoral acts. While the purpose of this article is simply to determine whether or not this *is* possible, Iâ??d like to point you to an incredible resource that explores the â??howâ?• of this topic even further â?? â?•Are You Minding What Matters?â?• I think youâ??ll find it extremely helpful!

With all that said, I think we can see that, yes, it is possible for us in our human nature to be purely moral ALL of the time. And actually understanding that itâ??s one hundred percent possible makes all the difference. Once we can recognize our true moral potential and recognize that being moral ALL of the time is not an impossible concept, we can look for the means of becoming moral and can make the changes and choices in our lives that make it a reality, which will aid in leading others to do the same.