**Practical Wisdom**
Eleanor Stewart, PhD
John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre
Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry
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**Aristotle**
Phronesis: wisdom to know what to do in particular circumstances

Eudaemonia: long-lasting happiness that is the goal of life; human flourishing

**Aristotle’s forms of virtues**
- Character virtues
  - Courage
  - Temperance
  - Justice
  - Self-respect
- Intellectual virtues
  - Science
  - Art
  - Philosophy

**The Golden Mean**
- Virtues represent the mean between excess and deficiency
- Use rational judgment based on consideration of all the facts in a particular situation

**What does practical wisdom consist of?**
- Knowing what to do (do the right thing)
- Knowing why you do it (right reason)
- Knowing when to do (at the right time)
- Knowing to whom (to the right person)

**How does practical wisdom develop?**
- Aristotle > practice, experience, = habit
- Cognitive science > perception, emotion
A short story…

Why are you so angry?

Why is practical wisdom important? (challenges)

• As a counterbalance to:
  - Overreliance on evidence (especially when there is none)
  - Overreliance on experts (not thinking)
  - Overreliance on rules and procedures

Another story (or two)…

3 times, You’re Out!

It’s not what you think

Can practical wisdom be taught?

Sellman (2009) offers a re-direct
  - Can phronesis be learned?

What can we do?

• Community
• Stories
• Opportunities * (one last story)

And in the end…

Be like Mr. Dress-up
Selected references


Contact information:

Eleanor Stewart
John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre
5-16 University Terrace
University of Alberta

ges@ualberta.ca