**Key Terms**

*Ethical Choices*, Third Edition

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Chapter 6: Egoism

**completeness** *(Part II Introduction)* A criterion of theory assessment: a theory must support everything that the theory is supposed to be about; a complete ethical theory supports all meaningful moral claims and values.

**ethical egoism** An ethical theory that claims the only right act, for any particular situation, is what will most promote one’s self-interest.

**explanatory power** *(Part II Introduction)* A criterion of theory assessment: a theory should give us explanatory insight as to what makes something morally right or wrong, good or bad.

**jointly benefiting interests** To act on these interests is to act with the intention of benefiting others as well as oneself.

**moral confirmation** *(Part II Introduction)* A criterion of theory assessment: a theory should yield results that fit with our deepest, clearest, and most widely shared moral intuitions.

**practicability** *(Part II Introduction)* A criterion of theory assessment: a theory should be useful to us in actual applications by (a) being clear and precise, (b) furnishing helpful moral guidance, and (c) not generating irresolvable conflicts.

**prisoner’s dilemma** Two people face a mutual problem for which their choices’ outcomes depend on the other’s choice; acting in self-interest may forfeit the best outcome.

**psychological egoism** A psychological claim that we are only capable of choosing what we believe is in our own interest.

**self-benefiting interests** To act on these interests is to act solely with the intention of benefiting ourselves, not others.