

Case-Ex: “An Ethical Pause” (SFC Thompson)

Example Questions

Part 1

[Watch Part 1 of “An Ethical Pause”]

1. SFC Thompson doesn’t have long to make a decision. She contemplates her decision, “Do I sit here and leave this guy knowing he has a family? ... Or do I stop what I’m doing, take a 2.2 second pause behind this truck—even though it’s on fire—and pull him in?” When considering the ethical aspects of this situation, what options does SFC Thompson have to evaluate?
2. What personal and professional convictions factor into SFC Thompson’s decision making process? How do we make decisions in stressful environments that may conflict with our personal and professional identities?
3. What factors into a Soldier’s decision to help save the life of a civilian on the battlefield even at the potential cost of their own life?
4. What level of risk/reward justifies placing additional Soldiers’ lives at risk while engaged in combat operations and how is this determined?
5. SFC Thompson says of the Turkish man she contemplates helping, “He’s not from America, but he’s still a person. But you hear the radio saying, ‘move, move, move.’” What aspects of her personal and professional identity factors into SFC Thompson’s ability to make a quick decision?
6. How could SFC Thompson’s decision to stop affect the level of loyalty or trustworthiness between her and her fellow Soldiers?

Part 2

[Watch Part 2 of “An Ethical Pause”]

1. How did SFC Thompson use rules, potential outcomes and values to evaluate her options and commit to a decision?
2. What place do empathy and moral convictions have on the battlefield? What does this say about our profession and the way we fight?
3. In what ways could SFC Thompson’s decision to stop and not “push through” according to SOP have potentially undermined her leadership and should SFC Thompson have considered this in her decision making process?
4. What characteristics of a professional Soldier did SFC Thompson exhibit or fail to exhibit through her actions that day?