Discuss an ethical framework and apply it to a personal experience.

The scenario of domestic violence described in our literature brought to mind many similar past scenarios in the ER that I work, unfortunately. So often we are challenged by a case where we know abuse is occurring but the abused significant other either is scared to leave, not pressing charges or just is not ready to leave the situation because of thoughts that it will get better. Often, I have found myself in these scenarios and it is easy to find yourself anxious and overwhelmed. However, just as the literature presents, honest and clear communication are essential prerequisites for informed and responsible decision making. The skill of listening is just as crucial in effective communication. To listen well is to allow others the necessary time to form and present their thoughts and ideas. Many times I found when I listened well to victims of these acts, I could honestly and openly communicate with them and find that common, sensible ground together to make some helpful decisions. After listening and talking clearly with patient, I helped them to understand that I had to report the event regardless of their immediate or even continual refusal to not report the individual. Even though the principle-based approach of ethical decision-making is criticized as too formalistic, I think it is a good standard approach. We all are going to have different values but we all must have some sort of baseline.

It was interesting to read some of the ethical issues affecting APNs. Even though some of these we know of in the back of our minds, it made it “real” to me when I read them. I have truly witnessed moral distress when a NP is pressured to see an extensive number of patients or has a lack of power to effect change. Another huge struggle of the APN that I have witnessed and is also described more in our literature is that of helping patients discover ways to pay for and receive medications they need.

This comes back to why this class and classes like this are so important in our education. It brings to the forefront of our minds issues that we may find ourselves in until we are in our practice and prepares us on how to handle them when the issues arise. An understanding of contemporary approaches to ethics and bioethics enables the APN to appeal to a variety of perspectives in achieving a moral resolution. In the clinical setting, ethical decision making most often reflects a blend of various theories rather than the application of a single theory. The Code of Ethics for Nurses should be used as our standard. Throughout our education we should be introduced to value systems and undergo individual value clarification.

 Hamric, A.B., Spross, J.A.& Hanson, C.M., (2009). *Advanced practice nursing: An integrative approach.* (4th ed). St Louis, MO: Elsevier/Saunders.