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Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- Some areas of widespread agreement -- Distinguishing features of moral judgments -- Rationality and human nature -- Areas of moral disagreement -- Analogy between morality and grammar -- pt. I. The moral system -- Features of the moral system -- The moral rules -- The moral ideals -- General characteristics of moral rules -- To whom do the rules apply? -- Whom do the moral rules protect? -- Interpreting the rules -- 1. "Do not kill" -- 2. "Do not cause pain" -- 3. "Do not disable" -- 4. "Do not deprive of freedom" -- 5. "Do not deprive of pleasure" -- Summary of the first five rules -- 6. "Do not deceive" -- 7. "Keep your promises" -- 8. "Do not cheat" -- 9. "Obey the law" -- 10. "Do your duty" -- Violations of moral rules involve liability to punishment -- Justifying violations of the moral rules -- The two-step procedure for justifying violations of the moral rules -- The first step : using the morally relevant features to describe the act -- 1. Which moral rule is being violated? -- 2. Which evils or harms (including their kind, severity, probability, the length of time they will be suffered, and their distribution) are being (a) caused by the violation, (b) avoided (not caused) by the violation, or (c) prevented by the violation? -- 3. What are the desires and beliefs of the person

toward whom the rule is being violated? -- (a) What are the desires of the person toward whom the rule is being violated? -- (b) What are the beliefs of the person toward whom the rule is being violated? -- 4. Is the relationship between the person violating the rule and the persons toward whom the rule is being violated such that the former sometimes has a duty to violate moral rules with regard to the latter independently of their consent? -- 5. Which goods or benefits (including kind, degree, probability, duration, and distribution) are being promoted by the violation? -- 6. Is the rule being violated toward a person in order to prevent her from violating a moral rule when her violation would be (a) unjustified or (b) weakly justified? -- 7. Is the rule being violated toward a person because he has violated a moral rule (a) unjustifiably or (b) with a weak justification? -- 8. Are there any alternative actions or policies that would be morally preferable? -- 9. Is the violation being done intentionally or only knowingly? -- 10. Is the situation an emergency such that people are not likely to plan to be in that kind of situation? -- Summary of morally relevant features -- The second step : estimating the consequences of everyone knowing that a kind of violation is allowed and that it is not allowed -- Moral virtues and vices -- Summary and test -- pt. II. The moral theory -- The justification of morality -- Characteristics of moral agents -- Knowledge or beliefs required of all moral agents -- Irrationality and rationality -- Rationality as maximizing satisfaction of desires -- Objectively irrational actions -- Personally irrational actions -- Reasons versus motives -- All reasons have justifying force -- Reasons and desires -- Adequate reasons -- Rationality, morality, and self-interest -- Impartiality -- Two philosophical attempts to achieve moral impartiality -- Justifying moral impartiality -- Why morality requires impartiality with respect to the moral rules -- The group with regard to which morality requires impartiality -- Why act morally? -- Morality as an informal public system -- The role of governments in settling unresolvable moral disagreements -- Rights -- The consequences of morality not always providing a unique correct answer -- A complete moral theory -- Conclusion -- Flow charts -- Rationality -- Morality -- Notes -- Index.

Sommario/riassunto

Describing the moral system that is commonly used by people when they are making thoughtful moral decisions and judgments, this book then goes on to analyse the concepts of rationality and impartiality, and of morality as a public system that is known by all normal adults.