Ethics Position Questionnaire

Items from the EPQ were originally published in Forsyth, D. R. (1980). A taxonomy of ethical ideologies was published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 39, 175-184. The original response scale used was a 9-point scale, although the version presented here uses only a 5-point scale. Idealism scores are calculated by summing responses from items 1 to 10. Relativism scores are calculated by summing responses from items 11 to 20. As this scale is used for research purposes primarily, normative data are not available.

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following items. Each represents a commonly held opinion and there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your reaction to such matters of opinion.

Rate your reaction to each statement by writing a number to the left of each statement where:
1 = Disagree Strongly
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Agree Strongly

1. _____ People should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.

2. _____ Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.

3. _____ The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.

4. _____ One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.

5. _____ One should not perform an action that might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.

6. _____ If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.

7. _____ Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.

8. _____ The dignity and welfare of the people should be the most important concern in any society.

9. _____ It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.

10. _____ Moral behaviors are actions that closely match ideals of the most "perfect" action.

11. _____ There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.
12. ____ It is acceptable for ethical perspectives to vary from one situation and society to another.

13. ____ Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.

14. ____ Different types of morality cannot be compared as to "rightness."

15. ____ Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.

16. ____ Moral standards are simply personal rules that indicate how a person should behave, and are not be applied in making judgments of others.

17. ____ Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.

18. ____ Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.

19. ____ No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.

20. ____ Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.