***Bok’s Model***

**What is Bok’s model?**

* When it comes to ethical decision-making, Bok’s model is based on the idea of holding empathy for others and “maintaining social trust” as a fundamental goal, according to the authors of [Media Ethics](https://www.amazon.com/Media-Ethics-Issues-Philip-Patterson/dp/1538112582).
* Using Bok’s Model can help analyze, develop alternatives and come up with a solution to ethical issues.

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| **Consult your conscience.***“How do you feel about the action?”* |  |
| **Seek expert advice for alternatives.**“Is there another professionally acceptable way to achieve the same goal that will not raise ethical issues?” |  |
| **Conduct public discussions.***“How will others respond to the proposed act?”* |  |

**Activity:** Using an example (case #1) provided by your teacher, analyze what ethical decision you would develop based on Bok’s model referenced above.

EXAMPLE: You are a reporter sent to the scene of a house fire. When you arrive, you begin taking photos of the blaze but most of the fire is out by the time you arrive. You collect interviews with witnesses and come across a gentleman who has provided you with a photo of the house engulfed in flames before firefighters arrived. The photo shows the extent of the fire as flames reached well above the top of the home. The man tells you that the person in the photo looking at the blaze in disbelief is the father who lives at the home. His wife and kids were unable to escape. The witness gives you permission to use the photo. You’re the only reporter with this photo. Should you publish it?

Step 1: Use Bok’s model to analyze the ethical decision-making process. Using the worksheet provided below, explain your findings.

WORKSHEET:

1. Before using Bok’s model, what would you do if you were presented with Case #1?

 ANSWER:

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| **Consult your conscience.***“How do you feel about the action?”* |  |
| **Seek expert advice for alternatives.**“Is there another professionally acceptable way to achieve the same goal that will not raise ethical issues?” |  |
| **Conduct public discussions.***“How will others respond to the proposed act?”* |  |

1. After going through each step of Bok’s model, discuss your answer to Case #1. Would you publish the photo? Why or why not?
2. Did your answer and/or reasoning change from your original decision to your decision following Bok’s model?
3. How did Bok’s model help you reach your conclusion? How could this help you in future cases?