But suppose the situation is more serious. Suppose the cared-for wants us to participate in some activity we regard as wrong. Clearly, if an open-minded analysis leaves our evaluation unchanged, we cannot participate. What sort of thinking does the one-caring do in such a situation? Must she turn away from persons and toward some principle?

Let's consider an example. Professor A receives a research proposal from graduate student B. B proposes to do research that requires deceiving the subjects involved in the research. A would not, herself, propose such research. She is prepared to care for these subjects and fears possible bad effects on them. But she knows B and cares for him. She can feel the anxiety with which B approaches her: the pride in a well-written proposal, the fear that months will have been wasted, the eagerness to get on with the job. Proximity, as we have seen, is powerful in caring. A is in direct contact with B, but she is not in direct contact with the still-to-be-chosen subjects. She cannot be sure that they would be hurt by the experiment. Perhaps it is harmless. Perhaps there is no other way to answer the question B has raised. What should A do?

There are several approaches to problems of this sort. A might put her feelings about the research aside and concentrate on the possible outcomes. What adverse effects might occur? How likely are they? How significant is the question that guides the experiment? This is a rational approach that leads A to consider "average subjects," probabilities, and utilities. Thinking of this sort can be valuable, because some great utility may be discovered and, if it is, its consideration may induce a change in A's attitudes. But we see that, while this sounds plausible, if great utility were embedded in the question, A probably would have seen it at the outset. This approach, unless it is moderated by frequent "turnings," might easily lead A beyond rational thinking to mere rationalization. If, however, A takes the view of one-caring, she will attempt to visualize concrete subjects. Instead of "average subjects" she will consider real persons about whom she cares. And she will look at the situation from two perspectives: How might C, a known and loved other, react to the proposed deception? How do I feel about C's being thus deceived? This kind of thinking keeps A in contact with the particular, the concrete, the personal. It can be decisive, but we note that A's thinking did not proceed from a principle nor will it, of necessity, lead to one, although it might. The dangers that A perceives during her reflection may be so great, and her own revulsion so strong, that she will be led to propose guidelines for the control of all research that requires deception. But this need not be the case. The one-caring is wary of rules and principles. She formulates and holds them loosely, tentatively, as economies of a sort, but she insists upon holding closely to the concrete. She wants to maintain and to exercise her receptivity. Further, she sees the potential weakness in her own form of thinking: When she substitutes the concrete "C" for "subject" in B's research, she opens the channels to her own feeling. But to get an accurate picture of the effects on the cared-for, C must be a legitimate substitution (someone to whom this could actually happen), and A must evaluate C's reactions realistically. Clearly, there is danger in this concretization, also, and the one-caring is unwilling to formulate principles on the basis of her concrete experience.