# Psychological egoism

Psychological egoism is the view that all human action is ultimately motivated only by self-interest. Some argue for the truth of psychological egoism on the basis of the claim that in every case of human action “the agent is merely doing what he most wants to do”(Rachels 73). Rachels contends, however, that this argument for psychological egoism fails. Rachels advances Two counter-arguments to try and debunk psychological egoism.

Rachels argues, first, that the argument says that people never do anything voluntarily that they don't want to do and that can be proven wrong. It can be proven wrong because we do actions as a means to an end, and also we do actions we feel obligated to do that have no means to an end for us. Sometimes we do not want to keep promises, but we do because we feel obligated to. He argues that by someone doing something they do not want to do, and that does not provide a means to an end, that the person is voluntarily doing something they don’t want to do, without being forced. The argument here is whether or not you can call following your feelings of obligation, as a means to an end of content consciousness.

Rachels argues, second, that there is no reason to call someone selfish because he gets satisfaction from helping others. He also argues that an unselfish man is a man that gets satisfaction from helping others. He argues that a selfish man simply does not get satisfaction from helping others. In this case the meaning of selfishness is in contention, and whether or not you can be called selfish just because you want to do something. He believes that this alone is enough to debunk psychological and ethical egoism.

I believe Rachels does not successfully show that psychological egoism cannot be supported by the claim that agents always do what they most want to do. I disagree with Rachels because his point about someone feeling obligated to do something, still is a means to an end. The person most likely feels obligated because if he is to tell, he risks the person knowing and then getting flak from that person and the person not trusting him. If someone does not care too much then they will tell the secret because it provides more benefit to themselves. His second argument falls flat in my eyes because I believe you can still define the action as selfish. To me neither argument is wrong, it is simply the question between whether or not you believe in the concept of unselfishness. If you believe that unselfishness is a thing then you ought to believe Rachels is right. If you believe all actions can be chalked up as selfish, then you believe in psychological egoism.

\*\*When someone has a lot of desire to grow it increases the chance they’ll be selfish.\*\*

\*\*Everyone acts selfishly, but many people selfishly help others because they are simply a good person.\*\*

A better way to view this is that every person has personal reasons to take actions, even one’s which are perceived as a sacrifice. People still derive value from those actions.

Everyone performs acts with a certain set of expected value return.

Find people who are selfishly good even in private.

People who are selfishly good because they care deeply about their own character, and love their output.