

# Chapter 3.1-3.3

## Team 3

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## §3.1 - Egoism

Why shouldn't I just pursue the kind of life  
I personally find enjoyable and rewarding?

Does a ‘good life’ consist solely of getting what you want, regardless of how this affects others?

Definition: An ethical Theory that treats self-interest as the foundation to morality

*Ego* in Latin means “I”

“Reasons for me to do things – have to be grounded in what matters to me”

Egoists ask a different question from Chapter 2.

Even if we can come up with a universal definition of morality and justice that everyone agrees with, it still begs the question:

Why should I act morally?

By Egoism, people don't need to be given reasons to pursue personal advantage, but they do need to be given reasons not to pursue personal advantage

My needs and desires matter to me in a way they can't matter to others; the pain in my shoulder cannot matter to you in the way that it does to me, and vice versa.

“When I care about other people, then I care about their needs and desires as well as my own– but only because I care about those people.”

# Socrates vs. Callicles

Strong desires should be fully satisfied

Self control is a weakness imposed by society

Laws are artificial restraints created by the weak

True justice allows the superior to dominate

# Socrates vs. Callicles

A life ruled by desire is unstable and unsatisfying-Leaky jar

Pleasure cannot be the same thing as good-scratching the itch

Strength does not equal wisdom

True freedom comes from self-rule, not domination-Slave vs master

# Socrates vs. Thrasymachus

Rulers define justice to benefit themselves

Obedience serves the interest of those in power

Rulers care for their subjects only to serve their own interests

Injustice is more profitable than justice

# Socrates vs. Thrasymachus

Rulers make mistakes and justice cannot be whatever benefits the rulers-craft analogy

True ruling aims at the good of the ruled-Shepherd and sheep

Exploitation Corrupts the practice of ruling

Injustice produces conflict and instability-civil war

## §3.2 - Psychological Egoism

Do people always only ever do what they truly want to do?

In the context of psychological egoism,  
what is **Wanting**?

“It no longer means one motive among others— ‘having a personal desire for’ —but wanting something much more abstract —just ‘being motivated towards’ (by something else)”

Broadening the definition of wanting leads to a circular argument that results in the claim of this theory to be challenging but false or true but only trivially so.

## §3.3 - Rational Egoism

The idea that we act based on what we ought to be *rationally* motivated by.

Rational Egoism answers the questions of “what we ought to do, and why we ought to do it” with :

“The only really good *reason* for doing something is that you want to do it”

**“Why is it more rational to act in pursuit  
of our own desires than on any other  
ground?”**

**Which position has the burden of proof  
to answer this question?**

## §2.2.3 - Universal and Moral Values

What is the nature of universals?

# Important Definitions:

Universals:

Structures that help human advancement which can be expressed publicly to all

Moral Nihilism

Universals are meaningless → loss of purpose

Moral Essentialism

Universals are foundation of democratic agreement/ethical judgement

# Collectivism

Moral values:

Come from share conscientious

Form basis for:

Utilitarianism

Capitalism

Socialism

Utopias

Cons:

Vulnerability to manipulation

Trends towards Utilitarianism

“What *seems* good collectively... does not possess the quality of truth”

