

# Philos 22 Notes

## *Lecture + Reading Notes Notes*

### **4/3 - Week 1**

#### *General Stuff*

- Is it possible to live freely in the oppressive world that we live in.
- Ethical theory more refers to the practice of thinking about what to do and how to live life.
- The things that we currently do already contain your personal answers to that question of how to live life.
- Philosophy begins in the middle of a life.
- The answers to those question are also a function of the answers from the people that came before us.
- The tradition continues with us asking those questions and looking to previous people as well for answers, similar to how Aristotle did back then.
- What's the basis for whether to follow your own original thought or to look to others' thoughts in the past?
  - If something seems right to me, is that a correct basis for following that. Or should you follow others.
  - Maybe we just gotta trust ourselves. Or if we go with the latter, we have to trust that those people in the past kinda knew what they were doing and were acting ethically. But the problem is that there's a lot of shitty things in human history (wars, slavery, etc). Why would we trust the people that created that? Why would we trust the ideas that came out of their mouths? Why would we trust such outdated ideas?
    - Worth noting that people have been fighting back against these ideas.
- Aristotle came out in favor of listening to elders and listening to education that we've been thought in our childhood.
  - But have to ask whether the info the elders have is right. If the info is poisonous, then it is just transmitted.
- It's so arbitrary that we're born in the places we are, that we come to UCLA, and get exposed to certain ideas over others.
- We live in a world that allows governments to lock people in solitary confinement, a country that is built on slavery. These are reasons to doubt that the people who came before us know how to live and how to live with other people.
- Aristotle says that being happy means living well and doing well. It means having virtues like courage. This means that by Aristotle's definition, Woodfox is technically happy even though he was locked in solitary confinement for 40 years.
  - If you act in ways that are virtuous (which Woodfox did), you should be happy but other people can make you unfree to actually be happy (racist organization, crime you didn't commit, etc).

## 1.1

- Main themes in the first 2 sentences: Expert knowledge, good, action
  - Things that people do (actions) seeks some good.
    - Ex) Making breakfast in order to achieve some good.
  - The action can be done well if you have that expert knowledge.
- The things that actions are for are the ends.
- Some actions we perform in order to get to do other actions. Also some activities fall in the category of other actions. Knowing how to do something helps us know how to do other things.
  - Performing the action of breaking an egg falls under the action of making an omelette.
  - Now think about the goods that each of the actions seeks. The good of breaking an egg is that it provides you a way to make an omelette. The good that I'm pursuing for breaking an egg might be the pursuit of making an omelette.
    - More generally, for some action A, you can be doing it for the immediate reward of A as well as for the subsequent set of actions/pursuits S that accomplishment of A allows you to see.
- Views on activities and products. Some actions are good because of their product (cooking and the finished meal) and some for its own sake (friendship).
  - Actions are done for the sake of having the products. The product is better than the activity.
    - The finished product of the breakfast is better than the act of making the breakfast. All that's good about it (activity) is the thing that it produces.
  - This is not true for the activities where the product isn't really the most important part of the activity. The activity itself is what we're doing the action for.
    - Being someone's friend. You're not really doing it for the sake of them being able to give you cash or rides to the airport or whatever.
    - Also, the product isn't very clearly defined.
  - A third category is a bit of both. Where you do an activity for the product and for its own sake.

## 1.2

- There could be a chief good such that whatever you might be doing for some local good X, X is also contributing to the chief good.
  - Take any activity, ask what's good about it, then what's good about that, etc. then you'll eventually get to the chief good. We're making a chain of ends ("I'm doing this because A because B because C..."). There is likely to be some chief good because we always do things for the sake of other things.
  - Each of the goods we want because of what that good gets us, and because it gets us closer to the chief good.

- If we don't have a chief good (the chain is limitless), then the desire is empty or vain. There needs to be a stopping point. Every chain you start for the reasoning behind an activity must have a stopping point.
- However, no evidence that all the chains were get to a single starting point. Could there be a lot of chief goods?
  - Some examples could be the value of knowledge or the value of health, etc. These are goods that you can stop the chains with. Therefore, there may be a collection of goods that could be chief to a group of goods, but there may not be a single one.
- All expertises also could have this chain structure, which also contributes to the idea of the chief good.

## **4/5 - Week 1**

### *1.2 continued*

- When thinking about what to do in life, people also tend to ask what is good to do?
- Even with actions such as war, there is some good that people are trying to achieve.
- There is a dictionary of actions and the corresponding good that is trying to be achieved.
  - Sometimes the true good of an activity is different than what we had in mind. Also sometimes the good is not as good as we thought.
- If we know the chief good, then we might have a better time trying to figure out what actions to undertake. With the knowledge, will we be more successful in getting to the chief good?
  - If so, we should try to figure out what that good is and what sort of expertise it belongs to. In other words, what is the skill we need to develop to get that good.
- Knowing how to run a cities means that you need to know the people who have expertise in different areas. This means to have political expertise.
  - That expert directs all of what takes place by organizing the other expertises.
  - This so called city that Aristotle is talking about is hard to imagine people aren't well organized most of the time.
- A person who knows how to run a city would be good overall because this is the action that organizes the other people with other expertises to do their respective actions and achieve those goods. This combining and organization of the other people is what the political experts do.
  - Poetry is good, wrestling is good, all these actions are good. Political expertise wants to make sure that each of these good things is taking place.
- Also, he says that doing these actions for the good of the whole city instead of just for yourself is nobler and more godlike.

### *1.3*

- The political expert will only be understood by educated people and so the young are not an appropriate audience since they are held by emotions.

#### 1.4

- Now, Aristotle wants to ask what that chief good is, assuming there is one.
  - Everything we're doing is ultimately for that chief good.
- Aristotle wants to ask people what they think the chief good is
- Both ordinary and people of quality say that happiness is the chief good. Happiness is living well and doing well according to them. Ordinary people may identify it with pride or honor. Some people will pick out different definitions at different points in their lives.
- Some people know that they don't know the answer to it, they are aware of their own ignorance. And they will therefore say something pretty cliché like love or pleasure. But some people say something very impressive and in depth.
- Even though things like pleasure, love, etc might be the first thing that comes to mind, there may be some underlying idea that explains why those things make you happy.
- There can be different ways to find the chief good
  - Use a more general truth to justify low level convictions about what to do
    - I know that the chief good is X and therefore, I should do Y and Z in particular situations.
  - Other way around
    - I don't know what the chief good is, but I know that I shouldn't lie to people, shouldn't kill, etc.
    - Have particular judgements about what good is, and then try to find the trends and the commonalities to understand the general truth.
    - From knowing the local truths, you can try to find the general.
  - Start with convictions about particular pursuits, guess what's worth doing in general, and then use that general understanding to correct and develop your particular actions.

#### 1.5

- Aristotle's 3 candidates for happiness
  - Life of pleasure - People live for pleasure and do whatever to bring about pleasant experiences.
  - Political life - People are engaged with others to figure out how to live in a social world.
  - Life of reflection - People think about reality, how things really are, the nature of things, physics, biology, etc.
- Aristotle thinks it's probably the life of reflection.
- He says that people of quality will always try to go to a life of action.
- Why life of pleasure is probably wrong.
  - Aristotle doesn't really think highly of these people since it's just a life of consumption. He says that the people who choose this are slavish and behave like grazing cattle.
- Why the political life theory is likely incorrect.
  - When people are pursuing the political life, they are trying to pursue honor from others mainly. In this case, honor would seem to be the chief good. However, this

feels superficial since it is dependent on others giving it to you. It's not really a good that the person themselves have. It doesn't belong to the person.

- Happiness should be something that belongs to the person, it should be difficult to take away from them, independent on what others may do and external circumstances, and cannot be taken away.
- Aristotle then says that for the people that seek honor, if you look under that desire, we want honor because we are not sure if we are any good and honor is a way of getting validation from others. Therefore, our real interest is being good or excellent. That should be a better candidate for happiness, rather than honor.
- However, excellence is also incomplete because it is possible to do things like sleep or be inactive and to suffer while still being excellent, and at the same time unhappy.

### 1.7

- 2 main arguments
  - First concerned with what the chief good is. He is saying that that good is happiness.
  - Trying to define what happiness exactly is
- The problem Aristotle is encountering is that the good that we're looking for might be one thing in one situation and different in another.
  - He concludes that if we are able to find one end of all the practical undertakings that people go through, this this will be the chief good.
- For the first argument, he says that happiness is complete while the other things like honor and courage are not.
  - An example of happiness being complete: "Why are you eating the sandwich?" "I'm eating for pleasure". Pleasure leads to happiness. That's it. There's nothing that really that comes after.
    - Pleasure is incomplete, but happiness is complete. It's complete because we choose it because of itself and not to serve some future purpose.
  - With the other types of goods, you can always say that there is some underlying goal. For a lot of them (honor, pleasure, etc), we choose those things for themselves as well as for the sake of happiness.
  - Since happiness is complete, it is the best candidate for being the chief good, over the other things like pleasure and honor.
  - Happiness is also self sufficient for everyone in society.
- For the next argument, we want to determine what happiness actually is. We first look at different people (flute players, sculptors), they have particular activities they do and their good seems to be doing well in those functions. They are able to do well because they have particular characteristics. In a similar way, different parts of the body have different functions and characteristics as well. Now we have to try to figure out what the function of the human being is. Do we have a main activity or function, and does the answer then lead to us being able to define happiness better?

- Maybe the characteristic activity/function is living, but that's even true for things like plants. Plants also do nutrition and growth. Other animals also have perception and locomotion like humans do.
- An activity that humans have that other living things don't is activity of soul in accordance with reason. The human is rational, acts for purposes and desires. Human has values and does actions accordingly. Doesn't mean that these actions are good, but they are rational because the human has reason.
- Let's look at the above more carefully.
- Having a life as being the activity of soul and action accompanied by reason (aka rational activity) and doing those actions well requires that the person have the proper excellence.
- Overall, human good is an activity. The chief human good is a person doing well or living well. Happiness is doing a good job or performing the activity (rational activity) well. Doing a good job means that the person has the excellences that allow them to do well.
- TLDR Human happiness is a person doing rational activity excellently because of their excellences they possess.
- We want happiness to be a property of individuals and their lives. Can distinguish between one person's happiness and another's.

## **4/12 - Week 2**

### **1.7**

- Pair of central arguments
  - Happiness is the chief good because all of the things that people normally go for leads to happiness as a result. Those other goods are worth going for for their own sake, but they are incomplete because you can say that they are motivated by because they lead to happiness.
  - Humans have a function or characteristic activity and you can say whether or not something does well or not in that activity. A thing is good if it is good at its characteristic activity. When it does a good job, it does well because of the excellences that it has.
    - Ex) Flute player is good and does a good job because of her excellences in lung capacity, tone, phrasing, etc.
 So maybe the human has a characteristic activity. People may have certain excellences that allow them to do well at that activity.
- On the topic of the second bullet point, we can think of some human excellences as being kind, courageous, justice, good at friends, etc. Having these excellences and performing acts well might get you to the chief good.
- When the good flute player plays well because she has certain good characteristics, the good things that happens (beautiful notes formed) belong to that person because of her excellences.
  - So we can extrapolate the previous statement about people doing well in the life of actions backed by reasons because they have the right excellences.

- However, this is different from a bad player just picking up the flute and having good sounds come out accidentally. The good flute player's action is a success because of her excellences. We attribute the notes to the presence of those excellences.
- Human happiness isn't just something that is good, but it is a property of something that you're doing. Your happiness is due to having the excellences, not just an accident.
- But like, what is the activity that humans do? What is that thing, such that when they do it well, means they are good humans and leads to happiness.
  - This gets into that discussion of animals and plants being living similarly to humans.
- Just like humans have the job of doing their human activity well (aka human good is just the human version of doing well in life), the sheep also has the task of living their life well which entails the job of doing their characteristic activity well.
  - Humans aren't the only beings who things can go good or badly. They're not the only ones who can do well.
- Why should we identify our living with the thing that sets us apart from all the other animals or plants though?
  - Why are we solving for the human by solving for the thing that humans can do that nobody else can do?
- Life is self organizing process through which its components work in such a way as to maintain a structure. We do things in life so that we have more life in the future.
  - "We live so that we can live"

#### *Not Sure*

- Goodness itself is natural. Flourishing is where the nature is actualized.
- In the beginning, we don't know of what's good, but over time, we learn what it is and try to do actions accordingly.
- We know of the chief good as the good that all things seek and it is the sake of which all of our actions are pursued. How can the chief good relate to the other goods in that the other goods help you get to the chief good.
- Rational activity is bringing yourself to do something because you think that it will get you to some good.
- Realizing the chief good is doing rational activity well.

#### *Not Sure*

- Aristotle wants to try to determine whether people agree with the chief good and the definition for happiness. He notices that people can be happy because they are healthy or wealthy, it seems like the external circumstances of your life can determine your wellness of living.
- To account for the apparent dependence of happiness on external goods (rather than things that you do), he says that for people that have bad circumstances and who are unhappy, they can be facts that make it harder to be happy, not because happiness is in

wealth or health, but those two things make it possible to do the things that bring you happiness.

- On the topic of pleasure, he says that life can be pleasant, and pleasure is an attribute of life. Relation to pleasure is not that different than the other virtues.
- The other goods that people go for (acting justly, being a friend) are pleasant in themselves. You can take pleasure in them.
- Aristotle says that the unit of happiness is considering a person's whole life. It's the property of life as a whole. When we say someone is happy, we are saying someone is living well as a whole.
  - However, how do you account for the idea that happiness can fluctuate? He doesn't really say anything on this topic.
  - To counter that, many of the things that really make us happy can't be told in independence from the rest of the events in your life.
  - Also, do we have to wait until you've lived most of your life to be able to say you lived a good or happy life?
    - However, you are still living a life currently and you've had past moments, so you can characterize the life at the moment.

## **4/17 - Week 3**

### **2.1**

- Human soul has a rational and nonrational part.
- Rational part has two components. Reason is one of them and is the one prescribing certain actions and thinking about what should be done. There is another part that listens/obeys the reasoning component.
  - Reason = intellectual excellence, Obeys = character excellence
  - Intellectual excellence comes through someone teaching you and character excellence comes through habituation.
- The desire is between the judgment that something is worth doing and the actual action of moving the body.
- Realization of the desire to move is acting rationally when the rational part is doing you to do this.
- On the topic of habituation, in order to come to have the excellent virtues, these virtues have to be earned through consistent acts. The character excellences don't come to us by nature, but rather through constant acts.
  - Ex) Become just by doing just things.
  - Make people get their virtues through habituation.
- The process of habituation involves learning and getting better at a certain activity and thus getting a certain virtue.
  - Ex) You are learning how to be just. Thus, you will be disposed to act justly. Previously, you didn't know what being just was or how to be just.
- A character excellence is a disposition/tendency toward action.
  - Ex) To be just is to be disposed toward just actions.



- It is an excellence involving action.
- One counter to the idea that one will become just if they do just actions: If you're doing just actions, aren't the people already just? The counter to that would be that you cannot describe a character just off one action, and people can do a just action without being just.
  - Ex) You can repay a debt on accident (money falls out of your pocket) or repaying a debt for a different reason. You're not acting from justice.

## 2.2

- Aristotle talks about excellence. He's talking about a number of excellent virtues like courage and moderation and honor.
- In terms of evaluating a person's goodness, we look at if they have those virtues.
- Doctrine of the Mean says that every excellence is a midway point between two vices. The excellence splits the difference between the two which can be labeled as being in excess or lack of.
  - Ex) Courage is between rashness and cowardness. Rashness is throwing yourself into dangerous situations, and cowardness is being afraid to do anything.
    - Cowardness is excess of fearfulness and deficiency of boldness. Rashness is the other way around.
  - We can draw definitions for all the other excellences in the same way.
  - Sometimes we don't have good names for the two vices for a particular excellence.
- Aristotle makes a distinction between taking pleasure in an event or action is a way of reflecting happiness. This is true even for the lower pleasures of taking food. You can also take delight in things that are noble.
  - Thus pleasure is a component of excellent activity.
- However, Aristotle also criticizes pleasure in terms of the lower pleasure. You can want pleasure too little or too much (too intensely), meaning that it is a bit of a vice.
  - That wanting too much can mean that you choose pleasure at a possible loss of other virtues.
- This characteristic of having the right amount of something is a property of things that are good. Intermediateness is a good property. The virtuous person is a kind of basic person if you think of basic as being close to the average.
- Developing the courage virtue can involve having experiences with the two vices on either side and adjusting future behavior to hit the mark. Easier to find a midpoint when you're steering between two poles rather than just trying to find the virtue itself.

## **4/19 - Week 3**

2

- Character excellence is something you acquire over time and through activity. By doing them consistently, you will come to have that character.

- People, at the beginning, won't have the excellences, but with training and practice and performing the activity, you'll get that excellence.
  - This is great for things like playing a musical instrument. You're learning how to do the thing you want by doing that activity.
- However, what about things like having courage and justness. Do you just perform actions that are just or courageous? How do you really know how to be just in the beginning?
  - Someone who is trying to be just will end up performing those just actions and they may already be a just person.
- But how can a person get a better grip on what it is to be just by just performing just actions? How can they gain that knowledge?
  - Character excellence says you develop it through consistent activity.

## 2.4

- It is possible to perform a just action and still not be a just person if the person does not knowingly do so, doesn't do it for its own sake, etc.
- A person should only act as just if that person does something just and does it in a way that a just person does it.
- Doing a just act as a just person does it involves:
  - Knowingly doing the just action
  - Intentionally deciding to do the just action
  - Doing it from a firm and unchanging disposition
- Intellectual excellence is different from character in that character excellence comes from the desiring part of the soul.
  - Acting from knowledge of which actions are just is related to intellectual excellence. Someone probably taught you which actions are just.
- We should look at both types of excellences since they are interacting qualities for people that are doing well.
- In your process of practicing and doing those consistent activities, there is also a growth of understanding, knowledge, and reason.

## 3.2 / 3.3

- Voluntary actions are the ones that you decide to do.
- Decision are things that are reached through deliberation, which is something that people do (think) about things that are personally changeable. They are things that can come about their our agency and we want to decide whether to do them.
  - Decisions also revolve around what you want and agency to make the changes.
- Deliberation takes a person from being for some end (wanting some end) to wanting to perform some intermediate actions that is a way of realizing the original desires.
  - Decision is a form of desire and is the desire in deliberation.
- Character can be thought of as a way to desire and way to decide good actions.
- Character can be formed in childhood when parents tell them to do something.
  - Desiring part of the soul is to the reasoning part of the soul as child is to parent.

- People can acquire character by being well brought up by adults that tell them what to do. Why are adults able to tell kids how to do things, why would it help those kids be good people and listening?
- There are some actions that we don't really deliberate on. We don't think about wanting every single one of the moves associated with eating (moving the fork, lifting the food, etc). We just want the overall goal of getting the food inside of us, and we go through the other motions.
- There is a difference between immediate desire/impulse (child wanting to play with the cat) and the deeper voice inside telling you what to do or deeper desires (child listening to parent who says 'Stop' and child wanting to gain approval). It's not really a decision that the child has to make, it's not the carrying out of an immediate impulse (the parent approval stuff doesn't really have a clear immediate reward).
  - The child is basically able to act in some distance away from the actions that give the immediate pleasures.
- Development of the desiring part of the soul, aka the character, will involve a change in desire. It is a coming to want to do good.

### 3.4

- There is a concept called a wish, a rational desire.
  - This wish could be incorrect in that the desire is not itself good.
  - The true object of the wish is the good itself and not things that simply look good on the surface, which could cause the scenario above.
- To be an excellent person, one simply wants the good.
- Countervoluntary actions are things that you do because of external force (wind blowing on your body or people kidnapping you) or ignorance. Voluntary actions are things that are up to you and originate in you.
  - Not all things that are not voluntary are countervoluntary.

### 3.5

- Is a person responsible for their character?
- Actions themselves (shameful or fine), they are voluntary and they are things we decide to do, the origin is in us. Therefore, being good or bad as a person is voluntary.
  - Kind of goes against the previous idea that you can be a good person that performs bad actions.
- Actions by which you form your character are voluntary, and the future actions are a result of that character.

## **4/24 - Week 4**

### 3.5 (continued)

- As said before, voluntary actions depend on yourself and have an origin in yourself. The action is something you decided to do.

- When thinking about when an event affects another person (someone throwing coffee that scalds you), the event didn't just happen randomly, it was the result of someone's voluntary action.
  - Legal procedures help to punish people because they decided to do them. Also, sometimes there is no punishment if there is a lack of willingness in the action (aka an accident)
  - What about situations where you don't realize the effects of the actions that you're taking (not realizing that handing a hot coffee cup to another person scalds them)?
- Ignorance isn't really an excuse sometimes because even though a person didn't know what they were doing, we expect them to know.
  - They had a responsibility to find out the consequences of their action. It was under your power to get more knowledge and yet you didn't and therefore the law can sometimes blame people even though they aren't aware.
    - Ex) Someone throwing coffee outside (not knowing there was someone there) and scalding the person outside.
  - Aka people should be responsible for their ignorance
- Ignorance can also be a result of someone being a careless person. These can be people that only look at actions in how it affects themselves. For these people, it might not be an option for that person to act not carelessly. She doesn't really decide during the time because the carelessness is a trait of the person.
  - But since the character arises from earlier choices which depend on the person, the later choices the person makes is an activation of the character (which is something that was formed by voluntarily actions). So that person still is responsible.
- Badness and excellence of a person is dependent on a person because actions reflect their character and the character was formed by previous voluntary actions.
  - Responsible for the actions that form the character in the past as well as the actions that activate or inactivate the character.
- However, in the formation of character, the actions that the people are taking are sometimes not aware of both the immediate effects of the act as well as the action's contribution to the long term character.
  - So, the action can both be voluntary in that you're deciding to do an action (run away from a bear), but you may or may not have it mind that the action is forming your character (becoming cowardly).
  - So if the person isn't really aware of the latter part, can we really say that they are responsible for all of their character.
- There is also some difference between formation of character through habituation and through increased knowledge.

## 6.1

- Character is only good for its interaction with practical wisdom.

- We go back to excellence of desiring part (character excellence) of the soul and intellectual excellence, and specifically the latter which is the reasoning part of the soul.
- Reasoning part of the soul can be divided into
  - Thinking: Reflection on principles who can be otherwise because they depend on you. Deliberation is also related. Specifically, we deliberate about what is up to us.
  - Reflection on principles who can't be otherwise??

## 6.2

- Actions involve perception, intelligence, desire
- Animals can move themselves around (locomotion), it can perceive things as food/water/threats, and makes a link to the desire to eat or run away. Perception triggers a desire and gets locomotion going. This process bypasses thought. There is nothing that counts as thinking or deciding what to do. It's just stimuli and response. Therefore, Aristotle doesn't think that the animals are doing actions.
  - Actions have to originate in decision, deliberation, and thinking.
- Difference between what the thinking I'm doing asserts and what the desiring I'm doing
  - The thinking has to be true and the desire has to be correct.
- Action originating in deliberation also originates in desire.
- Deliberation will involve premises and the conclusions you reach through deliberation.
- To be wise is to be good at deliberating which will involve moving from a general desire to belief of actions to get there, and finally the actions themselves to achieve the goal.
  - Wisdom is just development of desire and movement from premises to conclusion.

## 6.12

- Character makes the goal correct and practical wisdom makes what leads to the goal correct.

## **4/26 - Week 4**

### 6.12 (continued)

- People separated into character and rational part (practical wisdom).
- Practical excellence is a part of the rational part of the soul.
- Character gives people the correct goal, while wisdom makes what leads it to it correct.
  - Person of good character will desire/want good things. People with wisdom will get those goals because they are good at deliberating and figuring out the subgoals to get to the main one.
- Practical wisdom is an excellence of deliberation. When you have this wisdom, it is being good at deliberating and deciding.
  - Some idea about your deliberation needing to be aligned with what is really true and accurate about the world.

- Wisdom is something sort of application of the knowledge you currently have. You need to know about the way things are in the world.
- Just having the desire of good physical health does not automatically mean that you will have a desire to eat well, go to a doctor, exercise.
  - Deliberation is the process by which you go from that overall desire to the effective desires of particular things that will get you to the overall one. After those desires, you get to the actions that fulfill those desires.
  - Deliberation plays a similar type of role to things like perception in the non-human animal. Perception helps them figure out the subgoals and motivation for the satisfaction of their desire.
- Desire describes the ends and deliberation thinks about the means to get there.
- Practical wisdom might be trivialized in that being wise is just about being able to go from the desire (of health for example) to the conclusion to eat the dry food. Wisdom just seems to be moving from ends to desires for means to get there.
  - There isn't really a whole lot to this wisdom thing then. It seems to be something we always do, how can it really be an excellence then?
- Practical wisdom might have as among your starting point of the desires, a good knowledge of the world and knowledge of which means will lead to your ends.
- There is a rational desire or wish for goodness.
- Practical wisdom is deliberating how to be good. Need to figure out the actions necessary to do good.

#### *No Idea*

- Practical thought is about things in the future, not about things in the past. There is no deliberation on the past.
- Something about practical truth. It might be truth in agreement with desire.
- Success as a desirer depends on you wanting the good and you getting it.

## **5/1 - Week 5**

### *6.2 (continued)*

- Practical wisdom is an excellence of the reasoning part of the soul. In contrast, there character is an excellence of the desiring part of the soul.
- When you make good actions, the thinking part is correct and your desire is correct. Reason asserts and desire pursues. Often when they are correct, they go towards the same things.
  - Job of character to give you the right goals.
  - Job of wisdom to give you the knowledge for the process of reaching the goals.
- Wisdom must be being able to accurately represent reality and thus the facts of the matter that relate to the end you are pursuing.
  - Ex) If you want health, then wisdoming is knowing that eating dry food will be good for you.

- There are facts about which actions help you realize the goals. The thinking and deliberation that goes on is going well when you get that knowledge.
- Desire is more about what you want, and those desires are shaped by character which are shaped by your previous actions and your habituation.
- The thinking that you do in your deliberation does not actually set anything in motion (e.g. Thoughts about whether). The thoughts don't make themselves true. They just might track the way the world already is.
  - Practical thinking, though, can set things in motion, more specifically its own coming true. It happens because of desire.
    - Ex) Thinking about eating dry food to get healthy.
    - Aka thinking sets in motion its own coming true
  - By the end of your thinking, you will be thinking of the event that will be arising because of your thinking. It is made true by your thinking.

7

- If you are tempted by desires that take you away from activities that are good, you will be showing a lack of self control.
- You need to have a right to trust that the things that you represent to yourself as good that you will be doing those actions because of your thinking that you will be doing it.
- Person who is not in self control does not act in accordance with their own judgement as to what is good.
  - Is this even possible to do though? Socrates said that there is no such thing as uncontrolled self action. When a person does something, they always think it is a good thing to do. He thinks that if there is knowledge in us about what to do, there must be some insane force (maybe desire) that tells you to do something else.
  - Aristotle response is that people always do things they know aren't good (e.g. Think it would be good to not have the donut, but you do anyway). People always act contrary to judgement. He says that if reason and desire are doing their jobs, reason will motivate the action since it will make you want/desire that action and practical action comes through desire.
- Certain times there are outside separate pleasures that influence us to go away from the action that we know is good.
- The un self controlled person has the relevant knowledge of what is good but does not use that knowledge. However, what is it to have knowledge but not use it? Do they really have knowledge? Aristotle might say that you only fully have knowledge when it is able to be activated. If you know something but you never do it, then you're not fully having the knowledge.

*8 and 9 (8.2 and 9.4 specifically)*

- Friendship is the catch all for valuable interpersonal relationships (e.g. brother to sister, father to child, citizen to ruler, etc.)
- People get out of relationships in proportion to their worth, it's not necessarily 50/50.

- Friends want the good for their friends. Characteristic of the friend that they do things for their friends and for the sake of the friend.
  - The for the sake of the friend part is different from just wanting good will for a stranger. It's not you being a friend to the stranger.
- Friendship is reciprocal in that one person can't be friends with another unless they are friends with you.
  - You can love inanimate things, but you can't be friends with them because those things can't be your friend back to you.
  - However, love is not reciprocal in that you can love someone but they don't love you back.
- Can it be that two strangers happen to want the good for the other (e.g The people know of each other and based on what they know, they want them to be really happy and want the good for them). The good will is reciprocal but they aren't necessarily friends. The thing that is missing is that they don't know each other. Wanting the good for someone else requires knowledge, specifically 1) need to know each other based on past experience/shared activity and 2) mutually recognized.
- Friendship is also subconscious in that people know they both know it.
- Two people that are friends want to spend more time with each other.
- Aristotle says that friends are like minded in that they have similar beliefs that is the basis for the shared activity.
  - Ex) Being friends because same interest in music and thus the shared activity is going to concerts together.
- Friendship is good for both people.
- Does the happy person need friends?
  - Happy person should be self sufficient. But people do need other people right? Or is it enough to have a solitary life?
- 3 Questions
  - Why does wanting the good for someone else because you know them create the need for reciprocity from the other person?
  - Why does wanting the best for someone relate to like mindedness and sharing activities?
  - What is good for me about wanting friends?

## **5/3 - Week 5**

### *Review of 8/9*

- For two people to be friends, they want the good for the other person and they act for the other person's sake to help the other person be happy. Also there needs to be a reciprocity of friendship.
  - Aka It is presupposed that if I am your friend, then you are my friend.
  - The reciprocity of friendship also entails the reciprocity of activities done for one person by the other.
- Good will, however, is not reciprocal and you can have good will for a stranger.



- Good will doesn't need to be completed through being returned.
  - Even if they do bear good will, it also doesn't matter that the two people bear good will to each other. It doesn't impact anything.
- If A and B are friends, then
  - A is a friend of B and B is a friend of A.
  - A knows that A is B's friend and B knows that B is A's friend.
  - A knows that B is A's friend and B knows that A is B's friend.
- All of the above conditions have to be true. The conditions all kind of presuppose each other and aren't really independent.
- Aristotle asks whether a happy person needs friend? Happiness should be complete and self sufficient. If you are happy, then you are self sufficient and you can't add anything to your happiness.
  - Can you be a happy person living well through their own activity and still need friends?
- Maybe friends gives you an opportunity to take part in shared activity. You can't engage in those activities if you don't have friends.
  - Then, the next question could be why a person needs another person?
- There are several kinds of friendship
  - Friendship for utility (usefulness): You find yourself doing activities which serves the happiness of you and the other other person. You take benefit from the use of the other person. There is mutual benefit. The shared activity helps both people.
  - Friendship for pleasure: Both people say that the company of the other person is pleasant. They are each taking pleasure in the shared activity with the other.
  - Friendship based in excellence: People are each other's friend because of their excellences. They recognize and honor the person's excellences.
- For the first two, it becomes hard to argue that you're doing things for a friend for the sake of your friend. The first two kind of use the other person for the first person's utility and pleasure.
- Aristotle says the last one is the true friendship and is what friendship wants to be and it is the ideal form. The first two are stages for the overall friendship on the path to the excellence friendship. This friendship is a completion of the other two forms of friendship. Pleasure and utility is part of this larger concept.
- There are two types of justice
  - General justice is doing your part in the shared life of the community. This entails do your duty as a citizen and obeying the law. This encompasses the other standards of life.
  - Particular justice is a way of deriving goods and burdens from others in society. People should get the same. The equal outcome is intermediate between some people getting a lot and some getting a little.
    - Everyone should get the same, except where they shouldn't. Aristotle says that people differ in ways that give us different claims to things. Some people are inferior and some are superior. They should benefit in proportion to their status.

- A just exchange is an exchange of equivalence. When each person walks away with the idea of a just exchange, then both people benefit equally.
  - However, it is not clear that exchanges and benefits are equal (e.g. Fixing your pipes vs your shoes).
  - You can make the case that both actions create an equivalent amount of difference between before and after states.
- Money is for establishing the equivalence of an exchange. The fact that two things are worth the same amount of money means that two people will be willing to trade the items.

*End of 9*

- Excellence friendships have possibility to be one sided in that there is a benefactor and beneficiary.
  - Benefactor loves the beneficiary more (9.7) because those who have bestowed benefits to another person, that first person will love the other regardless of the other's opinion of the first.

## **5/8 - Week 6**

*End of 9*

- The opinion that the benefactor loves the beneficiary more is contrary to the possible belief that people may have that gratitude would result is the greater love.
  - Someone that makes something loves the thing that she makes. They love it more than it would love the person who made it (if that thing is animate and able to love).
    - Ex) The producer will love a movie by loving the activity of making it.
    - Ex) Parents bring children into existence and so the parents are the benefactor and the children are the beneficiaries but the parents love them as much, if not more, than the children love the parents.
  - Also, the benefactor is able to see the improved condition of the other person.
- The true friend helps a friend for the sake of the friend.

**9.9**

- Does a happy person need a friend since the happy person should be self sufficient?
- Take a happy person, and ask if they would be happier if they had a friend?
  - Most people would say yes.
- How does being friends with someone make you happy? What is the good about it?
- The friends will be able to see the valuable activity of the other person.
  - Recognizing other people's good actions requires you to also be good. Because the two people are similar, you can see their actions as being close to your actions.
  - Better able to observe other people's actions and take pleasure in them than taking pleasure in our own activities.

- The reasoning might be that when we are doing some act, we are in the flow and our attention is owned by the desire of the action.
- There's 3 arguments for ^ but didn't really understand them.
- Living well has a reflexive structure in that you are aware of you living well and that you are taking pleasure in living well.
- Doing a shared activity often means that you doing it for the product of the action but also because you want to help the other person do the task as well.

10

- Pleasure that you take is the pleasure that leads to the good life.

## **5/10 - Week 6**

10

- The official ending question is what version of a life is the happiest? Which then leads to the question of what is happiness? 3 options for life.
  - Life of pleasure: Aristotle isn't against pleasure. He thinks some pleasures are good and certain ways when pleasures are good (pleasure only when you take part in excellent activities. You can take pleasure when you do those acts). Taking pleasure in good activities completes the activity in a way. Basically pleasure is a part of living well and completes the living well given that you're doing the activities.
  - Political life: Better than other practical lives. This has to be a relation between equals. Might be an argument for democracy.
  - Life of reflection: Aristotle thinks this is the best life because reflection is what gods too and the act is divine. In this life, we do things that bring us closer to the divine. This is weird because the greatest happiness isn't something that only humans do (relating back to the idea of things that plants/animals are able to do). Reflection is also distinctly self sufficient since for other things like justice, you need to do just acts for another person, and therefore it's not self sufficient since there has to be other people. This is also a requirement with friendship and the political life. Aristotle is saying that the reflection can be done all on your own. However, there is not really total self sufficiency if you consider that someone had to give birth to you and take care of you as a baby. Aristotle is looking at self sufficiency in the way that you are able to reflect without the help for anyone else. Also, life of reflection is a serious form of leisure. You need enough time left over from keeping you healthy and alive to have time to think and reflect. This often assumes that other people are doing the chores/work that help to keep you alive.

### *Section 1 - Kant*

- When we think about what to do, it is a reflection upon what we are already doing.
- The good will is something that is good without limitation, therefore the goodness of other things have limitations. Other things like courage, wit, resoluteness, these things

can be good, but might be not good too depending on how we deploy them. Specifically, it depends on whether we do those acts with good will which is always good.

- If will is bad, it's not good that a person has courage, wit, self-control, etc. Aristotle, however, claims that all of those things are good independently, without really considering any effect good/bad will has.
- Kant says happiness is a contentment with one's condition. Happiness can be good, but only good when it is the happiness of the good willed person.
- In general, things can be good if they are active in relation to a good will. There is a limitation to things' goodness. However, good will itself does not have the limitation, it is always good.
- Is it through reasoning and successfully thinking about your action that leads to a person being happy?
  - This isn't plausible because people find that agonizing and reasoning over action does not lead to happiness.
- What is reason for then? If not for happiness, then it's something that we have for its own sake.
- Let's say someone is living and does not have a grasp as to what is good. There are influences that causes desires in that person. Aristotle says that these actions will eventually lead to habituation of things that are good and leading to a future desire to do good things. People will converge to good actions based on external influences and teachings. You don't have to know what's good, you go out and do things, get influenced, and then get pushed in a good direction. This means that we need to place an emphasis on creating the right laws and external things that push people in the right direction.
  - However, what if you realize that the things that make you happy are different from what others are pushing you towards? Aristotle says that you should trust that the thing you are doing is good. Trust in your own desires to already be pointing you towards good actions. If there is a conflict between these desires and the rules/laws/things other people are trying to get you to do, you'll have to think for yourself on what to do. How should that thinking go?

## **5/15 - Week 7**

### *Section 1 - Kant*

- Nothing in the world is good without limitation except a good will. A good will is just good. Other things can be good but just on condition. Courage, wit, resoluteness are examples of those. These are things that can be good, but they depend on people using them well. The context is necessary and the thing itself is not good independently.
  - Deploying the things in good willed actions makes the things good.
- The fact that you're willing well means that the activity will become good.
- Happiness is a matter and contentment with well being. That is good insofar as they are willing well.

- Good will is the basis of moral worth. Good willed actions are morally worthy actions. This is also the worthiness to be happy.
- Happiness that comes about as a result of the good willed actions means that the happiness will become good.
- If happiness or health or well being are good in themselves, then they may supply the function of reason.
  - Ex) Function of the eyes is to see. Seeing subserves happiness. You can also say the same about other human functions.
- Function of reason can be happiness. If reason gets us doing the things that will make us happy, it might not be its job.
  - Instinct may be the better thing to look at. Nature may be selling us short by having us focus on reason instead of instinct.
  - We kind of have both but there are some cases where choosing reason instead of instinct may create more hardship.
- Reason gets us to want certain things besides our physical needs. It is also giving us needs that we aren't to satisfy.
- Thinking what to do may make your will good which will make your happiness good.
  - Reason will make it so that if people are happy, then they are worthy to be happy.
- You can say that people have done well just for their good motives. It is a side benefit that the action actually produced tangible good.
- We have a basic right to trust the developed state of our psychology, even though we haven't proved our motives to be true.
  - The process over which a process comes across their desires is doing things and adjusting.
  - Later on in life, you can choose to do things only if you can know that they are good. This should happen when you are aware that the things you think are good come from your culture and the way that you were raised. It means going against the initial conditions of what you believe are good.
  - This however, could also lead to you being unhappy because of the effect that other people can have, especially if you are subordinate to another.
- There is also some discussion on if you should trust others.
- Having good will is a function of having a certain kind of motive, and doing the right thing for the sake of doing the right thing.
- Pulling back from your existing motives is you trying to get it right. At least I'm trying to get it right which is a good thing, regardless of whether it is successful.
  - You can also say that trying to get it right isn't good in itself.
  - Trying to get it right means trying other things that you think are good. This depends on your right to trust external influences that tell you what is going to be good.
- Good willed actions are done from the motive of duty alone. There are things that it is your duty to do.

- Ex) Merchants will not overcharge for duty. Or they can not be overcharging because in the long run people will trust her and she will get greater profits.
- It'll be easier to figure out which is the case when other motivations are taken away.
- Reason has as its function you willing well.
- The motive of duty turns your attention away from other objects.

## **5/17 - Week 7**

### *Section 1 - Kant*

- Motive for fulfilling your duty also relates in some way to reason.
- How do we restrict the phenomenon of good will to good will for common sense good acts instead of saying I have good will with any arbitrary action.
- A universal law is one that application to my actions and any rational being.
- In considering whether an untruthful promise, you should think about if there was a principle on which it is okay to make these promises, would it be okay as a universal law.
  - What would it be like to live in world like this?
  - We find out that we can will this instance of lying but having that applied everywhere would mean that future promises would never be considered. There would actually be no promises. Having it applied everywhere is destroying the maxim.
  - The fact that most other people are trying not to resort to this behaviour makes you doing it not good.
  - On the surface, this behavior seems to advance yourself, but if everyone does it, then the principle destroys itself.
- Adding a test of the universality of the maxim, then that narrows down the possible content for good actions.
  - Can it become a universal law through your will.

### *Section 2 - Kant*

- The Formula of Universal Law is basically the test of universality. "Act on the principle that others act on". The one talking about the will that you can make a universal law.
  - Can you have a particular principle/action that you're doing and will that others follow it.
- If you can will that some action can become universal this may be in contradiction with the world that will come into being if everybody follows it.
- The second formulation of the principle of action is to treat humanity as ends and never just as means.
  - Other people's humanity has a certain value.
- If you will the ends E, then you should will the means M.
- There should be things that reason itself should be sufficient enough to do things.
- Categorical imperatives are ones that apply to you without condition.

- Some ends are bound to be your ends and ones that you have because you have them.
- If there is something that was just good, and not because of its products, then that thing might be a categorical imperative.
- Someone can be used as both a means and an end in an action.
- Each of the two formulas can be taken on its own. They, however, should give the same answers to the same questions and they are pretty much equivalent.
  - The way to treat humanity as ends is to act to others on principles on which they can act on themselves.
- Third formula is the formula of the realm of ends.
  - Our principles are the things that tell us to follow things in the realm of ends.
- Kant says that the 3 formulas pretty much say the same thing.

## **5/22 - Week 8**

### *Section 2 - Kant*

- Questioning what it is to act on principle is an activity shared by other humans. The resulting action should be similar to the conclusion come to by the other people.
- We can't assume everyone is acting by the same right principle.
  - The two assumptions are that everyone is acting on the same principles and the other is that everyone is not acting on the same principles.
- We might make the case that everyone helping others will cause everyone's lives to be better than if everyone is looking to help themselves. However, it might not be better than if most people are helping others, and I make the decision to help myself.
  - What difference would be made if I stopped helping others while the other people are helping others.
  - Should be asking the question of what we should all do, but this is a tougher and different question than what I should do.
- Principles should be shared between people to reflect that principle of universality.
- When one person tries to coerce another person to do something and threatens with some consequence, the two people are acting on ends that can't be shared. Coercer is failing to treat the other person as an end herself.
- Legislature making something a law causes people to know what to do.

## **5/29 - Week 9**

### *Section 1dek - Kant*

- We know that we have free will and that we can will actions freely.
- When the actions willed follow a moral law, the person acts freely.
- There is a problem of circularity in that