Jeremy Holloway

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Nicomachean Ethics Book I

Aristotle believes we need to have three things to flourish, which are harmony, pleasantry, and prosperity. He says that harmony is with those who find happiness in virtuous activity, but that harmony can also be achieved by someone who merely possesses virtuous traits. A person doesn’t have to constantly, or even consistently, performing virtuous acts to be considered a person of virtue. This follows along with his earlier assertions that a happy person will live well and do well.

Pleasantry is something that I didn’t immediately think of when considering what it would take to develop a flourishing life, but Aristotle makes a good case. He says that if you are pursuing happiness in your life then the things along the way will have a pleasantry about them. I’m studying computer programming, so I find programming to relaxing and pleasant because I feel as though I’m in my element.

Prosperity may seem like a contradiction on the surface, but Aristotle doesn’t exclusively consider wealth to be prosperity. I think he is driving at that adage of being rich in spirit or other non-monetary conventions. He says that a person needs the proper equipment to pursue their goals like I need a well running computer for programming or a horse rider would like a good saddle to ride in. This also includes prosperity in your personal life like having beautiful children, good friends, or a good wife.