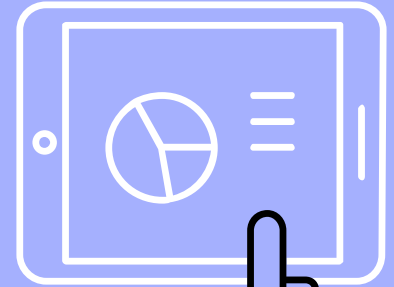
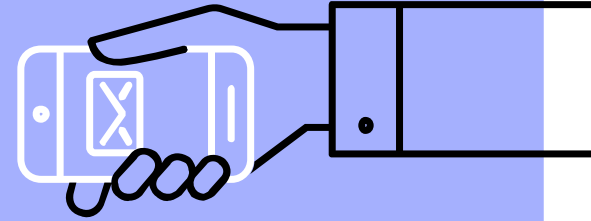
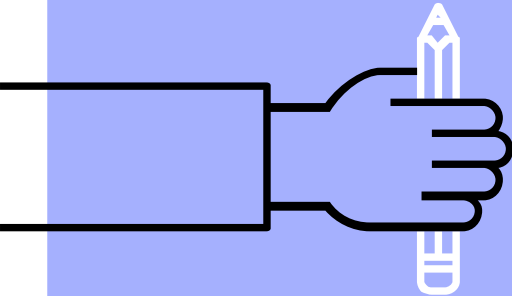
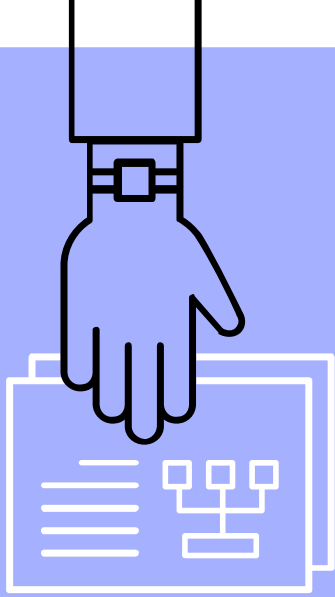
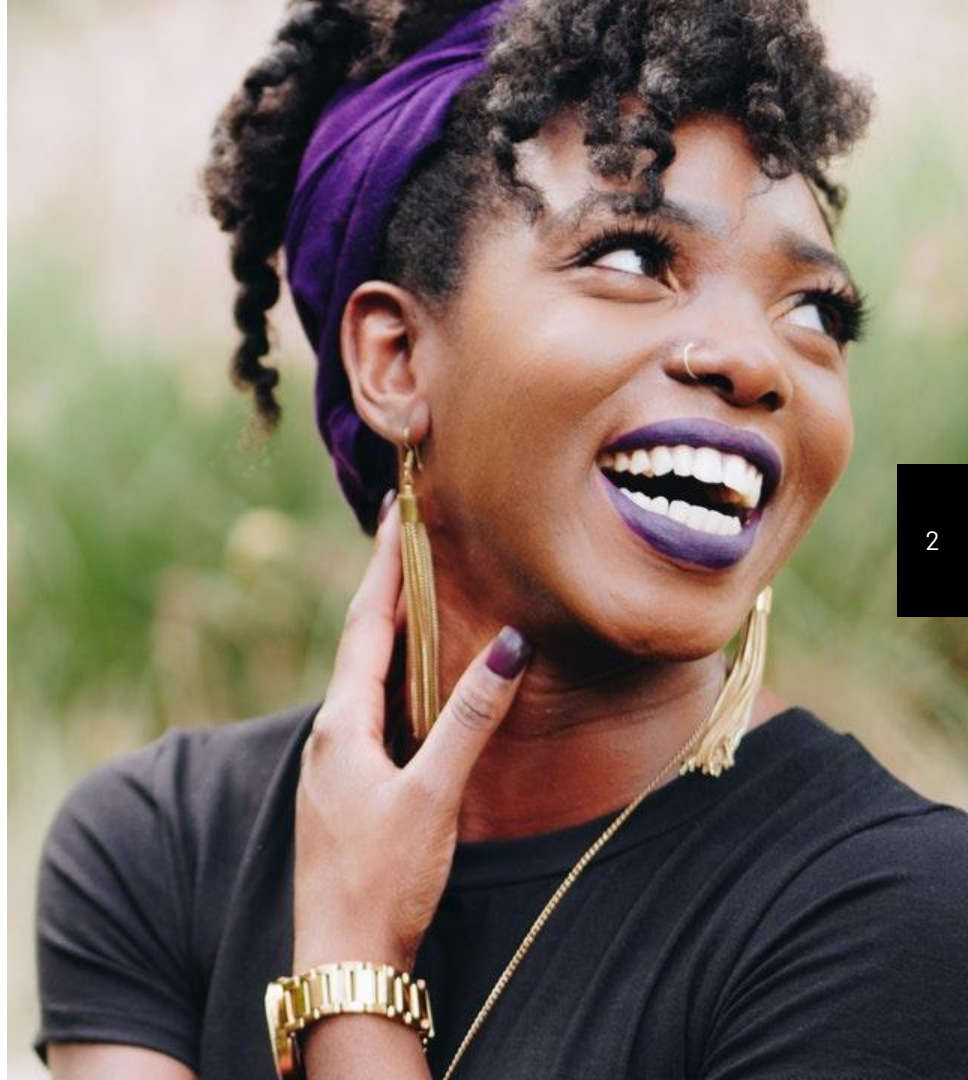


Module 1: Hedonism



Definition:

The view that pleasure is the only thing that is intrinsically valuable, and pain (or unhappiness) is the only thing that is intrinsically bad.



Core Intuitions

HAPPINESS IS THE HIGHEST GOOD

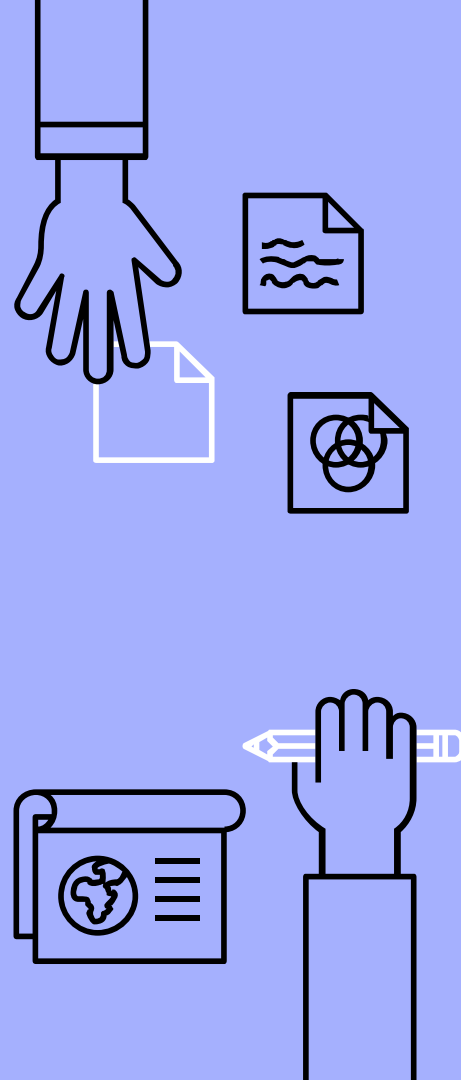
"Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do."

(Jeremy Bentham in *The Principles of Morals and Legislation*)

INTRINSICALLY GOOD

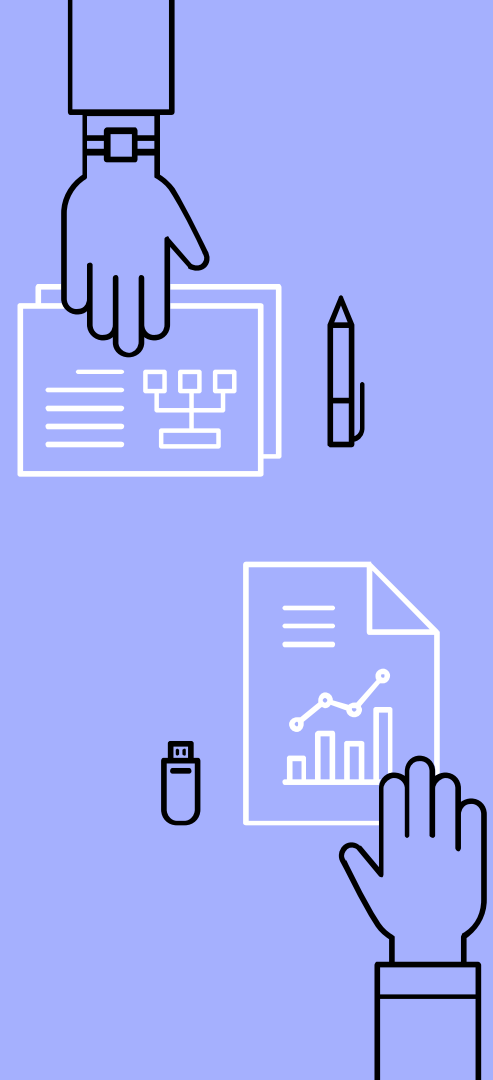
All other goods are good insofar as they are instrumental to your acquiring more happiness in your life.

- ▷ The hedonist is a value monist. There is only 1 intrinsically valuable thing, and it is happiness.

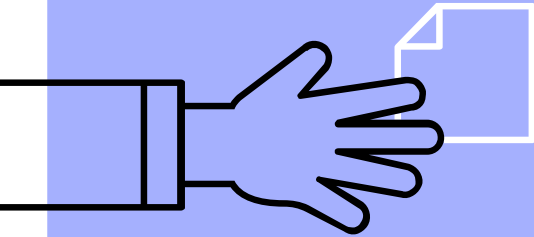
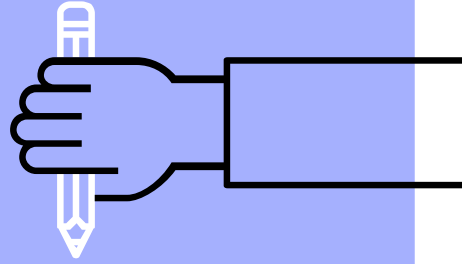


Pleasure, Happiness, or what?

- ▶ Pleasure = Happiness = Positive Attitude of Enjoyment
- ▶ *Not* physical sensation
- ▶ Psychological account of *good*



1. Initial Plausibility





Take two
otherwise equal
lives and vary only
the happiness
experienced.

Are they equal in
value?

“

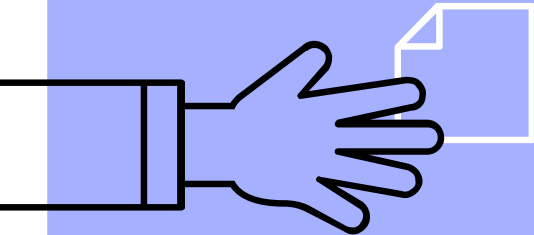
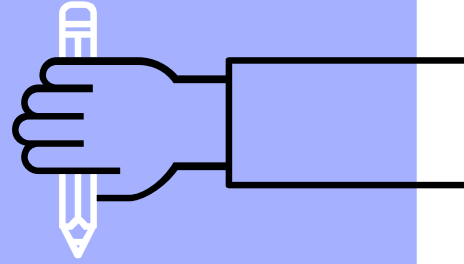
*“Happiness is man's
greatest aim in life.
Tranquillity and
rationality are the
cornerstones of
happiness.”*

Epicurus

Good lives
can look
different
(contra
Plato)

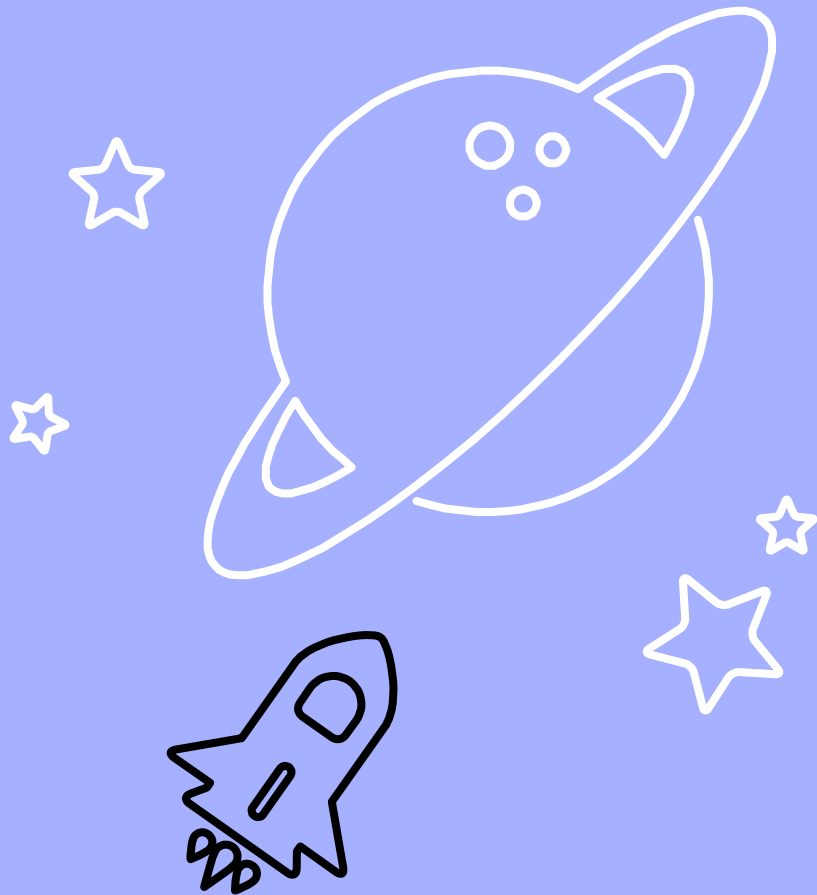


2. Objections



Thought Experiment

Nozick and the
Experience Machine



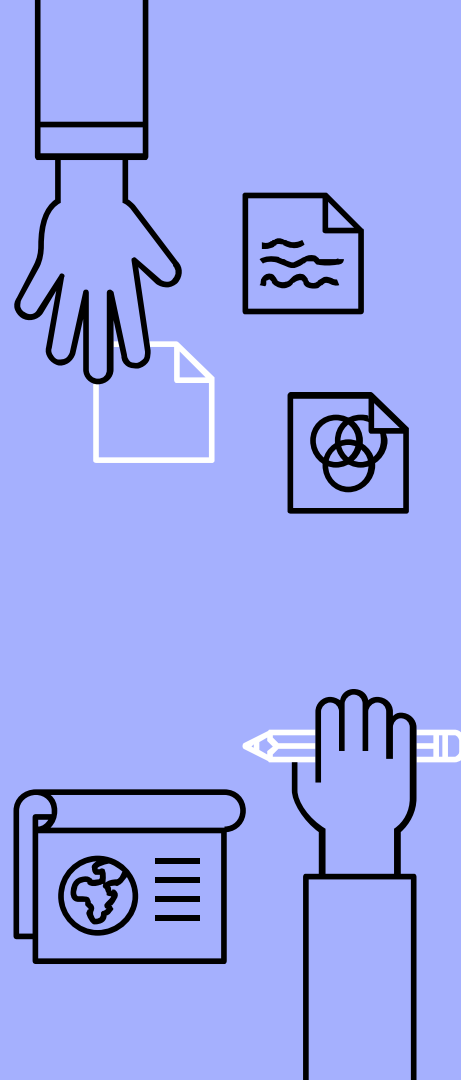
WHY NOT PLUG IN?

Autonomy?

It does seem as though living in a virtual world does reduce one's autonomous choice. Genuine autonomy does not always produce happiness but is good in itself.

Truth?

Many, if not all, of your beliefs in the machine will be false. If truth is intrinsically valuable, then entering the machine would be to give up something valuable.



LIFE'S TRAJECTORY

UPWARD

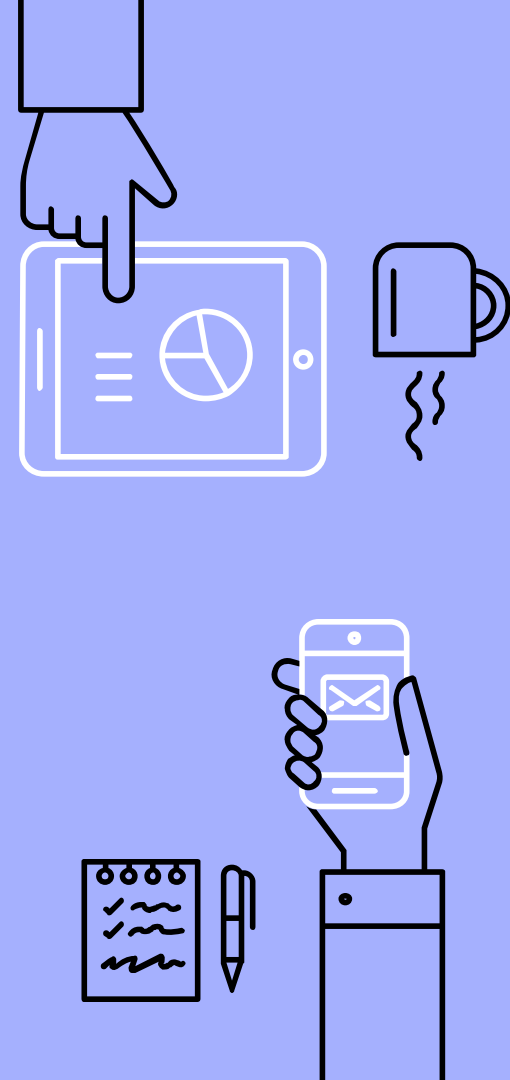
Life begins with little happiness, and much pain. Life ends with much happiness, and little pain.

VERSUS

DOWNWARD

Life begins with much happiness, and little pain. Life ends with much pain, and little happiness.

Which life is better?



Questions?

