**Module 5: Critical Thinking**

**Ethical Egoism**

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**Ethical Egoism**

Shaver, R. (2023, January 9) with The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy describes ethical egoism as an action that is moral if the performing action maximizes one’s own self interest. Therefore, everyone ought to strive to conduct actions which are in their own self interest. If everyone is acting in their own interest, nobody will be doing something outside of their own interest. Thus, never doing anything one doesn't want to do ever again. Doing something outside of one’s own interest would be unjust and immoral. Ethical egoism can be witnessed everywhere including the software development realm.

Within the realm of software development, ethical egoism can specifically be seen with various startups. Startups are developing what they wish to create and are serving their own self interest. They may have to do a few things they do not necessarily want to do, but overall they are striving to serve their own startup. Thus conducting themselves morally within the eyes of ethical egoism. A promising startup they may have ventured away from conducting themselves morally relative to ethical egoism could be Facebook.

Towards the beginning of Facebook’s creation and operations they were certainly doing what was in their self interest. They enjoyed building a powerful social media platform and did it in their own self interest. Which ended up greatly benefiting nearly everyone involved with the development process. Thus, their moral ethical egoism action paid off in the end. Facebook started off great and was looking at expansion.

The expansion of Facebook started once the platform really took off and became popular. Nearly everyone and their dogs were on Facebook. It was a huge hit but the people in-charge of Facebook wanted more success. They began contemplating what their users may be interested in. The problem arose when Facebook stopped focusing on what it liked to do and instead focused on what the user would enjoy. This led to half baked products being released because Facebook’s own interest was not all there. Plus the half baked products released by a mature Facebook did not capture their user’s interest very well. Thus, leading to the decline of Facebook, as users simply moved on to other new and exciting products.

Facebook declined because it was no longer conducting itself morally in the eyes of ethical egoism. Instead of doing what was in Facebook’s own self interest, they looked at what would be a quick and easy cash grab. Which led to the poorer products and the decline of Facebook users. Therefore, if Facebook stayed on track with ethical egoism morality, they could have potentially avoided the mass decline in users.

In summary, ethical egoism is the idea where one must pursue one’s own self interest because anything else would be considered immoral. Examples of ethical egoism in the software development world can be seen with many startups. Several startups began with developing what their interest was in. Thus conducting themselves morally within ethical egoism. A more specific startup, Facebook, began by following the moral guidelines on ethical egoism. However, after a huge initial success, Facebook lost their way and no longer followed the moral guidelines of ethical egoism. Which led to their decline. Thus suggesting that software companies follow ethical egoism guidelines in order to reach financial success.

**References**

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