

## Introduction

Cebes challenges Socrates to prove that the soul continues to exist on its own after it is separated from the body. In order to do this, Socrates must prove that the soul continues to exist after a person's death, and also prove that the soul still possesses intelligence.<sup>1</sup>

## Argument for Immortality 1

1. All things come to be from their opposite states: for example, something that comes to be "larger" must necessarily have been "smaller" before (70e-71a).
2. Between every pair of opposite states there are two opposite processes: for example, between the pair "smaller" and "larger" there are the processes "increase" and "decrease" (71b).
3. If the two opposite processes did not balance each other out, everything would eventually be in the same state: for example, if increase did not balance out decrease, everything would keep becoming smaller and smaller (72b).
4. Since "being alive" and "being dead" are opposite states, and "dying" and "coming-to-life" are the two opposite processes between these states, coming-to-life must balance out dying (71c-e).
5. Therefore, everything that dies must come back to life again (72a).

## Argument for Immortality 2

The theory of recollection: knowledge is recollecting what we once knew and subsequently forgot. The supposed evidence: you can recollect answers to questions that you initially report not knowing the answers to.

1. Things in the world which appear to be equal in measurement are in fact deficient in the equality they possess (74b, d-e).
2. Therefore, they are not the same as true equality, that is, "the Equal itself" (74c).
3. When we see the deficiency of the examples of equality, it helps us to think of, or "recollect," the Equal itself (74c-d).
4. In order to do this, we must have had some prior knowledge of the Equal itself (74d-e).

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<sup>1</sup>Notes and summary of arguments are taken directly from the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. See this link for the full article: <https://www.iep.utm.edu/phaedo/SH4c>

5. Since this knowledge does not come from sense-perception, we must have acquired it before we acquired sense-perception, that is, before we were born (75b ff.).
6. Therefore, our souls must have existed before we were born. (76d-e)

### Argument for Immortality 3

1. There are two kinds of existences: (a) the visible world that we perceive with our senses, which is human, mortal, composite, unintelligible, and always changing, and (b) the invisible world of Forms that we can access solely with our minds, which is divine, deathless, intelligible, non-composite, and always the same (78c-79a, 80b).
2. The soul is more like world (b), whereas the body is more like world (a) (79b-e).
3. Therefore, supposing it has been freed of bodily influence through philosophical training, the soul is most likely to make its way to world (b) when the body dies (80d-81a). (If, however, the soul is polluted by bodily influence, it likely will stay bound to world (a) upon death (81b-82b).)

### Argument for Immortality 4

1. Nothing can become its opposite while still being itself: it either flees away or is destroyed at the approach of its opposite. (For example, the cold cannot become the hot while still being cold).
2. This is true in a similar way of things that contain opposites. (For example, fire and snow are not themselves opposites, but fire always brings the hot with it, and cold always brings the cold with it. So fire will not become cold without ceasing to be fire, nor will snow become hot without ceasing to be snow.) (103c-105b)
3. The soul always brings life with it. (105c-d)
4. Therefore, the soul will never admit the opposite of life, that is death, without ceasing to be soul. (105d-e)
5. But what does not admit death is also indestructible. (105e-106d)
6. Therefore, the soul is indestructible. (106e-107a)