

Altruism demands sacrifice of yourself for others to the extreme?

What is the standard definition of altruism?

Good as in giving up what you want and even your very self for another or others. Evil by contrast demands the sacrifice of others for you.

What do you think of the idea that altruism requires us to suffer to a certain extent and not too much?

Not much. Altruists claim that altruism is love. The idea is arguing that we need love but not too much of it for it would not be love to cause too much suffering. If love is treating a person correctly and honouring them there can't be too much of it. Altruism logically puts a stigma on happiness and says it is love to urge people to suffer for others without doing anything for themselves. Clearly then the more suffering the better in this view.

How can you say altruism is evil when it forbids unreasonable sacrifices?

No altruistic sacrifice is a reasonable sacrifice. Giving away your last Rolo to a friend, is putting a being whose existence you are less sure of than your own before yourself. It is doing it just for the sake of being altruistic and not for happiness or people. That is unreasonable. (If you do it for your own happiness and that of the person it is a different situation altogether.) It would be replied that you know you have to give pleasure to others to receive help from them so that you can live only to sacrifice even if you are less sure of others than your own existence. But the real altruist will help others and seek no help for himself from them to save them the trouble and/or that they can give their help to somebody else. He will help himself to help others. He will not let others know of his problems so that they will not be able to help. This in itself would be an altruistic act. The altruist will be independent.

Altruists say things like that it is wrong to give the family savings away to save babies from death in the Third World for that is an unreasonable sacrifice. This shows their non-altruism for the family could live safely in a shed.

According to altruism, you have to walk forty miles in hail and snow to get a packet of sweets for your friend.

Is a person who says altruism is great but do not give away your kidney for a stranger just because you can a hypocrite?

He is a liar and a hypocrite not an altruist.

What other proof is there that all sacrifices are unreasonable?

If I want to eat my last Rolo and give it to a friend instead then I am saying that that the small pleasure of the being I am most sure of, myself, must be sacrificed for that of a being that might not exist at all. When I say that such a small pleasure is more important than me I am saying I am worth nothing and it would be meaningless to say that there are forbidden or unreasonable sacrifices. I will lose the friend if I do not share things but altruism says that I should be giving the sweet to sacrifice and not to keep a friend to make me happy and that I should love others as persons and not as people to make me happy. I must love without motives.

How does when the people I know disapprove strongly of me being kind to some evil person prove that altruism demands extreme sacrifice?

When it is okay to hurt them by doing the kindness it would be the same if the pain were all my own. It is okay to hurt myself too. Jesus said his followers are blessed or holy in God's eyes if they are persecuted for his sake. He said they are doing a lot of things wrong if they are not persecuted and are liked instead.

The issue in the question shows that altruism has a tendency to develop into legalism, the idea that some things, like homosexuality, are everywhere and always wrong with no concern for different situations and circumstances.

Only the egoist could justify hurting the others for he wants them to be kind for his own sake and pleasure.

But the altruist could only justify it by claiming that happiness or the doing least evil has nothing to do with morality at all and is evil. That's legalism. If altruism is good and you are most sure you exist which you are it follows you should let others treat you like a doormat.

Surely you agree that altruism does not permit one to die for others without need?

If you live on as religion says and you should believe that you should die for your faith then why not die for others without need?

Don't you see that unreasonable sacrifices would guarantee that others will be made selfish by them?

Any level of altruism could be used by another person to make themselves selfish. Besides altruists say it is the recipient of the kindness' problem.

The altruist admires the person who gives up work, entertainment and the prospects of a happy marriage to look after a sick relative for life. So we should train to be able to make such sacrifices and we need to deny ourselves all day long. If we don't, we are putting a restriction on how good we can and should be. We must train.

Should a person who can't swim risk their life by swimming out into a lake just to retrieve a ball for a child if altruism is right?

Altruists tend to say no. But Altruism denies your own worth and right to be happy and by implication that others are worth serving or helping. All that matters is being Altruistic. So, the more Altruism or sacrifice the better and the person should try to swim.

Can't you see it is madness to say that an altruist should do that instead of preserving his life to help others in better ways?

By reasonable sacrifice, an Altruist means the act that will enable you to sacrifice to the maximum for others later. You sacrifice your time to go to the doctor to see about your flu. You should only do it in a spirit of sacrifice and because you hope it will enable you to sacrifice far more later and only for others.

Risking one's life amounts up to all the sacrifices that will be made if one does not risk and does not lose one's life. If altruists say this risk and sacrifice is evil for it prevents the person working to make others altruistic and happy they are contradicting themselves. For altruism, it is the sacrifice and the bigness of the sacrifice that matter. The altruist looks more favourably on the person who is bipolar and really in the pit of depression who parts with a medal they are attached to with great devotion than on a normal person without these disorders doing this kindness.

But is it not the case that some sacrifices are more unreasonable than others and these are forbidden?

But if the more goodness the better and altruism is goodness then the more unreasonableness the better for altruism is unreasonable. The only alternative is to deny that altruism or love in the altruistic sense is really good.

What about altruism and the family?

When altruism encourages extreme sacrifices it is hard to judge individually and it is impossible in many cases. For example, if a man abandons his family against their will to go where he will do the most good, we can't condemn him if he says the family hurt him and he will punish them by doing good. They owe him the freedom to do that. The altruist will say they are blocking him from being altruistic so he can ignore their wishes and go and serve others despite them. They will say if the family cannot altruistically let him go that is the family's problem. Clearly altruism will take away the stigma attached to anti-social acts and result in chaos for the world.

Finally

Altruism is about you giving up your wellbeing and even your self for another. It does not care that you are as important as the other person. It is intrinsically unreasonable and accuses you of demanding the other sacrifices for you if you will not do it for her. There is no room for saying that it is wrong to kill your baby in the following case. Your baby is starving and your neighbour's is starving and one baby has to die so that the other can live. The altruist cannot command altruism or advise it. That would contradict the rule that the other must come first.