

EXISTENTIAL EGOISM - THE DOCTRINE THAT SELF-AWARE EXISTENCE NECESSARILY IMPLIES BEING EGOIST

WHAT IS EXISTENTIAL EGOISM?

The doctrine that a being that knows it exists ultimately lives only for itself. Altruism is not real.

IS IT TRUE?

What is being or existence? Thomistic philosophy says it has three features. One is it is true. There is something there. That something is itself and not something else so it is a unit or unity - two. Three it is good to exist.

Question: I have to be alive and well enough to do this good thing. Does that mean the good thing is more important than me or not? Does it mean I'm an egoist?

Answer: It is good that I exist. Good is bigger than me for without good there would be no me. If I want to live and be well to do a good thing then I am using my life and health as a means to doing an act. I am using myself as a means not as an end in myself. I see myself as a free agent. But being a free agent is more important than what I am free for. Sight is more important than what I see with it for I would see nothing without sight. How can doing good then be seen as essentially egoist when it seems to make me a sacrificial lamb? It is egoist to use your body just as something to fill with drink and drugs even though you get something out of it. What you get out of it feels good but is not a true benefit. So to make yourself a means to an end is to say that others are potentially just to be used as well. To deny your own dignity disrespects those who love you.

Vindictive is trying to hurt others for you hope to enjoy it. Vindictive means you enjoy hurting others or enjoy how you feel nothing at their pain. The selfish person at some level is "so what?" when it comes to hurting somebody or risking hurting them.

So are we saying that selfishness is at least partly vindictive? Yes. Is it about you dehumanising others? Is it about protecting yourself so that you aim for whatever resources you think you need to take otherwise somebody will get them before you? Yes. Selfishness must have spite for an ingredient.

The selfish person may not even realise how motivated by spite they are. Selfishness means you won't want to notice. After all spite is not good for your opinion of yourself as a person who deserves better than others. And it is not pleasant for you