

# The ethics of selfishness philosophy essay



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Selfishness... When people hear this word, most of them will think that it is a defect, an immoral value. According to the definition from the Webster's Dictionary, selfishness is "caring supremely or unduly for one's self." That can mean everything is rubbish for him except himself. Is this word really such that bad to hear? For Ayn Rand, a philosopher, she regarded that selfishness is a moral virtue. (In Bates, 2009) For her, selfish is totally not as worse as most people think of. Selfish is just how a person expresses his love to himself. Ayn Rand also defined selfishness as a concern with one's interest and also individual happiness as the moral purpose of the life (Bates, 2009). It is like an individual who is willingly to do a work, to spend a penny and to waste a second for his enjoyment only. ("An Explanation", n. d.) This selfish person always places his interest and his happiness foremost than other things. All are familiar that the antonym of selfishness is selflessness. How to distinguish these two? For Selflessness, it is known as one doing anything not for own sake but for others. This is different from the selfishness, which only works for self. Selfishness it is self benefits, while for selflessness is others benefit. Both of them are need to sacrifice, but selfishness' sacrificial repays with greater value. On the other hand, selflessness' sacrificial always is the greater value without any repays and sometimes one's life is become one of those sacrificial things. In short, selfishness could be better than selflessness, one is gaining benefits from what he has done, as selflessness is always giving out. The best thing of selfishness is that its intention of being selfish is not in a bad way although is not accepted by all yet still attempts the happiness.

Selfishness is a rational thought or an act for individual to attain his/her own happiness. Loving self is an intellectual act yet one still needs to know how to express this selfishness thought rationally and remember what Ayn Rand said, selfishness is a moral value. Rational Selfishness is the right of a person to seek for his own sake, he has the freedom to do what he desires, merely as long as he will not violating other people's rights. I have an own example to show how rational selfishness works. In a plastic bag factory, the manufacturer wants his workers to produce one hundred sacks of plastic bags in a day but the problem is the daily average shows that only about sixty sacks can be done in one day. Without hiring new workers and reaching one hundred sacks of plastic bags in a day, this manufacturer makes a selfish decision. He compelled all the workers to work fast and be able to reach one hundred sacks of plastic bags in a day; else there will be a deduction on their wages. This manufacturer is not expressing rational selfishness. He is violating his workers' rights. No one will feel happy to his decision and he may lose workers. If this manufacturer change his mind and tells the workers that they can go home at anytime as the amount of plastic bags reaches one hundred sacks. In this situation, I believe the workers will do their work as quickly as they can, so that they are be able to go home earlier and in the other hand, the manufacturer himself will also glad to the result. Both the manufacturer and workers gain their own happiness and both of them didn't violating each others' rights. This is what a rational selfish people will do to help him attempts the happiness he is looking for, together with the respecting of others' rights. Rational results happy ending all the time and is what people should appreciate.

Selfishness constructs happiness. One feels happy when he is getting what he needs and enjoys everything surrounding at him, and happiness is what people inspire to have for his entire life. Happiness links selfishness, these two have a bottomless relation to each other. I can say that everyone would want to live his life happy ever after same as the stories in the fairy tales and certainly no one will choose a desperate way to end up his life. Here is my example to demonstrate how this selfishness relates to the happiness. A very familiar fairy tale story " Cinderella", all of us know that story ends with Cinderella married to her Prince Charming through a glass shoe. The question is: if Cinderella didn't escape from the room and try the glass shoe but choose to stay calm in a locked room and let other woman married with the Prince, can she still be happy with this kind of situation? I affirm she wouldn't happy, everything will remain the same, suffering under her Mother in Law. Happiness is for everyone but one need to claim it by himself or his own hand. Hoping and seeking for someone will act as a selfless hero for him is not a shortcut way for one to gain his happiness. That is a matter of wasting time. It is better to start working for own sake, and the individual himself is the one suppose to choose his own destiny and others don't have the right to meddle him. Cinderella gives a good example of acting rational selfishness which brought to her forever happiness. At the moment to step on the right direction of true happiness is whether how deep the one loves himself than others.

Selfishness is a wisdom step, for one to easily accomplish his long lasting happiness. This happiness always bonds together with rational; rational performance tends one to obtain happiness. If one acts rational selfishness

to gain his happiness, the happiness will take effect permanently or lifelong period. People should keep in mind that parasites can't or never have the chance to taste the fruit of happiness whereas selfishness person have the opportunity to taste it because he exerts enough to achieve his desires and at the same time, he respects others' rights, and there will be no obstacle for him to toward his own happiness. Remember that loving self leads one to recognize and realize the significance of his goals in life and this lightens his way to happiness. Selfishness confronts difficulties like lose friends, lose the significant things, isolate from the crowd, but these things only happen when an individual performs the irrational selfishness, he abuses others rights, uses fraud and cheat to attain the happiness. This happiness is not the true one; this pleasure moment cannot stay long. Only rational selfishness directs the right direction to the path of real happiness.