

The meaning of life philosophy essay

[Philosophy](#), [Life Philosophy](#)



The universal question “ What is the meaning of life?” has been asked since the start of civilization. The answer from people in today’s society may differ greatly from the answers of those from Roman and Greek civilizations thousand years back. The great philosophers, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the Roman Stoics have contributed what we believe gives our life value. Each philosopher gives their own perspective of life which raises many questions by many for years.

Through the writings of Xenophon and Plato we learn what Socrates visions he had of life. One principle notion from Socrates is that the Meaning of life is through thought. What we can acquire from Socrates is he believed that humans will do what is good to achieve happiness. However it is finding what is the true human ‘ good’? Through Socrates teachings he wanted those to learn that there was a difference between opinion and knowledge. He believed that through questioning others opinion and showing others their opposition correct began the truth of knowledge. This leads to that truth can be acquired through dialect.

Ultimately, Socrates focus is on one’s ethics. It is our morals that make life what it is meant to be. He believes that if one does wrong then they do not clearly understand or have not experiences the good of life. There is no clarity to them on the virtues of love, morality, or anything else ethical. However if one never does anything wrong and is always good then they will never have reason to do wrong.

Given that Plato was a student of Socrates his teachings and writing intertwine with Socrates. The importance of life to Plate would be best

represented in his sixth book the Republic. Plato looks for answers about what is the ideal government, fair individuality, and what is good for the human soul. The Republic looks towards answer of government being based on justice, wisdom, courage, and temperance. Plato believed happiness would be achieved this ideal government which had an abolitions of families and private property.

Plato's visible and intelligible worlds is the concept of the continuation of discovering truth and knowledge which leads to life's happiness. In the visible world we can only have an opinion and with the intelligible world we find the knowledge. When that ultimate knowledge is discovered then that one can have good and meaning in their life. Plato wants people to discover the truth beyond their existence.

Aristotle thoughts differ greatly from those of Plato and Socrates. His ideas form a naturalist view. The value of life to Aristotle shapes around the thought of the body's soul, thinking, and one's perception. The individual can take properly take in what they see from the outside world and as well what they seem in themselves. Aristotle disagrees with Plato's the Republic in which plurality is what is needed. He claims that Plato's theories would not allow happiness do too many flaws. Aristotle believed that the good life was the city-state and it cannot be done alone but only as a community.

To Aristotle the worth of life begins with human activity. Happiness can be obtained first though personal experiences. He describes that it is not one thing alone that leads to happiness but multiple things such pleasure and work. However pleasure and work in moderation and not excess. Aristotle

emphasizes that life's meaning lies in our friendship and lovers. Humans are also able to have emotions in their souls like other animals but human differ from that they can control emotions. Since human can control their emotions and desires properly it lead one to moral virtues.

The Roman Stoics philosophy revolved around concept of the logos. Everything that surrounded one on earth including God was materialism according to Stoics. Virtus was well respected by Romans and with virtus being acknowledged one could fully accept their life's' situation. There was also no discrimination between male, female, slave, and free as opposed to Plato. The main goal for the Stoic was happiness. Nevertheless this happiness could only be achieved through the quest of virtue. This ideal of living with virtue meant living with reason within logos. It described by the Stoics to preserve happiness if to avoid emotion and passion.

Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the Roman Stoics philosophies vary but in many ways conform to each other. Aristotle philosophies of life and writings are most appealing to me. Although I do not agree entirely with everything Aristotle has stated I find he is the most leveled headed philosopher to my standards. Aristotle's belief that the individual and the community need to come together in the city-state is a philosophy that I strongly agree with. However, I do not agree with Aristotle's soul and body relations. I find that Plato and Socrates to be too extreme especially with Plato's the Republic.

The philosophers may have shaped many ideals of what is thought to be meaning of life. Theories from Plato to Aristotle to The Stoics have given the individuals over the past thousands years to today food for thought.