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CHAPTER 2- Science, Technology, and Society And the Human Condition



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Life is good



LESSON 3- THE GOOD LIFE

Every human being moves according to some end. Every action that emanates from a human person is a function of the purpose (telos) that the person has. Every human person, according to Aristotle, aspires for an end. This end, we have learned is happiness or human flourishing.

No individual resists happiness. We all want to be happy. Aristotle claims that happiness is the be all and end all of everything that we do. We may not realize it but the end goal of everything that we do is happiness. If you asks one person why he is doing what he is doing, he may not readily say that it is happiness that motivate him. When Aristotle claims that we want to be happy he does not necessarily mean the everyday happiness that we obtain when we win a competition.



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What Aristotle actually mean is human flourishing, a kind of contentment in knowing that one is getting the best out of life. A kind of feeling that one has maxed out his potentials in the world, that he has attained the crux of his humanity.

Happiness as the Goal of a Good Life

In the 18th century, John Stuart mill, declared the Greatest happiness principle by saying that an action is right as far as it maximizes the attainment of happiness for the greatest number of people.

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Materialism

The first materialists are the atomists in Ancient Greece. Democritus and Leucippus led a school whose primary belief is that the world is made up of and is controlled by the tiny indivisible units in the world called atomos or seeds. For Democritus and his disciples, the world, including human beings, is made up of matter. Atomos simply comes together randomly to form the things in the world. Only material entities matter. In terms of human flourishing, matter is what makes us attain happiness. We see this at work with most people who are clinging on to material wealth as the primary source of the meaning of their existence.

The Materialistic World





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Hedonism

The Hedonists, for their part, see the end goal of life in acquiring pleasure. Pleasure has always been the priority of hedonists. For them, life is about obtaining and indulging in pleasure because life is limited.

The mantra of this school of thought is the famous, “Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die.” Led by Epicurus, this school of thought also does not buy any notion of afterlife just like the materialists.





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Stoicism

Another school of thought led by Epicurus, the stoics espoused the idea that to generate happiness, one must learn to distance oneself and be apathetic. The original term *apatheia*, precisely means to be indifferent. The stoics, happiness can only be attained by a careful practice of apathy. Adopt the fact that some things are not within our control.

The sooner we realized this,
the happier we can be.



Theism

Many people find the meaning of their lives using God as a fulcrum of their existence. The Philippines as a predominantly Catholic country is witness to how people base their life goals on beliefs that hinged on some form of supernatural reality called heaven. The ultimate basis of

happiness for theists is the communication with God. The world where we are in is only just a temporary reality where we have to maneuver around while waiting for the ultimate return to the hands of God.





Humanism

Another school of thought is humanism where it espouses the freedom of man to carve his own destiny and to legislate his own laws, free from the shackles of a God that monitors and controls. The humanist, man is literally the captain of his own ship. Inspired by the enlightenment In seventeenth century, humanists see themselves not merely as stewards of the creation but as individuals who are in control of themselves and the world outside them. This is the spirit of most scientists who thought that the world is a place and space for freely unearthing the world in seeking for ways on how to improve the lives of its inhabitants.



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We agree or not technological advancements, these are all undertaken in the hopes of achieving good life. Balance between the good life, ethics, and technology has to be attained.

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Technological advancements are seemingly occurring in a rapid pace that our morality cannot quite keep up; no such consideration was given in this approach in achieving the good life.





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Country Living

**“IF YOU WANT TO BE
HAPPY, BE.”**

- Leo Tolstoy

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