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Subject: Re: Debate on Altruism.

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Thu, 12 Feb 2009 17:31:55 GMT

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I think you misunderstand the concept of self-interest a little bit. You are insinuating that all selfishness is a bad thing and that it's a corruption of sorts. I don't believe that, at all. It certainly can BE a corruption of the mind/soul/heart, etc..., but I don't feel that it has to be.

I assume that in Buddhism, you live your life in a way to be enlightened among other things. You're acting in self-interest, but it's not "selfish" in the way that the world sees selfishness. You're not trying to put yourself above anyone else, and you're certainly not trying to push anyone down. You're simply trying to progress as a person, and helping others along the way. Certainly bettering yourself is not "selfish", but it is acting in self-interest.

Of course, acting in a self-destructive manner IS a selfish act, and selfishness is a negative form of egoism.

Like I said, acting in self-interest doesn't have to be done with the intent to reap the benefits. That's the difference between someone you can see as moral versus someone as immoral. It's what one seeks to get out of it.

You brought up love. People don't get into love because it's "what humans do". You have a desire to be with someone and make them happy. If you can do that, then you succeed in your desire. You benefit from the sense of fulfillment, and you benefit from getting love in return (hopefully) from your partner.

Edit: Of course, there's also people who like relationships to control someone else, but then that's just an obvious case of egoism. Then there's arranged marriages which is to not shame one's family/culture/religion by refusing.

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