**What is Psychological Egoism?**

An Egoist is someone who thinks that life purpose is to look out for oneself – there is no obligation to look out for any one else – in fact, it would be morally wrong

**•Ethical egoism Vs. Psychological Egoism:**

Ethical Egoism

•A claim abut morality

•We “ought” to pursue our self interest

Psychological Egoism

•A theory on human psychology (leads to despair)

•A claim about human nature

•We do “in fact” pursue self interest

**Arguments for Psychological Egoism**

We always do what we most want to do….p.65

–Whether it is altruism or self Interest…(Actions dictated by

desires, choices etc…)

•But do we?

**Flaws in the argument:**

We do things because we ought to not because we want to. P. 66

•Acting on desire does not mean acting out of self interest/ looking out for your self

•It depends what you desire (do you only care for your own welfare regardless of others?)

“If what you want is to help someone else, then your motive is altruistic, not self-interest” p. 66

We always do what makes us feel good (self satisfied?)...p. 66

Rachels answer: The strategy of re-interpreting motives

We always do what makes us feel good...p. 66  
A benefit/self-interest for the person who does the act.

Sometimes there’s more than one motive...

Yet still a benevolent motive (case of Wesley Autrey) p. 68

PE provides a simple response to human vanity, has nothing to do with morality.

An implausible theory “an unrealistic view of human nature” p. 69

**Ethical Egoism….Me first?... Me only?**

**•**Ought to pursue own self interest exclusively

•Looking out for yourself doesn’t mean not helping others...

–Sometimes your interest coincide with another person’s interest

•Looking out for yourself doesn’t mean you get to do whatever you want no matter what...

–Ought to do what is in the best interest over the long run

**Arguments for Ethical Egoism**

•Altruism is self-defeating

We know our selves more than we know others hence Pursuing the interest of others does more harm than good

“Looking out for others” is an intrusion to their privacy

Making others the object of your charity is degrading…Consequences dependency, lack of self respect, and resentful.

Is this the true in all cases of charity (hungry children etc…)?

•Therefore by promoting our self interest we are promoting everyone’s interest

•That defeats what ethical egoism is all about. Instead of being egoists we end up being altruists.

Ayn Rand’s argument

•Altruism is a destructive idea (it denies the value of the individual)

•You end up not living your life but sacrificing it p. 71

•Read argument on page 72

•Problem: An argument with two extremes (wither ethical egoism or ethical altruism)

•A Balance/Middle Ground is needed

**Ethical Egoism as compatible with commonsense morality**

•A revisionist moral philosophy

•A common sense morality

–Obey rules, speak the truth, keep promises (To EE those duties are based on pure self interest)

•Duty not to harm others (we get hurt back by them)

•Duty not to lie (Bad reputation and people won’t be honest with us)

Duty to keep promises( to get people to keep their promises with us

**Arguments against Ethical Egoism**

•It endorses wicked actions when they promote self-interest

•It cannot handle conflicts of interest

•It’s logically inconsistent

•It is unacceptably arbitrary (discussion Group)