



Eudaimonia

Module 5 Activity Goals, Actions, Virtues

In our class sessions on Aristotle’s Virtue ethics, we explored the Greek idea of Eudaimonia—human flourishing, excellence, or happiness—and several key principles towards ways of living that could enable human flourishing through the cultivation of specific virtues.

For this Module Activity, you will create a table-graph where identify some of your own goals and the actions and virtues required to achieve them. You will then spend **two days** (perhaps the weekend), intentionally attending to the cultivation – the practicing, habit-building, internalizing – of one or two selected virtues from that table.

For Your Table (#1 below):

- ❖ Write down **three goals** you consider intrinsically valuable: goods that are worth pursuing for themselves.
- ❖ **describe the actions required** in order for you to achieve these ends. You will likely think of multiple actions here.
- ❖ **list the virtues or character strengths for each action** that would enable you to do them well. Again, it's likely that you will think of multiple virtues for each action, and some may be duplicates from other columns. If you need a list of virtues, see the list given on the Aristotle PPT, or [check this list out](#) (the “mean”-list is the virtue-list).¹

For your Two Day Philosophical-Exercise (#2 below)

- ❖ **Select one or two of the virtues** you’ve identified in your table
- ❖ Think of some **ways that you could “Fake it til you make it” or “learn by doing”** the virtuous action.
- ❖ Over the course of two days, **engage in some of those practice-actions**.
- ❖ **Write a reflective essay** (see #2 below)

What you’ll turn in (due on Tues, Oct 16)

- 1) A copy (screen-shot, or doc) of **the graph/table** you created. (here’s a template you can use)
- 2) A **reflection essay** on which virtue(s) you chose to attend to, and practice, over the course of two days, including reflections on:
 - a. The **importance of that virtue** for the goal you have connected it to
 - b. At least **two examples of specific actions you did** over the two days to “practice” that virtue
 - c. ***one* selected key quote from Aristotle’s Book II**, which you explain the meaning of by drawing on your own experiences above. (for instance, if you were to explain your quote with the help of principle one (about habit-formation) or two (about the golden mean) or three (about the internalization of virtuous disposition), etc. how would those be illustrated, understood, and such through the lens of your two-day experiment (...or your overall table of goals, actions and virtues, if you’d like to do a more holistic exploration of your goals and practices as seen through the lens of Aristotle’s virtue ethics).

¹ The table idea is borrowed from a Philosophical Exercise developed by Tushar Irani, professor of Philosophy at Wesleyan University.