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Intro to Philosophy

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<div align="center">PHI 101 Intro to Philosophy</div>

<div align="center">Writing Assignment Two</div>

Virtue ethics is a normative philosophy that stresses the significance of character qualities or virtues in moral existence. According to this approach, rather than obeying specific moral norms or concepts, the emphasis should be on cultivating virtuous character attributes. The foundations of virtue ethics may be found in the works of ancient Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle.

Plato's philosophical ideas had a significant impact on the development of Western thought, particularly in the areas of metaphysics, ethics, politics, and epistemology. His work explored questions about the nature of reality, knowledge, and morality, and he sought to develop a comprehensive understanding of these concepts. Plato also believed in the presence of objective and everlasting forms or ideas, which he felt were the fundamental truth behind the physical universe. He thought that comprehending these forms was necessary for understanding the universe and living a noble life.

For Plato, virtue was not just a matter of personal morality, but was also closely tied to the concept of justice. He believed that individuals had a responsibility to contribute to the well-being of their communities and to work together to create a just society. Plato thought that virtue could be taught and that it was the state's role to offer education that would nurture its citizens' moral character. He contended that humans may cultivate virtue through studying philosophy and acquiring intelligence, bravery, self-discipline, and other qualities. Plato believed that virtue was essential for living a good life and for creating a just and harmonious society. In his work

"Morality and Happiness," Plato argues that morality is essential for achieving true happiness and well-being. "Morality, then, is an art which aims to make men happy, and the happiness which it produces is the enjoyment of things good and the acquisition of the same, accompanied by the consciousness of having deserved them through one's own exertions" (Plato, "Morality and Happiness," p. 487).

Aristotle was a Greek philosopher and scientist who lived between 384 and 322 BCE. He studied Plato and subsequently became Alexander the Great's teacher. Aristotle contributed significantly to several fields of knowledge, including logic, metaphysics, ethics, politics, biology, and physics. Aristotle's ethics and politics were concerned with the nature of humans and how they should live in society. He felt that virtue and moral character were necessary for leading a decent life, and that individuals owed it to their societies to contribute to their well-being.

Aristotle thought that virtues are habits or dispositions that allow people to act rationally, and that the ultimate goal of the moral life is to achieve eudaimonia, which may be interpreted as human flourishing or happiness. He recognized many essential virtues, such as courage, justice, knowledge, and temperance, and maintained that cultivating these qualities takes practice and habituation. "Happiness then is the best, noblest, and most pleasant thing in the world. And these attributes are not severed as in the inscription at Delos: 'Most noble is what is justest, but best is health; and pleasantest is to win what we love.' For all these properties belong to the best activities; and these, or one, the best and most complete activity, will be the activity of the best thing" (Aristotle, "Ethical Virtue," p. 492).

One practical demonstration of how a virtue ethicist might address an ethical problem is the instance of a doctor who is presented with a terminally sick patient who is in excruciating

agony. To ease the patient's suffering, the doctor has the option of providing a deadly dose of medicine, but doing so would violate the Hippocratic Oath, which forbids doctors from knowingly inflicting injury to their patients.

From the standpoint of virtue ethics, the doctor should concentrate on cultivating the virtue of compassion, which involves a strong care for the well-being of others. In this scenario, the doctor's compassion should encourage them to consider alternatives to euthanasia, such as palliative care or hospice care.

It is critical to examine virtue ethics' strengths and shortcomings while assessing its suitability as a cohesive approach to moral life. The emphasis on the development of virtuous character qualities is one of virtue ethics' strengths; it can give a more comprehensive approach to ethical decision-making than rule-based or consequentialist methods.

However, one weakness of virtue ethics is that it can be difficult to determine which virtues are relevant to a particular ethical situation and how they should be balanced against each other. Additionally, the emphasis on the development of virtuous character traits may not provide clear guidance in situations where conflicting virtues are in play.

In conclusion, virtue ethics offers a distinctive approach to the moral life that emphasizes the importance of developing virtuous character traits. While it has its strengths and weaknesses, it provides a useful framework for ethical decision-making that takes into account the complexity of human experience and the importance of personal character.

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