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Sept. 25, 2019

One Page Assignment

ONE PAGE ASSIGNMENT #4

Is it important to be individualistic, collectivistic, or altruistic? In understanding the individual we take the notion that selfish interests guide our conduct. Us, in the sense of the plural, and not another, is the most important person in our group. With collectivism we view ourselves as part of a totality that needs what's best for it in its entirety to successfully function, and this above any part not having what's individually best. But in altruism, we can function effectively as both selfless and selfish, so perhaps it is what's best.

Altruism as a guiding philosophy states that we take a disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others. Altruism inherently negates selfish individual interests, but does not exclude collectivistic bargaining for what's best for a group. In this context, we assert that what's best for the group is what's best for me regardless of what I may think. As applied to the group, instead of selflessly giving to an individual other, we do what's best altruistically. This means we cope with the wants, needs, and desires of others so long as they don't infringe on our own liberty individually.

Conceding our interests seems difficult until we realize that as the American Dollar says, E Pluribus Unum, which means "out of many, one". It literally seems that simple to this author that we cede our ego and accept we can't always get our way and another's interests are, at least sometimes, as important as or more important than our own, so long as ours are at least recognized. While altruism as applied to the ethics of something like the business world isn't clear cut, as altruism is with charity.

In modern living in the USA our everyday experience with altruism in our individualistic culture is accepting we have to tolerate another way of life, or another individual we hate, ceding instead the ground that as a sum of our parts we rely on the concept altogether for our society to succeed.