

Pragmatic Rationalism: An Introduction

Frank Robert Vivelo



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Pragmatic rationalism is a coherent blend of elements from Epicureanism, Stoicism, Empiricism, and Existentialism. It holds that the ultimate goal of life is happiness-individual happiness identified as psychic tranquility or untroubledness-and attempts to pursue that goal in the most practical, efficacious manner possible. Accordingly, it emphasizes investing this pursuit in the only things we each control, our thoughts and feelings, and minimizing desire for and reliance on all things external to us and therefore not under our control, such as wealth and fame. It insists that individuals choose, and therefore are responsible for, all they think and feel. It rejects all emotionalism and belief systems and, instead, relies on induction and probability to guide decision making and behavior. Though an egoistic and hedonistic philosophy from the individual's perspective, it nevertheless advocates the Golden Rule as the most useful guiding principle in interaction with others.

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