
Summary Of Robert Nozicks's Philosophy And The Meaning Of Life

In this paper, I will be explaining the main points of the essay called Philosophy and The Meaning of Life by Robert Nozick, where Robert Nozick begins to talk about how we have to understand the unquestioned assumptions and do we really want to know about the meaning of life. In his essay he talks about what a meaningful life should be, he starts with the modes of meaningfulness, the conflict with his meaning of life with death, a person's traces, god's plan, and transcending limits.

Firstly, the modes of meaningfulness, are notions that Nozick has set in order to determine a meaningful life. The modes are a way that.....the first five modes that he describes were one being the modes are a way to determine/describe if a person has lived a meaningful life or not. The first mode that Nozick starts explains... that meaning as an external causal relationship where causal antecedents or causal concomitants that serve as a basis of inference, the second mode is meaning as external referential or semantic relationship, this means giving synonymy, reference, stating a fact or symbolizing someone or something the third mode is something that has meaning as intention or purpose, for instance when there is intending and action or purpose, the fourth mode is meaning as a lesson, the fifth mode is meaning as personal significance, importance, value, and mattering, based upon a positive evaluation of transparent features of our life plan. This is recognizable as what some have meant by a meaningful life: a life organized according to a plan and hierarchy of goals that integrates and directs the life,

"...having certain features of the structure, pattern, and detail that the person intends his life to have...and show forth; he lives transparently so others can see the life plan his life is based upon...and thereby learn a lesson from his life... a lesson involving a positive evaluation of these weighty and intended features in the life plan he transparently lives. In sum, the pattern he transparently exemplifies provides a positive lesson" (Nozick 69).

This quote explains how Nozick thinks that a meaningful life should consist of these sets of ideas, it for him it is a way to see if one had lived their life in a meaningful or an unmeaningful way.

Secondly, in the essay, Nozick talks about death, where if scientists were trying to find a solution to make one immortal it will defy his definition of a meaningful life. "It would appear, then, that persons who were or could become immortal should choose to set a temporal limit to their lives in order to escape meaninglessness" (Nozick 70). this quote explains how if we were to become immortal then we would lose the

Thirdly Nozick also talks about the idea of a person leaving it traces after death "A significant life leaves its mark on the world. A significant life is, in some sense, permanent; it makes a permanent difference to the world— it leaves traces. To be wiped out completely, traces and all go a long way toward destroying the meaning of one's life. Endurance, however, even if a necessary condition for a meaningful life, is certainly not sufficient" (Nozick 72).

In conclusion, the summary of this writing explains what some of the reasons may be for in order for a person to live a meaningful life through Robert Nozick's ideas of modes of meaningfulness, how death has a crucial part in defining that allows for people to see/think that the person has lived a meaningful life,

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