

# Altruism

Post by “Joshua” of May 30, 2021 at 4:21 PM

Diogenes of Oenoanda is [excellent](#) on this point;

## Quote

In addition to my fellow-citizens who are in this predicament, I desire to help future generations, for they too, though unborn, belong to us, as do any foreigners who may happen to come here.

And a little further down;

## Quote

This includes those who are called “foreigners,” though they are not really so, for the compass of the world gives all people a single country and home. But it does not include all people whatsoever, and I am not pressuring any of you to testify thoughtlessly and unreflectively. I do not wish you to say, “this is true,” if you do not agree with us. For I do not speak with certainty on any matter, not even on matters concerning the gods, without providing you evidence, and the proper reasoning to support what I say.

What humans (and some other mammals!) have in lieu of a moral imperative is an empathetic faculty. Even more than that, our evolutionary history has endowed us with a neurological reward circuit to reinforce this faculty. Altruism is then in itself another avenue for the pursuit of pleasure! Nor does this pleasure-reward by any means cheapen the experience of the fulfillment of empathy; indeed, quite the opposite. It means that the act of helping is beneficial both for the one who helps, and for the one who receives help--it brings good to everyone involved.

After all, Vatican Sayings no. 52 doesn't say that friendship dances around the block, or down to the social club and back; "Friendship dances around the world bidding us all to awaken to the recognition of happiness."