

MORAL FEELINGS AMBITION

Ambition is the desire to accomplish something above the ordinary, thus improving one's own ^{lot} or someone else's welfare.

Unqualified ambition is morally neutral: there are good ambitions, such as that of becoming a competent farmer, and ~~bad~~ ones, such as that of becoming a conqueror. Some ambitions are purely selfish, others disinterested, and still others a mixture of the two. For example, the ^{dedicated} civil servant, statesman, or voluntary worker [bénévole] is happiest when he accomplishes actions that benefit the public. Of all ambitions that is the best, for it unites benevolence and self-love.

Humility, or the lack of ambition, makes for mediocrity. We should encourage good ambitions, particularly those of the mixed type. But we should check ambitions, in order to minimize the search for success at any price. (Nothing exceeds like success.)

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