

## VIRTUE: DEFINITION

Definition: A virtue is a learned trait of character that enables one to live a satisfying and useful life.

Note the following features of this definition. Firstly, virtues are not innate but learned. This disqualifies physical strength and wealth as virtues. Secondly, virtues are learned but are neither skills nor items of knowledge. Accordingly, the acquisition and exercise of virtues are very different from those of skills and items of knowledge, even though in all three cases some effort and practice is needed. Thirdly, the possession of virtues does not lead to happiness or to the bliss of eternal life, but to satisfaction with oneself and others in a given society. Fourthly, the definition could conceivably apply to some of the higher animals.

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