I'm not a bot



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Also found in: Thesaurus, Wikipedia. (m-prtns)n.1. The quality or condition of being importance, consequence, significance, import, weight These nouns refer to the state or quality of being significant, influential, or worthy of note
or esteem. Importance is the most general term: the importance of a proper diet. Consequence is especially applicable to persons or things of notable rank or position (scholars of consequence) and to what is important because of its possible outcome, result, or effect (tax laws of consequence) and to what is importance and import refer to the quality
of something that gives it special meaning or value: an event of real significance; works of great social import. Weight suggests seriousness or authority: "The popular faction at Rome ... was led by men of weight" (J.A. Froude). American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved. (mptns) n1. the state of being important; significationCollins English Dictionary Complete and Unabridged, 12th Edition 2014 HarperCollins Publishers
1991, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2014 (mpr tns) n. 1. the quality or state of being importance, consequence, significance, moment refer to something valuable, influential, or worthy of note. importance is the most general of these terms, assigning exceptional value or
influence to a person or thing: the importance of Einstein's discoveries. consequence may suggest personal distinction, or may suggest importance based on results to be produced: a woman of consequence in world affairs; an event of great consequence for our future. significance carries the importance not readily or immediately
recognized: The significance of the discovery became clear many years later. moment, on the other hand, usu. refers to immediately apparent, self-evident importance: an international treaty of great moment. Random House, Inc. All
rights reserved. See Also: MEMORY, NECESSITYBrittle and meaningless as cocktail party patter William BrammerHis influence it is like burning a candle at Dover to show light at Calais Samuel Johnson been an America instead of an Englishman living in England, his comment on Thomas Sheridans influence on English
literature might well have illustrated with A candle in New York to show light in Boston. Hollow as the (ghastly) amiabilities of a college reunion Raymond M. WeaverImpact [of information] as thin as gold Raymond Chandler (About as) important as a game of golf to an astronomer AnonImportant as mathematics to an engineer AnonInconsequential like
the busy work that grade school teachers devise to keep children out of mischief Ann PetryInsignifacnt as the canals of Mars Frank ConroyIts loss would be incalculable like losing the Mona Lisa Dr. Paul Parks, New York Times, August 23, 1986 on potential death of Floridas Lake OkeechobeeMeaningful as love Kenneth PatchenMeaningless, like
publishing a book of your opinions with a vanity press Scott SpencerOf no more importance than a flea or a louse Boris PasternakIn the novel, Doctor Zhivago, a character uses this simile to compare a wife to workers. Seemed scarcely to concern us, like fairy tales or cautionary fables that are not to be taken literally or to heart Joan ChaseShallow as a
pie pan Anon[A speech] shallow as time Thomas CarlyleUneventful as theory A. R. AmmonsWorthless as withered weeds Emily BronteSimiles Dictionary, 1st Edition. 1988 The Gale Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Noun1.importance of a well-balanced diet"value - the quality (positive
or negative) that renders something desirable or valuable; "the Shakespearean Shylock is of dubious value in the modern world"big deal - anything of great importance or consequencemagnitude - relative importance; "a problem of the first magnitude" account - importance or value; "a person of considerable account"; "he predicted that although it is
of small account now it will rapidly increase in importance requiring speedy action; "do not underestimate the significance of nuclear power"essentiality, essentiality, e
need"weightiness, weight - the relative importance - a prominent status; "a person of importance standing - social or financial or professional
status or reputation; "of equal standing"; "a member in good standing"emphasis, accent - special importance or significance; "the red light gave the central figure increased emphasis"; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of being first in importance or significance; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of being first in importance or significance; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of being first in importance or significance; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of being first in importance or significance; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of being first in importance or significance; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of being first in importance or significance; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of being first in importance or significance; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of being first in importance or significance; "the room was decorated in shades of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents primacy - the state of grey with distinctive red accents pred accents primacy - the state of grey with a state of grey with 
2003-2012 Princeton University, Farlex Inc.noun1. significance, interest, concern, matter, moment, value, worth, weight, import, consequence, substance, relevance, usefulness, momentousness Safety is of paramount importance. 2. prestige, standing, status, rule, authority, influence, distinction, esteem, prominence, supremacy, mastery, dominion,
eminence, ascendancy, pre-eminence, mana (N.Z.) He was too puffed up with his own importance to accept the verdict. Collins Thesaurus of the English Language Complete and Unabridged 2nd Edition. 2002 HarperCollins Publishers 1995, 2002 noun The American Heritage Roget's Thesaurus. Copyright 2013, 2014 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved. WichtigkeitBedeutungBelangimportanciapesosignificadoimportanzarilevanzaseriamenteimportanteCollins Spanish Dictionary - Complete and Unabridged 8th Edition 2005 William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1971, 1988 HarperCollins Publishers 1992,
1993, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2005 [mprtns] n importance to sb compter beaucoup d'importance avoir peu d'importanc
parent avec une personne importante? Collins English/French Electronic Resource. HarperCollins Publishers 2005 Collins Publishers 1991, 1997, 1999, 2004, 2005, 2007 Collins Italian Dictionary 1st Edition HarperCollins Publishers 2005 Collins Publ
1995 (important) adjective (negative unimportant) having great value, influence or effect. an important book/person/occasion; It is important that you arrive here on time. belangrik importante svarbus svargs; nozmgs penting belangrijk viktig,
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svargi; nozmgi dengan penting in belangrijke mate betydningsfullt, viktigistotnie importance nounKernerman English Multilingual Dictionary 2006-2013 K Dictionaries Ltd. dleitost vigtighed Wichtigkeit importance rounKernerman English Multilingual Dictionary 2006-2013 K Dictio
belangrijkheid betydning znaczenie importncia vikt nem tm quan trng Multilingual Translator HarperCollins Publishers 2009English-Spanish Medical Dictionary Farlex 2012 Want to this page for free fun content. Link to this page: Under Thought is included
every effect which has to be produced by speech, the subdivisions being,-- proof and refutation; the excitation of the feelings, such as pity, fear, anger, and the like; the suggestion of importance or its opposite. Two or three people, your husband among them, understand all the importance of the thing, but the others simply drag it down. The paramount
importance of these considerations in explaining the immense amount of variation which pigeons have undergone, will be obvious when we treat of Selection. There was no hospital or town of any importance nearer. "One must begin with grandeur, paint everything expressed, soften the shades of those which are of least importance, collect all into
one point of view, and carry the reader thither with a rapid flight. "The word SIXTY was emphasized in a way to show the importance that showed that she felt she quite knew what she was about,
went across the room to where Pierre was standing and gave him a taper. For in the most insignificant words of men of political importance their friends and their opponents always endeavour to detect, and hence think they can interpret, something of their true thoughts. Mosey was too resolutely bent on asserting her own importance, by making the
most of the alarm that she had suffered, to be repressed by any ordinary method of remonstrance, really," replied the Rich Woman, with a cheerful smile. I have many friends in America, I feel a grateful interest in the country, I hope and believe it will successfully work out a problem of the highest importance to the whole
human race. That consideration naturally tends to create great respect for the high opinion which the people of America have so long and uniformly entertained of the importance of their continuing firmly united under one federal government, vested with sufficient powers for all general and national purposes. as in significance, weightas in
prominence, standingBrowse#aabbccddeeffgghhiijjkkllmmnnooppqqrrssttuuvvwwxxyyzzAboutCareersContact usCookies, terms, & privacyHelpFollow usGet the Word of the Day every day! 2025 Dictionary.com, LLC [noncount] : the quality or state of being important : value or significance The teacher lectured the students on the importance of
mutual respect. a medical discovery of great/major importance [=a very importance in the wake of the bomb attack. a matter of little/minor importance Nothing of importance [=nothing important] was decided. [+]
more examples [-] hide examples [+] Example sentences [-] Hide examples Meanings Synonyms Sentences The state or quality of being importance. Importance is a property of entities that matter or make a difference. For example, World War II was an
important event and Albert Einstein was an important person because of how they affected the world. There are disagreements in the academic literature about what type of difference is required. According to the causal impact view, something is important if it has a big causal impact on the world. This view is rejected by various theorists, who insist
that an additional aspect is required: that the important thing affects the well-being of people. So on this view, World War II was important, not just because it brought about many wide-ranging changes but because these changes had severe negative impacts on
the well-being of the people involved. The difference in question is usually understood counterfactually as the contrast between how the world actually is and how the world would have been without the existence of the important entity. It is often argued that important entity. It is often argued that importance claims are context- or domain-dependent. This means that they either explicitly
or implicitly assume a certain domain in relation to which something matters. For example, studying for an exam is important in the context of academic success but not in the context of world history. Important in the context of academic success but not in the context of world history.
domain. The term "importance" is often used in overlapping ways with various related terms, such as "meaningfulness", "value", and "caring". Theorists frequently try to elucidate these terms by comparing them to show what they have in common and how they differ. A meaningful life is usually also important in some sense. But meaningfulness has
additional requirements: the life should be guided by the agent's intention and directed at realizing some form of higher purpose. In some contexts, to say that it is valuable. More generally, however, importance refers not to value itself but to a value difference. This difference may also be
negative: some events are important because they have very bad consequences. Importance to it. Ideally, the two overlap: people subjective feature in contrast to the subjective feature
apart when people care about unimportant things or fail to care about importance based on intrinsic or final value. A closely related distinction is between importance relative to someone and absolute or unrestricted
importance. The concept of importance is central to numerous fields and issues. Many people desire to be important or to lead an important or to lead an important or to lead an important but negative way: by causing a lot of harm and thereby making an important but negative value difference. Common desires
that are closely related include wanting power, wealth, and fame. In the realm of ethics, the importance of something often determines how one should act towards this thing, for example, by paying attention to it or by protecting it. In this regard, importance is a normative property, meaning that importance claims constitute reasons for actions,
emotions, and other attitudes. On a psychological level, considerations of the relative importance of the aspects of a situation help the individual simplify its complexity by only focusing on its most significant features. A central discussion in the context of the meaning of life concerns the question of whether human life is important on the cosmic level
Nihilists and absurdists usually give a negative response to this question. This pessimistic outlook can in some cases cause an existential crisis. In the field of artificial intelligence, implementing artificial reasoning to assess the importance of information poses a significant challenge when trying to deal with the complexity of real-world situations. the
quality of being importantShe stressed the importance of careful preparation. to emphasize/highlight the importance of somethingHe understands the importanc
be of paramount/vital importanceState your reasons in order of his own importance (= of his status). see also self-importanceExtra ExamplesDon't underestimate the importance of good presentation. Education takes on an added importance at a time of economic uncertainty. It is of the utmost importance that you
arrive on time. No one can seriously question the political importance of the environment. She was inclined to downplay the importance of her own role in the affair. The manual stresses the importance of her own role in the affair. The manual stresses the importance of her own role in the affair.
West. The town's importance lies in the richness and quality of its architecture. These finds have considerable archaeological importance on cleanliness. Oxford Collocations Dictionary adjective cardinal central considerable verb + importance + verb preposition of the first importance in the richness and quality of its architecture. These finds have considerable archaeological importance on cleanliness.
importance importance forimportance forimportance forimportance forimportance matter of great importance for im
in + portare carry. See importance in the Oxford Advanced American Dictionary See importance in the Oxford Learner's Dictionary of entities that matter or make a difference. For example, World War II was an important event and Albert Einstein was an
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relative importance of the aspects of a situation help the individual simplify its complexity by only focusing on its most significant features. A central discussion in the context of the meaning of life concerns the question of whether human life is important on the cosmic level. Nihilists and absurdists usually give a negative response to this question
This pessimistic outlook can in some cases cause an existential crisis. In the field of artificial intelligence, implementing artificial reasoning to assess the importance of information poses a significant challenge when trying to deal with the complexity of real-world situations. Importance is a property of entities that make a difference in the world. [1][2]
So for something to be important, it has to impact the world around it. For example, World War II was an important event in history both because of the suffering it caused and because of the long-term political changes it affected.[3] Or in the field of medicine, Alexander Fleming was an important person because he discovered penicillin and thereby
made a difference to the health of many people since then.[4] Things that lack importance, on the other hand, could be removed without affecting any significant change to the world.[5] Nonetheless, it seems that making a difference is not sufficient: even unimportant things usually make differences, however trivial they may be. An uncontroversial
but circular definition holds that something is important if it makes an important from unimportant from unimportant from unimportant if it makes an important from unimportant things.[7][1][2] The idea behind such an approach is important from unimportant from 
that there are many ways to make an important difference and there should be some element they all share in common.[7][1][2] According to the causal impact a thing has in its domain or on the world at large.[7] Many theorists require as an additional element that this impact affects the
intrinsic value of the world, often in terms of promoting someone's well-being.[8][9] The difference between these views matters for various issues. For example, it has been argued that human life lacks importance on a cosmic level when judged based on its causal impact but has it in relation to the value difference it makes.[7] Other central aspects
bigger the difference it makes.[7][8]According to the causal impact view, a thing is important if it has a sufficiently big causal impact on a large scale. This view has a strong initial plausibility since it is true for many events we see as important. It is reflected in the intuition that, to become important, one must interact with the world and change it.[7]
[10][11] For example, Napoleon is seen as an individual of world-historic importance because of how his decisions affected the course of history and changed the lives of many Europeans. Something similar is true for many world-historic figures: they affected how many people lived, perceived them, and responded to them.[7] However, various
arguments have been raised against the causal impact view, often based on counterexamples to the effect that having a big causal impact is neither sufficient nor necessary for importance. [8][1][7] For example, it has been argued that the invention of a device that can bring about cosmic changes to the orbits of planets in faraway galaxies would not
be important if these changes had no impact on anyone's well-being. Or in analogy to The Myth of Sisyphus: if rolling a rock up a hill on earth is pointless, then one cannot simply increase its importance by multiplying its causal impact. So doing the same thing not just for one rock, but for billions of rocks across the galaxy, is equally pointless. [7]Other
counterexamples aim to show that, at least in a few cases, a large causal impact is not necessary for importance of Alpha Centauri, its intrinsic value would significantly affect the overall importance of this life
on other star systems was negligible. Or on a small scale, a short period of extraordinary suffering before death may significantly affect the overall value of someone's life even if it does not have any wider causal impact view suggest that something else besides or instead of the causal
influence is central to importance. According to the value impact view, this factor consists of an impact on the intrinsic or final value.[7][6][5] In this regard, the relation to value is built into the concept of importance: causal impact view of
importance, it has been argued that having immense causal powers does not entail importance if these powers are not used to make a value differences on the evaluative level it brings about. [7][8] To assess the value impact of something, it is
necessary to study not just the thing itself but also its wider and sometimes indirect impact on its surroundings.[7] Many theorists combine both views in their conception of importance: things are important to the extent that they cause value differences. Some theorists, however, defend a pure value impact account by not including causation as a
requirement.[7]A central aspect of the value impact view is how intrinsic or final value is understood. Many theorists in this field have argued for some form of welfarism.[2][9] On this account, final value consists in the well-being to Harry
Frankfurt, this can be understood in terms of needs: a thing becomes important because some sentient being needs it. In this context, a person needs something if they will be inevitably harmed unless they have it.[1][2] For example, food and shelter are important to humans because they suffer if they do not have them. Abraham Maslow holds that
there is a complex hierarchy of needs. The needs on the higher levels, like esteem and self-actualization, can only be fulfilled once the needs on the lower levels, like food and shelter, are fulfilled.[14][15] A more general definition includes not just negative impacts on well-being, but also positive ones. So a thing may be important either because in
harms someone or because it helps someone or is enjoyed by them.[2] A similar connection between being good and being important is drawn by Ernst Tugendhat. He defines "good" as that which is justifiably preferred. According to him, this can be understood, for the most part, in relation to someone's well-being: a thing is good or justifiably
preferable to the extent that it contributes to someone's future well-being. In the case of altruism, for example, an action by one person is good because it aims at improving the well-being of another person. [9][16]The value impact of things is often understood counterfactually: based on how much value would be lost or gained if, hypothetically
speaking, the thing had not existed.[7][17][18] This value includes both the intrinsic and the instrumental value of the things are important because they are good in themselves, like pleasurable experiences. In the former case, some things are important because they are useful to other things and help them becomes
more valuable, like medicine or school books.[19][20][7] The overall degree of importance is then given by the total value difference a thing makes.[7][8]Most theorists agree that importance of a thing is relative to a certain domain. For example, preparing for an exam is important in the
context of academic success or a revealing slip of the tongue may be important in the context of personal health or the importance of the Scientific Revolution in the context of ruining someone's career. But these events are not important in the context of personal health or the importance of the Scientific Revolution in the context of ruining someone's career.
technological discoveries.[7] The property of importance has a comparative aspect in this regard: something is importance than most of the other things in its domain. [6][5] Because of this context-dependence, importance may be
understood as a relational or extrinsic property: an event may have importance relative to one domain. [7][6][5]Some researchers also consider the possibility of a form of absolute importance that is not restricted to one specific domain.
into this category. However, various theorists have expressed doubts that anything is significant enough to fall into this category.[21][22][5] On the other side of the spectrum, almost anything has importance of something relative to a
domain is to ask how detailed this thing would be treated by a textbook on the subject. For example, in the context of the general biography of someone, if a full chapter is dedicated to the description of a single event in this person's life then this event is prima facie more important than another event described only in two sentences.[6] Another
heuristic is to consider the temporal and spatial dimensions of the event in relation to the size of the domain.[6][23] For example, one reason why global pandemics, like Covid-19, are more important than local epidemics, like the Western African Ebola virus epidemic, is due to their increased spatial extension.[24]Another aspect of importance,
besides its dependence on a context, is that it is relational. This means that it involves an explicit or implicit comparison with other entities in the corresponding domain. So to say that stoicism is an important school of Hellenistic philosophy, i.e. that it is more noteworthy or influential
than an average school of Hellenistic philosophy. [25][5] This is similar to other gradable adjectives, like "small" or "expensive", which carry an implicit comparison to other whales even though it is not small when compared to other forms of sea life
This comparison can be directly linked to the degree of impact that the entity makes. An entity is important within a domain.[7][8]Importance is a very basic concept and most people have an intuitive familiarity and understanding of it. But it has proven difficult to give
a clear and non-circular definition of it.[21] For this reason, many theorists have tried to elucidate the concept by comparing it with various related concepts, such as "meaningfulness", "value", "significance", or "caring".[8] The elucidation happens by pointing out their commonalities and differences. However, such an approach is not unproblematic
since these terms are sometimes also used as synonyms.[28][5]The terms "importance" and "meaningfulness" are closely related. Especially in discussions of the meaning of life, they are often used in overlapping ways. For example, the desire to lead a meaningful life frequently corresponds to the desire to live an important life. Nonetheless, it has
been argued that the two can come apart, i.e. that there are meaningful lives that lack importance and importance is often
seen as a less noble and more egocentric undertaking.[6] There are various accounts of what meaning in life is. Some theorists identify three essential features: life is meaningful if (1) it is guided by purposes that are valuable for their own sake, (2) it transcends mere animal nature by connecting to something larger, and (3) it merits certain attitudes
such as taking pride in it or admiration from others.[6][30][31] These criteria can be used to distinguish meaningfulness, it is central that the event in question is guided by the agent's purpose and intentions.[32][33] So in this regard, random events that happen by accident may still have tremendous importance.
due to their causal consequences, as in the case of unintended butterfly effects. But such events do not make life meaningful. In an example due to Thomas Nagel, the pants of a nobleman accidentally drop the moment he is being knighted. This embarrassment would not make his life meaningful even if it was important by somehow causing a brutal
war to end.[6][23]Another difference is that some form of higher purpose is necessary for meaningfulness but not for importance.[34] It has also been argued that meaningfulness can be brought about by the mere appreciation of valuable things must
be created or defended and not just admired.[6] Another distinction is based on the quality of life. Finding meaning in life contributes to the quality of the life in question. In the ideal case, the two
coincide in a life that is both meaningful and important.[6]But not everyone agrees with the distinction between meaningful to the extent that it makes the world overall better without a direct reference to the agent's intentions or a higher purpose.[6][35]Some
theorists treat the terms "important" and "valuable" as synonyms. This way of speaking works in various cases but is not generally accepted. Importance is a more complex concept since it depends not just on the value itself but also on the domain of evaluation and on the counterfactual comparison to what would have been the case otherwise.[7][8]
So in this regard, it has been argued that there are cases of valuable activities without importance and maybe even of important since it does
not have a significant impact beyond itself. Chess differs in this aspect from mathematics: both activities have occupied some of the brightest minds but only the insights discovered in mathematical inquiry have had important implications beyond themselves in the form of scientific and technological developments. [8] This distinction is also central to
Nozick's thought experiment of the experience machine. [36] This machine is similar to the Matrix in the Matrix movies a permanent simulated reality and can offer its subjects a life filled with joy and well-being. Such a life is full of value but lacks any wider importance, which is why Nozick recommends against entering this
fictional device.[8][36][37] Although the two can come apart, ideally they manifest together as a life that has both importance and value.[8]There is an intimate connection between the importance as an objective factor in contrast to caring as
a subjective attitude. The attitude consists of ascribing importance to something, paying attention to it, and treating it accordingly. A person who cares about things that lack independent or objective importance. For example, a
person with the obsessive-compulsive disorder may care a lot about things like not stepping on a crack in the sidewalk even though this is objectively unimportant.[1] A similar issue may concern the importance some people invest in a computer game or their favorite sports team.[1][39]Usually, a certain primacy is given to objective importance,
which is seen as an independent factor. In this view, the subjective attitude of caring should track this objective factor. Nonetheless, some theorists have argued that this may not always be the case. According to Harry Frankfurt, for example, caring about something makes this thing important to the person. The idea behind this view is that, by
starting to care about something, this thing becomes important to the person even if it was unimportant to the person even if it was unimportant to the person's well-being.[1][2][40] A similar view is defended by Matthew Smith, who argues from a third-person perspective
that a thing becomes important or morally significant if someone cares about it. This caring attitude by one person then acts as a reason for other people to change that it can be generalized. According to him, this type of case
contrasts with other cases of things that lack importance to a person independent of the person's conscious attitude towards them. For example, a person might care about their deeply damaged relationship with their spouse. This carring attitude might be based on wrong beliefs about how negatively a split would affect them, meaning that both
partners would be better off without it. In this case, the relationship is not important to the person even though they care about it. A similar case involves a person who, following the health advice of a charlatan, starts caring a lot about avoiding a certain type of food. But as it turns out, this food has no health impact whatsoever in this case and isance are the person even though they care about it. A similar case involves a person who, following the health advice of a charlatan, starts caring a lot about avoiding a certain type of food. But as it turns out, this food has no health impact whatsoever in this case and isance are the person even though they care about it.
therefore objectively unimportant to the person. [2] This way, it is possible to distinguish caring from importance: a person may care about something even though this thing is unimportant since it has no impact on the person's well-being but they may be unaware
of this impact and therefore do not care about the thing. This corresponds to the difference between actually needing something and merely believing that one needs it. Ideally, the two coincide: people care about what is important to them.[2][1]The relation between caring and importance is also central to Ernst Tugendhat's later philosophy. He holds
that there is a natural human tendency to take oneself and one's goals too important, i.e. to care too much about various personal issues that lack the corresponding objective importance. He thinks that a form of spiritual development is necessary to overcome this problem and associates it with mysticism and religion. It consists of a gradual move to a
more realistic perspective about one's unimportance in the world as a whole.[9][42]According to Bernard Williams, importance is closely related to so-called deliberative priority but not identical to it. Deliberative priority is a form of practical preference: it determines the weight the agent ascribes to different options in the process of deciding in favor
of one of them.[21][22] This weight depends not just on the agent's ability to affect these outcomes. Finding something important, on the other hand, does not imply that the agent has any power over it. So a traveler may find it important to have good weather during their trip even though this does not
carry deliberative priority for them since there is nothing they can do about this fact.[21]Importance to clarify what they mean and to avoid misunderstandings.[9][21][7] According to Guy Kahane, the distinction
between instrumental value and final value and final value found in axiology has its counterpart in the field of important for someone trying to pass an
exam but may lack importance independent of this goal. Other facts, like that Apartheid in South Africa was abolished, are different in the sense that they are important endependently of anyone's aims by contributing to the final value of the well-being of many people affected. [6] Bernard Williams different in the sense that they are importance independently of anyone's aims by contributing to the final value of the well-being of many people affected.
thing may be important relative to someone or important in an unrestricted sense. The former sense can be expressed by stating that the person finds the thing in question important. For example, it may be of personal important to finally acquire the Two-Cent Blue Hawaiian Missionary stamp. The collector finds this goal
important but it lacks importance in an unrestricted sense. Besides the restriction to people, importance claims may also be restricted to certain domains. In this sense, a fact may be aesthetically important even though it bears no importance in the domain of morality. [21][22] A closely related distinction is drawn by Ernst Tugendhat, who talks of
importance relative to someone in contrast to importance in an absolute or objective sense. In the first meaning, importance refers to a subjective attitude towards her child. This attitude usually includes the idea that its target is
worthy of love and appreciation. The second meaning refers to an objective sense of having value. This type of importance is not restricted to someone's attitude.[9] It is expressed, for example, when stating that Albert Einstein was objectively important due to his scientific discoveries. This is different from the fact that, presumably, Albert Einstein
was also important to his mother. [9][6]Many people desire to be important or to make a difference to the world: they want their existence to matter. This desire is usually paired with the requirement that it is realized through intentional actions that express the values one holds dear. [8][5] In this regard, the desire for importance is closely related to
the desire of leading a meaningful life.[6] So to become important by accidentally bumping into something and thereby causing an unintended butterfly effect would not satisfy this desire for most people. Similarly, having important effects, not through actions, but by refraining from actions, usually also does not qualify as fulfilling this desire. So a
short drive to the supermarket does not fulfill the agent's desire for importance because they refrained from running over any of the pedestrians they passed on the way.[8]This issue raises the question of the value of importance, i.e. whether it is good for a person to be important or whether this should be desired.[8][5][10] This also has a moral
dimension since it determines whether the motivation to become important is morally acceptable or misguided. Becoming important is good at least in the sense that it fulfills the desires. Being important can also have various other
side effects. Some of them may be beneficial by helping the person achieve something else they desire, like fame or power. But for others, such side effects may hinder them. For example, a spy may find it very difficult to continue in their discreet line of business if they become well known due to their importance. [5] Importance is not automatically a
good thing.[6][8] In some cases, it is even obviously a bad thing. For example, the fact that the black death traveled from Asia to Europe was an important event. But, due to its tragic consequences, it was not a good thing to happen.[6] So a central aspect of the value of importance is whether the difference in question is positive or negative. Being
important because one discovers a cure for cancer is a valuable form of importance while being importance one causes a global pandemic is a bad form of importance independent of whether it is positive or negative. In this case, they may cause a lot of havoc
to the world around them if they are under the impression that they can only achieve importance through a negative important by assassinating a political leader or cultural figure" without caring about the negative side effects of this act.[5]On the psychological level, the impression of being
important does not always correspond to someone's actual importance. For example, a descendant of a world-historic individual may think themselves importance plays various roles in ethics, for example, concerning what reasons we have for an action
 how we should act, and what merits attention.[21][7][5] Questions of importance play a direct role in morality. According to utilitarians, for example, only the consequences of an action in terms of well-being are important for its moral level is the
motivation for the action. [44][21] Importance is a normative property. This means that important to them to care about it: it appropriate for the care abou
becomes worthy of the caring about something is irrational or inappropriate if the thing lacks importance to the person. For example, it is not important whether a pedestrian steps on the sidewalk cracks or not, which is why caring about this fact is inappropriate. Ideally, the degree of caring should correspond to the
importance of the thing: the more important it is, the higher the adequate degree of caring [2][1][5] This has a direct impact on how one behaves towards this thing: what a person cares about is what quides this person's conduct and affects how they live their life. It involves both agency and a rudimentary form of self-consciousness: to care about
something is to be invested in it and to identify with the corresponding value. [1] Closely related to this issue is the role of importance in psychology, specifically in moral psychology. There are innumerous entities in the world together with a vast number of ways of interacting with them at any moment. Considerations of the relative importance of
these entities and possible actions help the individual simplify this complexity. This happens by focusing only on the most important factors and deliberating the relative worth of each possible goal when deciding what to do.[9][45] In the case of rational choice theory, for example, this is realized by making a cost-benefit analysis to determine the
significance of each option. [9][46] According to Harry Frankfurt, there is a difference between what is important to us and what is morally right. For example, an agent may decide against the course of action demanded by morality since they ascribe more importance to factors outside the moral domain. So people care about many other things besides
ethics, such as luxury, friendship, knowledge, and well-being.[1] For example, a job applicant may lie about their qualifications because getting the job is more important to them than their moral obligation to refrain from lying.[1] Nonetheless, there may be some people for whom these two dimensions coincide. This applies to individuals who have
made it their highest purpose to lead the best life from an ethical point of view. An example of this might be a utilitarian who is fully committed to maximizing the well-being of everyone in their sphere of influence and gives precedence to this goal over all other goals.[1][43][13]In the context of the meaning of life, theorists often discuss the question
of whether human life has significance on a cosmic scale. Something has cosmic important in the widest domain, i.e. important in relation to everything else out there or importance or importance independent of a context.[7][6]
[21] Raising the question of the cosmic importance of human life is frequently motivated by the perspective of the universe as a whole as described by modern science. In this regard, it is often argued that, from this perspective, the Earth
and all life on it are a mere "speck of dust in a vast universe" and "without significance, import or purpose beyond our planet".[7][47] Whether this outlook is correct may depend on how the concept of "important" means "having a causal impact on a large scale" then human life seems to be cosmically unimportant. Such
a view is held by David Benatar, who defends this claim by arguing that "[n]othing we do on Earth has any effect beyond it".[10][7] A similar pessimistic outlook may be motivated by comparing the spatial and temporal dimensions of human life with those of the universe as a whole.[7][23][48]However, various theorists have opposed this pessimistic
view. Their arguments usually focus on the unique qualities of human life.[7][23][49] In this regard, Earth is the only place with sentient life we know of. And humanity seems to have an even more special place due to its highly developed mind.[7] Guy Kahane calls this the solitary significance argument. It states that terrestrial life has cosmic
significance because it is the only thing in the universe with intrinsic value and thus makes a value difference to the universe. This argument can be extended specifically to human life by arguing that among the sentient beings, humans have the greatest value and have, therefore, a special form of cosmic significance. The other side of this argument
is that the existence of other intelligent lifeforms would threaten our cosmic significance, at also seems to follow from the argument that most individual humans lack cosmic significance, given the sheer number of humans in existence. However, there may be some exceptions to
this rule for individuals with a special world-historic impact, like Buddha or Mandela on the positive side, or Hitler and Stalin on the negative side, Nonetheless, the lack of cosmic importance whatsoever; they usually make some form of value difference in their own domain. This difference
is just tiny compared to the cosmic scale.[7][49]A negative response to the question of the cosmic importance of human life may lead to a form of nihilism or absurdism. On the moral or ethical level, nihilism can be expressed as the view that nothing really matters or that nothing has any importance.[50] This view is closely related to absurdism.
Absurdists accept this basic outlook and use it to argue for the world as a whole, is absurd. That means that there is a conflict between the internal human desire for things to matter that is frustrated by the external lack of significance belonging to the nature of the world. Accepting the absurdist or nihilist perspective on the
world may trigger an existential crisis. An existential crisis is an inner conflict in which the perceived lack of any importance causes various negative experiences, such as stress, anxiety, despair, and depression, which can disturb the individual's normal functioning in everyday life. [51][52][53] Usually, nihilism, absurdism, and existential crises are
defined, not in terms of importance, but in terms of meaning: they are concerned with the impression that life is meaningless. However, many theorists even define these phenomena in terms of a lack of importance or significance. [54][55][56]People often ascribe high importance to
power, material wealth, and fame. Power may be defined as the ability to affect outcomes or to carry out one's own will despite resistance.[8][57][58] These causal effects establish an intimate relation to importance, especially if importance is defined in terms of having a big causal impact.[7] Wealth, and the luxury that comes with it, is usually
treated as an indication that a person is important. According to Nozick, there is a central distinction between wealth and money: they can be used
to affect important changes but they can also be wasted without any lasting effect. In this regard, the successful pursuit of money alone does not guarantee that one leads an important life. And the same is true for power: it depends on how it is exercised, just having it is not sufficient.[8]Many people desire to be famous.[59] Fame and importance are
closely associated with each other: famous people are usually important and important people are usually famous. However, the meanings of these terms are not identical. The fame of a person depends on various factors. These include how many people know about them, and how positively they evaluate them.
This evaluative aspect can be used to distinguish famous persons from celebrities: celebrities are well known in their domain but this does not imply that they are seen in a positive light or have a good reputation. People may become famous because they do important things. The attention they get due to being famous may, in turn, help them do
further important things.[5] But the two can come apart nonetheless: not everyone who makes an important difference becomes famous and not all famous people make important differences. It has been argued that importance is in some sense more basic and that fame depends on it: "fame is what importance merits".[5][60] So ideally, the more
important someone is the more famous they should be. Power is often closely related to fame or how other people perceive and react to the individual since many types of power arise from people responding to the powerful individual, for example, by following their command.[8] a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q Frankfurt, Harry (1982). "The
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