

Iamblichus, *Protrepticus* XII  
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*from the fact that philosophy completely and truly brings success,  
an approach to a complete and most effective protreptic  
to doing philosophy*  
[4.21-23]

*If one should reach this conclusion not only from the parts of success, but also establish the same on a higher level, from the whole of success, let us state explicitly that, indeed, doing philosophy stands in the same relation to success as it does to our being good or bad.* [23] For everything, both those that are for this and those that are on account of this <are valuable ... a line of text is missing ...> to be valuable for everyone, both those things we do as necessary and the pleasant things that make us feel successful. [26] Thus we take the position that success is either intelligence and a certain wisdom, or virtue, or great enjoyment, or all these. [60.1] **Thus if it is intelligence, clearly only philosophers will have a successful life; and if it is virtue of the soul or enjoyment, even so it will belong to them either alone or most of all, for virtue is the most authoritative thing in us, and the most pleasant of all things, comparing one thing with another, is intelligence; and similarly, even if someone were to say that all these same things together are success, that is to be defined as being intelligent.** [7] Hence everyone who is capable of it should do philosophy, for surely this either is living perfectly well, or is, most of all, anyway, comparing one thing with another, responsible for it in their souls. [59.19-60.10]

But down here, due to our race being unnatural, perhaps, it is difficult to learn anything or investigate it, indeed it is hardly perceived, due to lack of natural talent and unnatural living; but if we were ever able to find salvation again whence we have been released, it is clear that we would all do so more pleasantly and easily. [15] For as it is now, we neglect the good things and are constantly doing what is necessary, most of all those most regarded as happy by most people; but were we to take the heavenly road and settle that life of ours upon its companion star, this is when we would be doing philosophy, truly living, and observing spectacles indescribable in beauty, gazing with the soul fixedly at the truth and observing the rule of the gods, gladly and with continuous enjoyment from the observing, taking pleasure apart from all pain. [61.1] *So in this way, approaching in turn every kind of success, we discover that doing philosophy makes a contribution for us; for this reason it is worthwhile to take it up as being the most excellent thing and the one most appropriate for us.* [60.10-61.4]