

# What Is Fatalism?

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*Adapted by Fishtank Staff*

- 1 Fatalism is the belief that events are predetermined by fate or destiny, and that humans cannot do anything to change them.
- 2 Fatalists believe that everything that happens has already been decided by some higher power, and there is nothing we can do to change it. This can have a number of effects of someone's outlook. On the one hand, fatalism can be positive when it leads to a person's acceptance of events that are really beyond their control, so that their view is in line with reality.
- 3 In other situations, fatalism can lead to a feeling of resignation and hopelessness, as people may feel that there is no point in trying to change anything because it will not make a difference.
- 4 Another term that is sometimes used interchangeably with fatalism is determinism. This is the belief that all events are determined by causes that have already been set in motion. For example, if someone believes that all of their future is determined by their past, then they are a determinist.

## History of Fatalism

- 5 The concept of fatalism has been around for many centuries and can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. One of the earliest known examples is from the philosopher Aristotle, who said "What is, necessarily is, when it is; and what is not, necessarily is not, when it is not." This idea was later picked up by the Stoics, who believed that humans should accept what is going to happen, as it is impossible to change it.
- 6 During the Middle Ages, fatalism was often used as a way to give meaning to natural disasters or other events that could not be explained. For example, if a city was struck by a plague, it was seen as an act of God that could not be prevented.
- 7 Fatalism has also been used as a political philosophy, with some leaders using it to justify their actions. For example, Napoleon Bonaparte believed he was destined to rule the world. This belief can also be seen in some authoritarian regimes, where those in power believe that they are meant to rule, and anyone who opposes them is fighting against fate.

## Signs of Fatalism

- 8 Fatalism can be seen in many different areas of life. For example, some people may have a fatalistic attitude towards their job, believing that they cannot do anything to change their situation. This can lead to them feeling unhappy and [demotivated](#) at work.

- 9 Other people may have a more general fatalistic outlook on life, believing that everything is predetermined and that they have no control over their own destiny. This can lead to them feeling hopeless and resigned, as they may feel that there is no point in trying to improve their situation.
- 10 However, fatalism can also give someone a greater sense of peace about a situation. For instance, instead of blaming yourself for everything that goes wrong in life, you can realize that you don't have control over everything and have [greater compassion for yourself](#) and others.

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