

## **LIVING THE GOOD LIFE!**

### ***Prof. Morten Kringelbach***

*Professor Morten L Kringelbach runs the Hedonia Research Group based at the Universities of Oxford and Aarhus. His prize-winning research uses neuroimaging and whole-brain computational models of, for example, infants, taste, sex, drugs and music to find ways to increase eudaimonia (well-being). He has published fourteen books, and over 300 scientific papers, chapters and other articles and his research features regularly in newspapers, magazines, radio and television. He is a fellow of The Queen's College, Oxford, of the Association for Psychological Science, on the advisory board of Scientific American and a board member of the world's first Empathy Museum*

For Aristotle, the goal of human life was to live well, to flourish, and to ultimately have a good life. These goals can be conceptualised as “eudaimonia,” a concept distinct from “hedonia” (pleasure). Many people would argue that the arts play a large role in their wellbeing and eudaimonia. Music in particular is a culturally ubiquitous phenomenon which brings joy and social bonding to listeners. Research has given insights into how the ‘sweet anticipation’ of music and other art forms can lead to pleasure, but a full understanding of eudaimonia from the arts is still missing. What is clear is that anticipation and prediction are important for extracting meaning from our environment. In fleeting moments this may translate into pleasure, but over longer timescales it can imbue life with meaning and purpose and lead to eudaimonia. I will discuss some of the evidence from neuroimaging and whole-brain computational modelling for the role of sex, drugs and music in orchestrating eudaimonia, and propose future strategies for exploring these questions further.