

# PD10 - Interpretations of PD 10 Discussion

Post by "Don" of January 18, 2021 at 9:14 AM

## [Quote from Elayne](#)

Don if it was a true bliss pill as advertised, then it would provide reliable pleasure. Otherwise it's just false advertising. As I've said already, I'd tend to be distrustful of it, given the history of pharmaceutical promises! ☐☐ But if it were really as advertised, there's no clear Epicurean argument against it.

See, that's where I disagree with the premise of the thought experiment: "a true bliss pill." There can't be such a thing. It seems, by definition, the pill or machine is \*changing\* all your sensations to "pleasurable" ones. If it makes you only "feel" pleasure, even in the midst extreme of objectively pain-inducing experiences, it is substituting its chemical or technological "pleasure-inducing" effect over your natural sensation or reaction. By definition, it can never truly be "your" sensation. It may be perceived to be "your" sensation, but that's like seeing unicorns in a dream and believing they're real. Epicurus calls us to experience real, natural pleasure derived from our choices and rejections. That's my Epicurean objection to taking the pill. I assume you will counter with something like "if we feel it, it's pleasure." If I would naturally feel pain if I was awake in surgery, and the pill / machine was making me "feel" pleasure, that's not a natural reaction of pleasure and provides false sensory data on which to make decisions to live pleurably.

## [Quote from Elayne](#)

And yes, that is exactly what I am trying to say-- that as I see it, when you used [PD10](#) to argue against a hypothetical it wasn't designed for, Cassius and I replied bringing in the context of the whole philosophy. I am trying to show you that you were doing what you said we had done. I see it as the other way around-- we were limiting the PD to its specific context without taking it to any general conclusion that would contradict the rest of the philosophy.

I'm still not convinced entirely, but for the sake of argument I'll remove my use of PD 10 to oppose the bliss pill.

So, if I'm not using PD 10, then, my objection to taking the bliss pill rests on its ability to override the Canon and substitute ones own senses and reactions for its own. Without the Canon - the use of one's senses, reactions, and prolepses - there can be no application of Epicurean philosophy in one's life. There is no choice and avoidance. There is no way to determine if you are or are headed in the direction of living a pleasurable life. Once you take the pill/machine, it will determine how your life will go, what you will feel. Once you take the

pill, you cannot have reliable sensory input or be sure you're having a natural reaction to something.