

# All Pleasure Is Desirable, Because It Is Pleasing To Us, But Is All Pleasure \*Equally\* Desirable?

Post by "Daniel Van Orman" of May 11, 2018 at 12:26 PM

"But allow me to extend an olive branch before making my argument"

Do not worry, it is difficult to offend me. I felt no offense of any kind as I was reading your post.

I think I interpreted that quote from the Letter to Menoeceus very differently. As always, please correct me if I am wrong.

I think Epicurus was not against having much, but against addicting one's self to having much. I agree with you that one should not "grow acclimated to these unnecessary pleasures, at which point they become our baseline and no longer are as pleasing as they once were".

As long as one fully appreciates having much in some pleasure (a fine taste to enjoy costly meals or a love of big TV screens or a personal library full of enjoyable literature), I think Epicurus would have been fine with them enjoying much.

I have condensed and underlined portions of the quote to better show where my thoughts are coming from.

"regard independence of outward things as a great good, not so as in all cases to use little, but so as to be contented with little . . . To habituate one's self, therefore, to . . . all that is needful for health, . . . enables a man to meet the necessary requirements of life without shrinking, and it places us in a better condition . . . and renders us fearless of fortune."

"Your claim is that freedom from pain = pleasure."

That is not my claim. My claim is pleasure and pain are not defined as the lack of one another - they may both be present at the same time. To clarify that point (thinking the bean jar analogy was unclear), I used an RGB color analogy: "more red does not undo green, but blends with green to make yellow". I have no idea how pleasure and pain blend. Maybe it is heterogeneous, like water and oil shaken together. Maybe it is homogeneous, like hydrogen and oxygen combining to make water.

"I 100% disagree that in increasing pleasure we are becoming increasingly free from pain."

I 100% agree with your disagreement.

"Choose pleasurable activities carefully so as not to suffer unnecessary significant pain that in your context 'outweighs' the pleasure? Absolutely YES.

Choose pleasurable activities ONLY if you can be sure that NO pain will result from them? Absolutely NOT, and that implication has to be firmly dismissed."

Teachings such as this is why I love calculus. Calculus emphasizes there are multiple variables one must consider to find the best solution to a problem. It describes nature so well.

It is great to learn so much from others on the forum! I hope I will help contribute your learning as well. 😊