

How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain by Lisa Feldman Barrett

Post by "Cassius" of April 17, 2021 at 12:15 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

nothing inherently inconsistent with Epicurus's philosophy to wanting to have a calm mind and a pain free body.

Absolutely agreed that there is nothing inconsistent about that, the issue would be that of being strictly rigorous in identifying the goal - the "end of nature," rather than getting sidetracked on lesser issues that are only part of the goal, like some people tend to do when they focus on the means rather than the end.

As for the distinction between "living pleasurably" and "pleasure" I think that the issue revolves around the context in which you're discussing the issue. If you're in a strictly philosophic debate you reduce things down to as essential and clear a concept as possible, so you end up expressing it like Torquatus did with his formulation:

Quote

I will start then in the manner approved by the author of the system himself, by settling what are the essence and qualities of the thing that is the object of our inquiry; not that I suppose you to be ignorant of it, but because this is the logical method of procedure. We are inquiring, then, what is the final and ultimate Good, which as all philosophers are agreed must be of such a nature as to be the End to which all other things are means, while it is not itself a means to anything else. This Epicurus finds in pleasure; pleasure he holds to be the Chief Good, pain the Chief Evil.

When we start talking about "living pleasurably" we're getting in the details of exactly what pleasures we're pursuing in a particular moment. When we talk about "pleasure" it sounds like we're at that higher level of identifying our ultimate goal (such as "virtue" vs "piety" vs "reason" vs "wisdom" vs "pleasure")

Both perspectives are valid and should not be seen to be at war with each other, or that one needs to replace the other.