

# **NPR Fresh Air: Dr. Anna Lembke on pleasure, pain, and addiction**

**Post by “Cassius” of August 28, 2021 at 3:23 AM**

## [Quote from Don](#)

Like different flavors of ice cream?

I don't would say the better analogy would be like eating ice cream in an ice cream parlor vs in a jail cell vs in a war zone vs in a hospital etc.

To me the important thing is first that you are in fact experiencing pleasure from eating ice cream, but we're also taking into account that the pleasure of eating it may be interrupted or disturbed (in a war zone or jail cell) or whether at the same time you are experiencing other pain (in a hospital with appendicitis).

This is something that I think we debated at times over the last several years under the "doing more than one thing at once" category. My view is that you can experience pleasure from eating ice cream but at the same time be worried or afraid about getting shot (war zone) and having the pleasure interrupted, or even while you experience physical pain in another part of your body (hospital).

With the point being that the best way to experience pleasure is without interruption or disturbance and without any accompanying pain of any kind.

The issue I see is that to isolate the absence of disturbance or interruption or pain in itself, without first focusing on the primary point that you are experiencing pleasure from some positive activity of body or mind is to imply that there is some substance to the "absence of" something, which I think is not true.

With an analogy being that matter has positive attributes (weight, shape, size, etc) while void has no attributes other than absence of matter, which gives matter space to be and move in. Matter is equivalent to void in one way only - quantity of space - and I would say pain is equivalent to pleasure in one way only - quantity of experience - as indicated by the quantity reference in PD3.