

In Defense of Desire and How to Enjoy It

Post by "Cassius" of January 7, 2022 at 5:23 AM

I agree but would add a minor general comment on terminology. You're put "moderation" in quotes and I think that is very warranted. The big picture is that people's body chemistry can be different, and even different at different periods of like. Someone who has overeaten sugar for years is likely going to have developed diabetes and their body will tolerate less and less sugar over time.

The point about "moderation" is that it's kind of like several other words that can be used too loosely. The point is not really to consider two extremes and divide them in half, but to use all the facts of a situation to analyze and choose "the right amount" that fits the situation. Sometimes that point is a "midpoint" between two extremes, but sometimes the situation calls for more or less or for a point that would not be some abstract "middle" but "correct under all the circumstances.

It's just a minor point but i believe greeks like Aristotle are associated with the impression that there is some kind of "golden mean" that exists in the abstract that everyone should follow. I think Epicurus stands for a different position - that there is not a one-size-fits-all "moderation" that should be the goal, but "the right amount under all the circumstances leading to the best pleasure/pain result."

I know this sounds nit-picky to some people but i think there's a point here worth making to zero in on Epicurus' exact position.