

A thought on duty to the whole world, and why virtue must be an instrument to happiness.

Post by “smoothiekiwi” of January 16, 2022 at 3:45 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

that if you let yourself think of these things too much you could pretty much destroy your own mental health.

Yes, that's exactly my point. The only way to solve it would be to harden your mind, to sacrifice empathy for reason- one should only be compassionate, but not attached to the subject. To me, that really smells like Stoicism, the „destroying the mental health“ part included. But that's a discussion for another thread 😊

[Quote from Matt](#)

and ultimately however much responsibility a person wants to feel for the suffering of others in the world is very, very subjective.

Well yes, but then the issue of „when you would be in such a catastrophe, wouldn't you be happy to receive help?“- issue comes up. And probably exactly for that reason, Epicurus set autarchy in such a high position; that in order to apply this mindset, you must be prepared that no one from outside will donate to you when something happens. Your friends will help you... wow, that actually makes sense, and that's the way nature has been! We didn't run to some distant tribe when we saw a big flood there- instead, we stayed on our side of the river and helped our friends. But by replacing our natural built-in empathy for friends and people we see, with a reason-concluded compassion for distant victims, we essentially override our emotions with reason. Damn, the Stoics again- get out of this forum! You're not welcome here!

[Quote from Matt](#)

Related to the suffering of the world. It's one of the premises within Buddhism that I vehemently disagreed with...that life's constant is suffering which ultimately creates dissatisfaction, which dovetailed into the metaphysical premise that samsara (reincarnation) doesn't end until you get off the “wheel”of rebirth through various disciplines. I always felt super uncomfortable with these premises.

Yep, absolutely agree. Life is full of suffering, that's true, but it's also full of pleasure. If suffering would „override“ any pleasure, then I could just as well kill myself. It's the only logical conclusion for me. Except when we introduce samsara and nirvana- but that's the same logical

escape like Christianity: that at the end, something will reward your suffering.