

Can you seek happiness and be full of joy when there is a war in Europe? Wes Cecil podcast.

Post by "Cassius" of May 15, 2022 at 8:33 AM

I haven't had time to read the article but in response to the topic question, it's according to Epicurus surely "yes you can seek happiness" but perhaps "can you be full of joy" is more difficult. Being 100% "full of joy" might be analytically only something that an Epicurean god can theoretically achieve in the intermundia, because we always have aches and pains that technically prevent us from being "full."

But Epicurus' last statement about the pleasure he was able to achieve even during the process of dying from a painful disease would be an example that as long as we are alive we can always seek and hope to achieve some amount of pleasure, even if it is only pleasant memories.

So it would be my view that the topic question:

Can you seek happiness and be full of joy when there is XXXX?

Would almost always be answered "yes" from an Epicurean perspective. The only exception I can think of would be those situations where you decide that death is preferable to living on, and even in those situations you are still using a pleasure/pain analysis to guide your decision.

I think that's the real "wrong answer" implied by the question -- it's implying that there is some standard of conduct (implicitly religious or humanistic or in some way absolute) to which you must conform that overrides the pleasure/pain calculation under XXXX circumstances.