

Does Happiness Require a Non-Epicurean Decision Procedure?

Post by “Hiram” of January 9, 2019 at 9:54 AM

Choices and avoidances are done according to hedonic calculus as explained in the middle portion of the Epistle to Menoeceus. I recommend that you read this:

<https://theautarkist.wordpress.com/2018/05/20/hap...ics-the-ethics/>

Another source: [Principal Doctrine 5](#) says a life of pleasure must be lived honorably, justly, and wisely. These are precise words. Virtue is not used here, likely because this word is not precise. And we know justice is based on **mutual advantage**, so the matter of divorcing one's spouse and moving to Costa Rica, if it is mutually advantageous for both, then the contract that binds them should be rewritten or abolished. If it isn't, then dialogue among the two contracted parties is needed. If you read the last ten [Principal Doctrines](#) you'll be better acquainted with Epicurean concepts of justice, and remember: a pleasant life is just, therefore relationships should be based on MUTUAL advantage (not the advantage of only one party, which is predatory, unfair, and would produce a miserable life).

On the choice and avoidance problem you present: Norman DeWitt said "an unplanned life is not worth living".

If your job AND your family make you miserable, then maybe a new job and a divorce can be planned diligently. But the question of leaving your family would require hedonic calculus. Are they sociopaths, or are they a danger to your safety? Is your wife doing something illegal that may get you into trouble? If so, this might pass hedonic calculus. Otherwise, probably not.

On whether relationships are means or ends, this is a frequent accusation. The ancient Epicureans observed that initially ALL friendships emerge naturally from mutual advantage, but later the relationship become strong and a friend may even give his life for a friend. This is a natural process.