

Pleasures of the soul, Values, Meaningful Life

Post by "Kalosyni" of June 19, 2022 at 10:38 AM

[Quote from Matteng](#)

Beside the pure sense-pleasures, I value for example that:

- I am not addicted to something/someone
- value friends/family, progress in society,
- have compassion for humans and animals
- love to learn new things and philosophy (like Epicurus), learning about nature, value/like to improve abilities.

Are that "pleasures of the soul" ?

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[Quote from Cassius](#)

If something brings you a feeling OF ANY KIND then the feeling is ultimately pleasurable or painful. All human mental and physical activities fall in one of these two categories, no matter how much the abstractionists want to protest that their virtues are higher than pleasure.

Good questions Matteng. And both Don and Cassius, I am enjoying reading your replies, and I'd like to throw in this into the mix:

From the Letter to Menoecus:

"Third, keep in mind that some desires are natural whereas others are groundless [[note](#)]; that among the natural desires some are natural and necessary whereas others are merely natural; and that among the necessary desires some are necessary for happiness, some for physical health [[note](#)], and some for life itself."

To illustrate what is unnecessary: This morning I was offered a chocolate covered cream filled donut (because my sister bought an entire box yesterday). Yet I have been slowly gaining weight (and I do not want to go out and buy new bigger pants). So I am choosing to reduce my sugar intake. I acknowledged my desire when I said "yes, those do look good" and then,

acknowledged the recognition that the donut was unnecessary when I said: "but no thank you" as I had already in mind to choose to eat unsweetened oatmeal with some strawberries. I made this choice for the sake of physical health. Good health is both a pleasure and a value.

What is unnecessary is that which is either not needed for long-term enjoyment/happiness and/or that which brings pain as a long-term result.

It up to each person to make wise choices about what for themselves is "necessary vs unnecessary" and we might each make different choices depending on our circumstances. There are some PDs which do point out important pleasures, such as [PD27](#) --"Of all the things that wisdom provides for the complete happiness of one's entire life, by far the greatest is friendship."

And I would say friendship is both a pleasure and a value. It brings both physical and mental joy. And Letter to Menoecus ends with: "So practice these and similar things day and night, by yourself and with a like-minded friend..."