

What is the future of friendship? (Some random thoughts prompted by ChatGPT)

Post by “waterholic” of February 20, 2023 at 9:41 AM

I am still having second thoughts here though. Consider two ways of addressing the anxiety: external and internal.

External: you avoid anxiety by doing or not doing certain things (e.g. avoid politics, since power and fame are unnatural and unnecessary, while the likelihood of being stabbed in the back is very real).

Internal: if you are for whatever reason in politics (e.g. to help a friend), don't panic: you cannot lose anything worth living for (basic pleasures of life, friends & family).

I think that the main difference is that stoicism disregards the first (external) approach: if it is virtuous to do something, you do it and you won't feel anxiety because you are doing the right thing.

When it comes to Epicurus, accepting pain and anxiety may be acceptable for pleasure in the future, so long as that pleasure is correctly defined (fame & fortune don't count). There can be an overlap between the schools in terms of situations in which acting is better than not acting.

But to get back to my first post: a stoic take on it would be that there should be no anxiety, since by remaining true to virtue, one has nothing to fear irrespective of the environment (loss of job, shelter etc. - so all is good in the community). However, when it comes to Epicurus, a community can fail to take care of its members and these members may justly feel anxiety: lack of food and shelter can be real!