

A Happy Life: the Emotional Feeling Tone of the Epicurean Lifestyle

Post by “Pacatus” of March 29, 2023 at 2:40 PM

[Kalosyni](#)

Great stuff!

My many-years-ago therapist (who also later became a friend) thought that happiness was definitely a choice that one could practice. (I doubt that he ever read Epicurus.)

His formula was that what he called joy was when his mind, body and environment were in harmony. If your relationship to your environment is out of whack, you can use your mind and body to correct (e.g., change your environment). If your body is the issue (e.g. an injury or illness), you can seek relief via your environment (e.g. restful quiet or seeking healthcare) – and/or via the mind (e.g., meditation or contemplation of something enjoyable). If both the body and environment are at issue, you still have the power of your mind – and techniques to practice. Etc., etc.

For example, when I was once compelled to put my body in a very stressful environment, he said: “Remember, the only thing you need to place there is your body. Beyond that no one can compel you to participate. You can go anywhere you want in your mind – maybe imagine and visualize an island vacation.” Something like that.

But practice is required – preferably before those situations arise – just like any other activity (like a sport): he gave me the belief, taught me some techniques, and encouraged me to practice. And practice that was enjoyable in itself (no Stoic teeth-gritting). I have many times allowed myself to get out of practice – and then I have to remind myself.

Thanks for this thread, Kalosyni. It is such a reminder. ☐☐

EDIT: I also thought of your reference to the possibility of a "therapy of pleasure." 😎