

# How Does An Epicurean Feeling Overwhelmed Or Depressed Overcome That Feeling?

Post by “Pacatus” of June 13, 2023 at 3:40 PM

*[EDIT FROM CASSIUS: I am copying this post into a new thread to address the topic now listed as the thread title: "How Does An Epicurean Feeling Overwhelmed Or Depressed Overcome That Feeling?" The first three posts are from [another thread entitled "Does the Philosophy Change You?"](#) but these posts set up the topic very nicely. We're not talking here about clinical depression or generalized anxiety but the normal ups and downs of everyday life, when the obstacles (real and not imagined) seem overwhelming. Maybe at some point we can set up a wiki-like summary - or I can just use this first post in that way - to bring together the major categories of responses, such as:*

- *Get back to / study Nature;*
- *Consult your friends for support;*

*We also need something to the effect that we're not talking "Pleasure" in the abstract as an antidote to pain, but the real feelings of pleasure that are particular to the individual concerned, such that we focus on seeking out things that are pleasurable to person feeling overwhelmed.*

*end of edit]*

I was raised in a milieu of Christian/Stoical/Kantian “virtue moralism” that I liken to a Pavlovian programming that leaves an array of reactive triggers in your subconscious – that can grab you decades later (at least for me). All of that was in continual struggle with my inherent tendency toward hedonism (as opposed, here, to asceticism); and an unchecked, rebellious hedonism led to borderline addictive tendencies.

Unfortunately, all of the philosophical/spiritual avenues that I explored and studied seemed arrayed on the side of that latent moralistic programming. And so, life remained a struggle most days, well beyond my midlife years – even with help from friends and a wise therapist. (I am nothing if not stubborn! 😡😭 )

Epicurus has finally given me some ease in all that – with a rational therapy that goes beyond mere intellectual philosophy (in the modern academic sense) and offers the practical means for a healthier hedonism (without the old guilt). 1/

I still struggle: those subconscious triggers still rear their hooded heads. But the old reactions are short-lived. Life is easier, serenity is more readily available on a daily basis.

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1/: I am reminded, in my random brain, of some lines by Rumi:

“As always, we wake anxious and afraid.

“Don’t go into the library!

“Take down your lute and play ...”