

# Episode 195 - Cicero's On Ends - Book Two - Part 05

Post by "Cassius" of October 11, 2023 at 3:30 AM

## [Quote from Godfrey](#)

It would appear that there's no sliding scale of intensity, other than through location and duration, by definition. At least That's what I'm thinking right here, right now. That may change.

Me too as to out for a while. But before I go:

Dropping back for a moment, if there are only two of a thing being discussed, then the presence of one = absence of the other and the highest possible absence of one is the highest possible presence of the other, full stop. That's all you need to know to say that in any such situation that if one is totally absent, the other is totally present. You don't need any information whatsoever about duration, location, or intensity whatsoever if you are told a person is "without pain" to know that he is in "total pleasure." So that intellectual formulation can't be violated and you are going to stick with it with the tenacity of Torquatus and you are never going to admit an exception, because of the way you have defined the terms and held that there are only two possibilities.

At the same time, in real life, no matter what your intellectual classification scheme, the senses are able to pick up differences of duration, location, and intensity of sensation.

Recall that Epicurus himself notes that some feelings are more acute than others in [PD04](#): Pain does not last continuously in the flesh, but the acutest pain is there for a very short time, and even that which just exceeds the pleasure in the flesh does not continue for many days at once. But chronic illnesses permit a predominance of pleasure over pain in the flesh.

You're not going to abandon your classification scheme, in which every experience is deemed pleasurable unless it is painful. But you also aren't going to ignore the different sensory information that the senses are providing. When you are dying with very great kidney pain you aren't going to offset that pain with thinking about how you trimmed your fingernails this morning, but only with a very great pleasure.

So you have to be able to incorporate both levels of perspective in a general theory of pleasure and pain if you're going to be persuasive that your theory has validity.