

Is All "Ataraxia" Equal?

Post by "Pacatus" of November 19, 2023 at 2:05 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

I think that, in broad strokes, is how life works. We may literally have infinite choices in each moment, but the choices we are most likely going to make in any given moment probably are constrained but our character, our philosophy of life, our social context, etc. Do I have the capacity to abandon my family and move to the woods? Will I choose to do that? Do I want to do that? No.

I'm not sure yet whether I disagree. 🤔

Do we choose? Yes.

Do we ever make choices that are not constrained by circumstance, resources, personal history, intellectual/emotional development, etc.? No.

That is why so-called "libertarian free will" fails: Given all those conditions, there is no basis to think I could have ever "chosen differently" in exactly the same case -- unless choice reduces to randomness, which I think not.

Does any of that change how I think of pleasurable alternatives, or variety in choice? No. But variety can be thought of (thinking "out loud" again) as simply loosening the choice constraints. And that offers more options for pleasure. (Though I still think that sometimes the activity of choosing itself -- which entails having alternatives -- can be pleasurable in itself.)