

# Fundamental Issues In Hedonism

Post by "Godfrey" of December 10, 2023 at 5:56 PM

## [Quote from BrainToBeing](#)

And, I was wondering if, particularly in this era of the planet, we can really say that searching for "a happy life" is going to save us all from the ecological and technological dilemmas we are creating.

In Epicurean terms, pleasure and pain are our guides. When the present or future conditions of, say, the planet or society are dismal, that's a source of pain to many of us as individuals. It's critical to remember that searching for a happy life involves paying attention to *both* our pleasure *and* pain, since they both are our guides. Over time, it often becomes evident that ignoring or suppressing our pain (such as distress over the state of the world) doesn't lead to more pleasure, and that we need to do the work to deal with the pain. In this case pain becomes a guide to living a happy life.

Also central to Epicurus' ethics are three categories of desire. One place to find these is in the Principle Doctrines, particularly [PD29-30](#), [PD15](#), and [PD26](#). These categories are natural and necessary, natural and unnecessary, and unnatural. These perhaps could be considered more specific guides to what is prudent to pursue, and can help us to sort out actions that we might take to remove particular pains. I think most Epicureans would say (well, at least I would) that if more people were aware of and followed this ethical system, society and the planet might not be in the situation that they're in.

Epicurean ethics is really quite interesting, but it takes a lot of work to really dig into it and get full benefit from it. However there's much pleasure to be had from doing this work!