

Fundamental Issues In Hedonism

Post by “Pacatus” of December 11, 2023 at 6:02 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

"Happy" carries so much semantic baggage in English it can get in the way.

Whilst I agree about the semantic difficulties with the word “happy/happiness,” I think that eudaimonia cannot be a strictly objective state – such that, say, you might claim that Pacatus is clearly in a state of eudaimonia/well-being, even though Pacatus might not be aware of that at all. So, I think there has to be a subjective element – such that I **feel** that state of well-being, which is a feeling of pleasure/pleasantness. And, semantic difficulties aside, I know when I **feel** happy, just as I know when I’m feeling enjoyment or contentment – they are all useful words in conventional discourse (where we don’t need to parse things so precisely, which itself might be off-putting to someone not steeped in the “academic” discourse). So, I use the phrase “happy well-being” for myself.

NOTE: I had a philosopher friend, who did his dissertation on the Nicomachean Ethics, who insisted the best rendering of eudaimonia was “flourishing” -- but that strikes me as even more problematic than “happy.”