

Is All "Ataraxia" Equal?

Post by "Titus" of February 19, 2024 at 9:23 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

"You have said Ataraxia is desirable. Is all Ataraxia the same?" How should I consider any differences in the experience of ataraxia in determining how I am going to live my life? Does the pleasantness of my experiences while I am not disturbed have anything to do with it? Am I supposed to consider the location, duration, and intensity of pleasures, or are all pleasures of equal significance to me so long as I am not disturbed?

How would you articulate the answer to that question to someone?

Have we already discussed [PD 18](#)? There, Epicurus states **after reaching the quantitative maximum of pleasure it only differs in quality.**

It seems to me, as long as I am mentally undisturbed and in a state of corporeal well-being, pleasurable sensations are "adding up" as an optional **seasoning**. This may be practically addressed in [PD 29](#), where the natural but not necessary category of pleasures addresses also a qualitative matter. We can find relieve from thirst by simply drinking water or we could also spice our experience e.g. with additional flavour to our drink, heating or cooling it.

I think we also have to take into respect, that this is not only a theoretical discussion of ideas, but of experiences that are fundamental to our being. The idea of fulfilling natural and necessary needs while sitting in a cave by drinking water and eating bread is a state of idealized sanctification. While it focuses on the relatively low hardware requirements concerning human material needs, it ignores all the other variables to our lives in our ever-changing material conditions.

While the natural but not necessary entities are somewhat "optional", they reflect our interaction with our environment. There we have to make decisions continuously. So while ataraxia seems to me somewhat equal as a comparable term, it is also confronted by a physical reality that has to be addressed by personal choices and avoidances.