

Choice & Avoidance: towards a better translation for avoidance

Post by “Godfrey” of August 16, 2024 at 2:36 AM

This idea of simplifying down to two words is intriguing and somewhat alluring. But when I think of it as a response to a Stoic pairing of "work and play" it comes into better focus for me. The Stoic worldview is idealized (made up? maybe that's too harsh...) and so it's really quite simple to come up with simple descriptions and clever exercises. The Epicurean worldview is based on observed reality, which is messy. Therefore I think that trying to adapt Epicurean philosophy to a Stoic-friendly format is ultimately unproductive.

Another example of this mismatch between Stoics and Epicureans is a closer look at "is it in my control or not" and where that fits into a process of choosing and fleeing (with a nod to [Don](#)). Stoics apparently keep this idea firmly in mind at all times. As I think about choosing and fleeing, whether something is under my control or not only comes into play when I fear that something might *not* be under my control, which usually occurs later on in my thought process.

Having said all this, I guess that I'm leaning toward "choosing and fleeing" (or choice and avoidance) because it acknowledges both pleasure and pain. Or "pursuing pleasure." What's important is grasping the wider concepts, the shorthand and outlines are really just reminders of the bigger picture.