

Aspects of Pleasure - Dopamine, Endorphine, Continuity

Post by "Julia" of November 8, 2024 at 1:11 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

As for anything that feels like it is a "hedonic treadmill"...I would suggest slowing down and putting more attention on the specific experiences and to "open up the senses" to be fully present both in your mind and body.

To agree and expand: When seeking ever more pleasurable activities, the range of experience gets increasingly narrow. It is common knowledge that with drugs, increased doses are needed to elicit the same sensation; however, the same basic principle applies to all comforts. Eventually, one hops from one previously-pleasurable activity to the next, without deriving much satisfaction from them anymore. Additionally, ordinary chores become increasingly excruciating.

This is why that which one should *habituate* oneself to are *simple* pleasures. Only then can "opening up the senses" to be fully present both in mind and body' really break the hedonic treadmill. That is to say: The hedonic treadmill is broken by widening the range of experiences towards the painful. This is how joys that turned bland eventually regain their brilliance; and by being prudent and putting some limit indulgence, they can keep that brilliance until the day we die.

[Quote from Matteng](#)

What speaks against the idea that intense sensual pleasures go beyond the limit of absence of pain?

Speaking in a physiological manner, **either a receptor is fully (ant)agonised or it isn't**. As such, even on the biochemical level, the absence of pain is the limit of pleasure. (Substance use, particularly using superagonists or otherwise in high doses, can exceed what the body evolved to experience, creating states of bliss unachievable by natural means; however, the result is long-lasting, sometimes permanent anhedonia, as even the most beautiful day pales in comparison to our modern level of chemical engineering...) If you're speaking of one's absolute limit of pleasure, as opposed to what is possible in the moment (which is less), or what is sustainable (which is even less), to be a bit blunt about it: States of intense sensual pleasures paired with the absence of all physical and mental pains, the very moment of climax, say, would be that limit, I suppose. The absolute limit of pleasure is not eating an apple in a tent, because while you do that, you might long for the presence of a loved one and a comfortable

bed – however, that might be the limit of pleasure sustainable during a long trek.

Note that pleasure is present only *where and while* pain is absent. I can laugh at a joke while my knee hurts. My knee can hurt while my skin, bones, muscles and sinews left and right of it feel good.