

# Why Minimizing All Desire Is Incorrect (And What To Do Instead)

Post by “Don” of December 6, 2024 at 11:24 PM

To reflect on the title of this thread: "Why Minimizing All Desire Is Incorrect (And What To Do Instead)" - I would agree that we aren't called to "minimize all desire" or, to rephrase that, minimize pleasures that we experience down to a bare minimal number of allowed ones.

Epicurus wrote that "all pleasure is good." If we equate "*the pleasures of the profligate*" at all times and all places with every experience of "*the joys of taste, of sex, of hearing, and without the pleasing motions caused by the sight of bodies and forms,*" and avoid every experience of these (and other pleasures I'm sure we can think of), that's not the point. I continue to contend that it's the unlimited indulgence of any one pleasure that becomes an issue for Epicurus. Although, it's easier to avoid some to begin with if one knows the likely outcome beforehand. Nevertheless, if you indulge in "sex, drugs, and rock and roll"; Epicurus is going to be there afterwards shaking his head, giving you some frank speech, but no doubt welcoming you back to the garden if you want to sincerely learn about the "limits of our pains (of either mind or body) and desires" and to "study nature." He wrote a treatise set as a discussion among attendees (including *himself*) at a drinking party ([Symposium, Συμπόσιον](#), number 18 on Diogenes Laertius' list) where they discuss, among other things, whether wine has warming or cooling properties and getting omens from indigestion.

Epicureanism has always been to me a philosophy of personal responsibility (tempered with an understanding of chance and circumstance). It's the outcomes of the choices that are made, NOT (necessarily) the pleasures experienced in and of themselves. I will continue to think that [PD10-12](#) provides a beginning framework of why and how to understand the limits that we should consider to be prudent choice-makers.