

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

Post by "Cassius" of December 7, 2024 at 12:49 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

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."

Perhaps you equate "indulge" with "over-indulge," or perhaps that's a typo, but I would think that sentence definitely needs to read "OVER indulge" to be clear. That's because I am pretty sure we agree that "sex, drugs, and rocknroll" are definitely desirable pleasures, and completely proper ones, when not "overindulged in" - which means essentially "to excess." Correct?

[Quote from Don](#)

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 completely agree with the emphasis on personal responsibility, unless you mean that wording to indicate that personal responsibility is more important than pleasure itself. I don't think you mean that, but in the context of the discussion I could see someone casually reading the post thinking that is what you mean. We live for pleasure, and personal responsibility is essential to ensure that we do not overindulge and end up with too much pain, but personal responsibility itself is just a "virtue" and therefore a "tool" for living pleasurably, and it is living pleasurably ("pleasure") that is the goal.

The difference in our readings continues to be (I think) that you and I have a different view of the usefulness and meaning of hypotheticals. In itself that difference is not a bad thing, but it needs to be understood by people browsing through the threads. I would say you're more suspicious of the problem of the stating accurate premises to include in using hypotheticals than I am, and so you sometimes take the intent of the hypothetical somewhat differently. I am willing to embrace that problem and believe that the challenges in stating the premises are what helps the point of the hypothetical to sink in. Regardless of that, however, in the end, I think we arrive mostly at the same place.