

Exposition therapy, Courage and when choosing Pain

Post by “Matteng” of January 14, 2026 at 1:19 PM

In the past I often read/hear:

Stoicism = Stress management

Epicureanism = Stress avoidance

And that Suffering belongs to Life, and is needed for growing and that it is bad to shun pain.

And that Epicurean philosophy would teach to shun pain.

Stoics train discomfort, for they pain is instrumental to progress to Virtue.

Stoics train Memento Malorum and Exposition to fear and pain makes them stronger and Exposition therapy is very successful.

From Epicurus there is often his method mentioned that he counters his pain on his last day with the pleasures of his memories about philosophy with friends and that this is the main way in Epicurean Philosophy to counter pain.

What do you think about these statements ?

I think they are one-sided, and a false dichotomy. Both methods can help and Stoics are not more courageous than Epicureans and the benefit of choosing kinds of pain is even in the epitome of Epicurean Ethics the letter of Menoecus:

„...(129)And since pleasure is the first good and natural to us, for this very reason we do not choose every pleasure, but sometimes we pass over many pleasures, when greater discomfort accrues to us as the result of them: **and similarly we think many pains better than pleasures, since a greater pleasure comes to us when we have endured pains for a long time.** Every pleasure then because of its natural kinship to us is good, yet not every pleasure is to be chosen: even as every pain also is an evil, yet not all are always of a nature to be avoided.

....“

[Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus](#)