

# Good and Bad Desire and Doubt In Epicurean Philosophy

Post by “Patrikios” of March 31, 2026 at 5:43 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

## Natural but Not Necessary Desires

The second category—natural but not necessary—covers desires that arise from our nature but **whose specific fulfillment is not required for well-being**. The desire for pleasant food, for **sexual gratification**, for aesthetic enjoyment, for variety and richness in experience—these are genuine desires rooted in human nature and entirely appropriate. They are natural in that they are not fantasies invented by culture or social pressure; but **generally they are not necessary** in that the specific objects of these desires can be varied, and their absence does not cause the deep pain that the absence of food or shelter would cause.

[Cassius](#)

Here is likely one of the few points that we may not see the terminology and human biological processes in the same way. So, with great respect I question the blanket categorization implied by this statement.

When you use the term “**sexual gratification**” as natural, but not necessary, it casts a pejorative shade over the natural exercise of our human reproductive system whose healthy maintenance does **necessarily** involve appropriate regular activity for a healthy life. I would open discussion on whether some level of sexual orgasm constitutes necessary healthy function, and does not fit your statement “*whose specific fulfillment is **not required for well-being***”.

Here is just one of many studies supporting a natural & necessary viewpoint, on at least a subset of the broader “**sexual gratification**” terminology.

Quote

*In humans, longer periods of sexual abstinence were associated with increased sperm DNA damage and oxidative stress, along with reduced sperm motility and viability.*

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2026-03-2...-animal-kingdom>

So, we are made with natural sexual desires, and we learn appropriate ways to manage those desires in order to lead a pleasant life (according to PD5). As you stated “**generally** *they are not necessary*”; so the implications cited in the WHO study, may fall in the ‘**not generally**’ cases.

Also, many people raised in traditional religious households are also taught how unnecessary our natural feelings related to “sex” are and should be denied in all cases. So, isn’t the maintenance of a healthy body a necessary condition for a life of wellbeing?

If this topic has been discussed elsewhere in this forum, please advise.