

Rebuttal to a Stoic who stated that "flourishing" would be a "better" goal of life than Pleasure

Post by "Matteng" of July 1, 2026 at 8:40 AM

[Cassius](#) Thank you for your input.

I'm realizing now just how much one adopts the questioner's framework and certain biases when dealing with questions. And that can quickly lead to straw man arguments. That's why it's good to examine the underlying assumptions of the questions.

For question 1 and 2 that are my current conclusions (the other will follow later):

Question 1: Relates to the Stoic/Epicurean Cradle Argument: **Self-Preservation vs. Pleasure**. And the Stoics mean the Decision-Making Self (Hegemonikon or Proheiresis) as the Self.

=> It is a strong argument because Evolution is about self-preservation or self-organisation.

But for me I think it is a **false dichotomy**. The natural/necessary desires (life, self, eudaimonia) represent all self-preservation/organisation. But just existing or self-preservation brings no Value.

Pleasure/Pain are the **Value System**. A growing crystal has no Values and Desires. And the self-preservation ends finally in death someday.

Question 2: The shortterm/longterm problem: Some people see pleasure as bad because **they confuse desire with pleasure**.

Let's say there is a desire for a drug and it use brings pleasurable stimulus. Following the desire is the problem when not reflection about what pain it brings to follow this desire, yes that is pure Epicurean teaching.