

Opening Discussion of Kelly Arenson's "Health And Happiness In Plato And Epicurus"

Post by “Matteng” of July 30, 2026 at 4:28 PM

Today I also thought about this connection.

I do sport to maintain a healthy body. Why do I want a healthy body? To function? To satisfy my needs? To live... ultimately for pleasure, that is the intrinsic good.

Yes.

But would I take a shortcut if I could? Would I forgo exercise and health if I could obtain pleasure directly?

Two things come to my mind that argue against this:

1. Is it realistic? Can pleasure be separated from a healthy body?

2. Why do I feel an inner resistance/conflict at the thought of separating health from pleasure? Even if one were to feel comfortable in a sick body, suffering or pain would inevitably follow—at the very least, when bodily functions fail and I cannot fulfill my desires.

I can see this is quickly heading back toward the "Experience Machine" or drug scenarios.

I would decide against it precisely because one loses one's freedom and connection to the real world; returning is difficult to impossible, and one sacrifices everything. Major inner conflicts arise, and there is no ataraxia—hence the decision against it.

Of course, once you're inside, everything could be simulated to keep you there—at which point it's likely too late; the decision has to be made beforehand.