

# Characteristics of the Wise Man, 1-9 Rough Draft of Outline

Post by "Don" of May 31, 2020 at 11:55 AM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

In the spirit of keeping it coming, I think:

(1) The issue of being clear in our technical discussions about "ranking" and "divisions" and "types" of pleasure. Here we have a fascinating and important discussion that can be pursued with a wide variety of types of people (both inside and outside the Epicurean framework) without too much pressure from emotional issues.

But we also have :

(2) The issue of the apparent subjective/relativistic nature of pleasure, the acceptance of which is explosively rejected outside the Epicurean framework of Nature. In fact it is hard to even discuss personal attitudes toward pleasure without first coming to terms with the practical implications of concluding that people will disagree on how to pursue pleasure. That probably takes us off into the infrequently discussed issues such as the last ten PDs, and this issue (which might be the most important of which) has to be kept tightly tied to the Epicurean framework for us to make progress on dissecting it. Talking about this issue with people outside the basic Epicurean framework is hardly even possible because you run into immediate and emotional issues about what "should" be the best pleasures, and if you can't agree that that "objective" framework makes no sense then you can hardly even get off the ground.

This is good. Thanks for summarizing! Here are my thoughts.

1) I don't think we can "rank" or "divide" individual pleasures. What we can classify (for lack of a better word) are the \*consequences\* of pleasures. Do someone's present pleasures move them along the path to future pleasures? That's always been my argument for why we \*can\* censure the "pleasures of the profligate" ([PD10](#)). Their actions, while subjectively pleasurable for them in the present, do not assure them of future pleasures.

2) Again, yes, people will pursue pleasure in different ways, but: (a) are the present pleasures they experience assuring them of future pleasures? and (b) are they in keeping with natural justice: to not harm and to not be harmed? I think those are the criteria by which to "judge" pleasure (again, for lack of a better verb). There are no best pleasures, or right pleasures, or correct pleasures in and of themselves. You all here in the forum have begun to move me in

that direction. I'm still wrestling with this myself because I can readily think of pleasures that people insist are pleasurable to them that I think are abhorrent. I'm also not convinced that these kinds of "pleasures" are actually pleasures and not activating some other center in the brain, but let's for arguments' sake say they are pleasurable for these people in the widest possible definition. Then we judge them by the criteria a and b above: assurance of future pleasures and accordance with natural justice. Epicurean Philosophy says that we should accept some pain for future pleasures. I'm thinking here of rehab for the profligate's drug addiction, for example.

That's my take (at least in this moment 😊 ... I could change my mind)