

# PD10 - Interpretations of PD 10 Discussion

Post by "Don" of January 16, 2021 at 11:44 PM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

PD8: " No pleasure is a bad thing in itself; but the means which produce some pleasures bring with them disturbances many times greater than the pleasures."

and from the letter to Menoeceus:

"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."

LOL! I would cite both those [Principal Doctrines](#) to defend my position, too, so we \*must\* be starting to meet somewhere 😊

I did want to address this part of your post:

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

If we look at [PD10](#) solely from the "practical" point of view alone, it seems to me that we imply, or at least open up the logical possibility, that pleasure can lose its nature as good in certain contexts -- namely the context in which the cost of such pleasure is large in terms of the pain required in order to achieve it. I would submit that labeling pleasure "good" or "not good" is not at all the same as saying pleasure is to be "chosen" or not chosen," so I am suggesting that Epicurus is telling us to keep these two aspects in mind as distinctly separate.

I don't agree. Looking at it as "practical" provides a concrete example of the philosophy's application to a real-world situation in which people must exercise choices and avoidances as to how to live a pleasurable life. The extravagant pleasures in and of themselves are not "good" or "bad"; they are situationally "choice-worthy" or not. There's no question the "profligate" (I'm really beginning to hate that translation) are experiencing pleasure. Epicurus is not saying some pleasures in and of themselves are good or bad. He explicitly states pleasure is good, The Good. But also explicitly states not all pleasures should be chosen at all times. The import for me of PD 10, PD 8, the Letter, is to reinforce the goal is to lead a pleasurable life. I would cite:

Quote

PD 25 If at all critical times you do not connect each of your actions to the natural goal of life, but instead turn too soon to some other kind of goal in thinking whether to avoid or pursue something, then your thoughts and your actions will not be in harmony.

For me, that dovetails with:

Quote

everything that you accept or reject in terms of the health of the body and the serenity of the soul — since that is the goal of a completely blessed life.

Epicurus's emphasis, in my opinion, is that the "profligate" experiences pleasure but will not find "the health of the body and the serenity of the soul" nor "a completely blessed life" if they're not also addressing their fear of the gods, of death, of pain. That way of life will not teach you how to rid yourself of those impediments to a completely blessed life filled to its fullness of pleasure.