

Why Tranquility Should Not Be the Main Goal for an Epicurean

Post by “Pacatus” of December 19, 2021 at 1:56 PM

Thank you for this thread. My comments fold some of what I've absorbed reading this with thoughts I'd already come to.

First, I identify as an introvert. I learned long ago the definition of an introvert as someone who tends to replenish their energy more in solitude than with others, though they may still find great pleasure in the company of others - especially friends. I have known extroverts who, being the opposite sort, found much alone-time to be tiring. Except for a few on the hard edges of the spectrum, most of us likely find ourselves in some range of "ambiversion."

I enjoy measures of both solitude and company. That is just part of my personal hedonic calculus.

Similarly for tranquility (*atarxia*) and other pleasures. I can experience *tranquillitas* alone and in the company of others. And I don't find it in conflict with other pleasures, any more than I find the pleasure of a good afternoon nap in conflict with the pleasure of a glass of wine. And tranquility, for me, does not imply stillness - just a non-turmoiled mind. I can experience tranquility in meditation as well as while watching an exciting sports event. again, it's just all part of my personal hedonic calculus - lesson which has taken a long time to learn.

I find in Epicureanism, as I understand it thus far, a kind of relaxation - perhaps like letting out a long sigh - that I do not find in, say, Stoicism or Zen. Though the path does take practice, it does not seem to be a gritting-of-the-teeth sort. That's why, in part, that I decided to revisit it.

