

Compassion in Epicurean Philosophy

Post by “SimonC” of February 8, 2022 at 3:12 AM

[Quote from Scott](#)

Compassion deals with *suffering*. It *calls* for suffering. Pretty much *requires* it. That seems obvious to me in hindsight. That's what really differentiates it from benevolence and love and help and such.

You put your finger exactly on something that felt fishy about this subject. Compassion seems to be self-defeating as a virtue since it requires that others are in and remain in pain, which is not a state of affairs I prefer.

Perhaps love or benevolence is a better word to capture the proselytising spirit in the above quoted?

It seems more Epicurean in spirit to state the goal positively: there are many reasons to prefer people even outside my circle of friends to live according to nature and be free of unnecessary suffering. Therefore adopting an attitude that helps bring this about is appropriate. This attitude is love (or benevolence).