

Is motivation to pursue pleasure the same as the motivation to remove pain?

Post by "Kalosyni" of February 9, 2022 at 2:39 PM

To state this question in the opposite order:

Is the motivation to remove pain the same as the motivation to pursue pleasure?

I think that there are differences, and the differences will create different outcomes.

For example, if I want to remove the mental pain of loneliness, how does this compare with the goal of seeking the pleasure of friends?

The framing of the problem is different in seeking pleasure vs removal of pain.

If we start with the uncomfortable feelings of mental pain and then ask how to remove them, then we might arrive at a list of possible ways to remove the pain...one option of which is to seek the pleasure of friendship.

Once we have determined that this is the best option to remove the pain of loneliness, then we must switch to a "pleasure optimising" goal...which would answer the question: "How can I best find the pleasure of friends?"

This seeking of pleasure will then lead to more and better options for ending the mental pain of loneliness.

We use a "short-cut" when we study Epicureanism, Principle Doctrine 27:

27. Of all the things that wisdom provides for the complete happiness of one's entire life, by far the greatest is friendship.

I am curious to hear other's thoughts on pursuit of pleasure vs. removal of pain, ...do these appear the same or different?