

Pleasures of the soul, Values, Meaningful Life

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 27, 2022 at 3:44 PM

[Quote from camotero](#)

B. After eliminating pain, all pleasures beyond this limit, are embellishments. Embellishment pleasures are great! Try to experience as most as you can (carefully calculating not to produce more pain for you down the line). Let these guide your life if you want even, but keep in mind the following point.

C. The limit of pleasure has been met. All of these embellishments don't add up more pleasure to your life. You won't experience them after you're dead, and you certainly won't take any memories of them to an afterlife. The maximum natural quantity of pleasure has been obtained when you eliminated all the pain, so if you want to stay at that, IT'S OK! If you want to go for more embellishments, IT'S OK! Just be wary of the slippery slope of wanting more of something that won't add more pleasure and may become a source of much pain.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I find that there are basically two camps:

Camp One - People who focus on the "absence of pain" passages and conclude that "avoid all pain to the extent possible" is the supreme guide of Epicurean philosophy, without regard to the pleasure that is thereby forgone.

Camp Two:. People who focus on "pleasure" as that term is ordinarily understood, embracing all forms of mental and physical enjoyment, and who conclude that the correct statement of the primary guide is that pleasure is the focus and is to be pursued so long as we ourselves deem the resulting feeling of pleasure to be worth the cost in pain needed to obtain it.

Everyone has different tolerances for pain, and different valuations of pleasure, so it's really impossible to make the generic statement of Camp Two more precise than that. There is no absolute set of pleasures always to pursue or pains always to avoid.

I would like to propose that friendship is a pleasure which every Epicurean should cultivate.

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

VS 52: Friendship dances around the world, announcing to each of us that we must awaken to happiness.

In our modern world when we are all so short on time it might seem that friendship is an embellishment, but I would say that friendship is not an embellishment. One certainly could live as a hermit free from pain, but would be much lacking in the joy that comes with engaging and spending time with a good friend or friends. And it must be cultivated -- finding good friends, making time, and also behaving in an enjoyable way toward each other -- choosing enjoyable things to talk about, finding humor and fun and sharing fun activities. The feelings of friendship are far deeper and surpass the simple enjoyments of food, music, etc. of the simple physical sensations.