

Pleasure, Desire and Limits

Post by “reneliza” of July 20, 2022 at 12:11 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

There are some translations that interpret αἱ δὲ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος ἀοχλησίαν to mean only things like clothing and shelter - those things that provide "freedom from disturbance" for the body, that is for one's physical existence. That isn't literally what is written so that is simply one interpretation. Those kinds of things - clothing and shelter - would seem to fall under the final category of those necessary for life. So, this category should catch those between eudaimonia and those necessary for life. This is an interesting category.

I would contend that those "necessary for life itself" are those essentials at the base of Maslow's hierarchy of needs: food, water, shelter, sleep, air, etc. Again, clothing and shelter would seem to fall into this category.

PS: the "on the one hand... On the other hand" are meant to literally translate the Greek μὲν... δὲ... It is clunky and awkward in English but I wanted to get across that they were there in the original. They do not have to be, nor should they be, translated this literally in all cases.

I do like thinking of it in terms of Maslow, but it seems to me that “necessary for life itself” roughly corresponds to the base of the pyramid, the physiological needs, and then the “freedom from disturbance” would be the next level, the safety/security needs (these two levels combine to form the “basic needs”)

In Maslow's hierarchy, the next level is social/belonging. I wonder how well these correspond to the “necessary for eudaimonia” category. The categories needed for life itself and for freedom from disturbance at least seem to be more universal than most things within Epicureanism. Is this also true for the desires that need to be satisfied for eudaimonia? Is this category just the desire for aponia and ataraxia, or is it more specific and personal than that?

I know that I often think of things as being “necessary for happiness” which just....absolutely are not (things like romantic love, especially a specific relationship) as shown by me having happiness without having those things, so it seems like this category can get REALLY blurry if it's left open-ended.