

Pleasure, Desire and Limits

Post by “Pacatus” of July 20, 2022 at 4:26 PM

I’m pretty much a clunk on this, but it seems to me that unnatural desires would be ones that do not lead to any (natural) health in body or mind – and hence to no natural pleasure (or ataraxia, or eudaimonia – which I would render as something like happy well-being). Fame, extreme wealth, any kind of braggadocio one-upmanship. I might include some Stoic (quasi-Kantian?) admonitions to duty, and a self-righteous pat on one’s own back.

I would think that “getting high” – by which I mean certain pleasurable “altered states of consciousness” is natural – but one where the means might end up causing more harm (pain) than sustainable pleasure. As will excess. [I just enjoyed an afternoon martini, relaxing on our shaded deck – and I enjoy the pleasurable “afterglow.” But I know that a 2nd martini now will dull everything, and undo the pleasure.]