

Kungi's Natural and Necessary Discussion

Post by "Cassius" of July 25, 2022 at 9:00 AM

See I read that differently. I think he's saying not saying that everyone has to avoid those things completely, but that everyone has to evaluate their circumstances and options and preferences and decide exactly how much partying and fine food is going to be what they wish to pursue - for the more they pursue, if their circumstances do not allow it - the more pain they will suffer in cost. I put key emphasis on the "endless" adjective.

That's why I see this as included: " reasoning and examining the cause of every choice and rejection and driving out the greatest number of opinions that take hold of the mind and bring confusion and trouble."

That's not a flat rejection of the activities listed, because those are the ways Epicurus has said he knows the good. Instead, he is saying to prudently deliberate how much of it to engage in considering your own resources and your own preferences and tolerances for pain.

It is not the activity itself which is inherently wrong - that would not be maintainable under the big picture of the philosophy - but the manner of engaging in it (constant / endless) as opposed to the right amount (which may be none or a lot) depending on your circumstances. And no activity is going to have the same amount of pain and pleasure in it for everyone in every circumstance - not even for the same person at different times.

Reading that quote as a flat prohibition or even a sweeping preference would create a list of absolutes that would not be consistent with [VS63](#) or more importantly with the absence of fate and supernatural gods and ideal forms - it would be handing down a list which applies to everyone, which violates the most basic view of how the universe operates.