

# Kungi's Natural and Necessary Discussion

Post by “reneliza” of August 1, 2022 at 12:12 PM

## [Quote from Godfrey](#)

One way to think about "absence of pain" and "living in a cave" is that it's actually rather unnatural to live that way. Unless you're thinking in terms of how early humans lived, which I don't think is what Epicurus had in mind as his philosophy is intricately tied to the society in which he lived.

The feelings of pleasure and pain are an entirely natural faculty. Our goal is to live the most pleasant life, which we do by listening to our feelings and using them as a guide to action. A person who is striving for maximum frugality is at some point going to experience mental and/or physical pain. If they ignore that pain then they're doing the same thing that in other situations clearly leads to unnatural desires, in this case the unnatural desire for frugality. If a person thrives on frugality, and either experiences no pain or examines their pain and determines that bearing that pain will lead to greater pleasure for themselves, then for them the desire for frugality could be considered natural and unnecessary.

Between this and Don's note that the word Epicurus uses (in Menoeceus at least) is not "unnatural" but "void" this thread quickly became one of other people making the exact points I wanted to make before I even caught up.

The only thing that has been kind of inferred in this conversation, but I haven't seen explicitly stated: it's my thought that the void/fruitless/vain desires are those that are infinite and therefore unquenchable. These are desires that are by definition impossible to satisfy, because of the lack of any limit.

This is exactly where the limit of pleasure conversation comes in. Pleasure can't be the goal itself because it is unlimited. Until Epicurus asserted that there IS a limit to pleasure, and it's the point where you have no pain in the mind or body.

What is the limit of fame? Or wealth? Power? Frugality? (Given that couponers sometimes leave the store having been paid to shop, even zero is apparently not a limit)

This means that void desires absolutely can look a lot like someone else's natural and unnecessary desires. (Or potentially even like someone else's N&N desire: the difference between the desire for a place to live where you feel safe, comfortable, and protected from the elements, and a 30,000 sf mansion which will eventually not be good enough and will need

replacing or upgrading)

Someone may truly have a limit to their desire for wealth, fame, frugality - although generally I suspect these people actually view wealth or whatever other potentially limitless desire as a means to meeting some other natural desires. And in the end I wonder if that's the sort of wrong-thinking that the void desires stem from: treating the thing as an end in itself instead of only using it as a means to obtain maximum overall pleasure.