

PD19 And The Meaning Of No "Greater" Pleasure

Post by "Kalosyni" of August 22, 2022 at 12:50 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

As I think some more, I still am becoming enamored of the idea that a pleasurable life's foundation is a mind and body free from trouble, pain, and anxiety. Ataraxia and aponia. That's where it starts! That's the foundation upon we can build experiences of pleasure arising from natural desires, both necessary and unnecessary. Without that foundation, we are anxious that we won't be able to fulfill desires we want to choose; we're troubled that our desire won't completely fulfill our expectations; we fear the pleasure coming from our chosen desire won't last long enough. The fears, anxieties, and troubles can spiral out of control. If we have a sound mind in a healthy body, we can pluck the desires we find appealing with no mental anguish, large or small. If your mind is already at peace, sink your teeth into the ripe peach, experience the juice dripping down chin, close your eyes and taste the sensuous sweetness on your tongue. Experience the pleasure undimmed by some mental baggage because you're already at the limit of pleasure and the peach is varying that feeling.

I think that ataraxia and aponia are important, however I view them differently -- because modern life is really at odds with being "pain free or untroubled".

We certainly wouldn't want to wait to be completely untroubled in order to enjoy life. In a given day we might have moments of feeling untroubled, but an active modern life will bring us into "stressful" moments. Also things can be a mix of pleasure and stress -- for example going to a coffeehouse can sometimes be too noisy (or unpleasing music is playing), but as long as there is over-all more pleasure than stress we will choose this activity. Also over time what might originally feel stressful can be adapted to.

Also, it came to me early this morning, that life requires a certain amount of "striving" or work. Most people until they are retired work at a job to make money for the purpose of survival (there are stay-at-home moms which is a big job in itself). Striving brings with it a certain amount of stress, but hopefully we can find ways to adapt which isn't too stressful (or jobs which aren't too stressful). Then beyond this for people who are retired, life still needs some form of striving, or else the will to live diminishes. And the striving could be any type of interest or goal (big or small) which requires some effort but also feels engaging and important in some way. And striving will always bring with it a small amount of mental stress. I would say that it is very important to make sure the level of stress does not become overwhelming.

So then for me "ataraxia and aponia" are focused toward creating more ease and comfort while still engaging in life -- and the amount of ease and comfort needed can vary from person to

person, or from week to week.

Quote

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This is where I believe that certain "natural goods" are important -- such as the need for friendship/companionship (and all the enjoyments that come with it) which can make life situations feel better or less stressful or less disappointing.