

# Episode One Hundred Thirty Eight - Letter to Menoecus 5 - Pleasure Part One

Post by “reneliza” of September 8, 2022 at 7:22 PM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

There is an awful lot of discussion of "confidence" but not all of it would clearly be applicable. This one jumps out at me first as applicable - is this not a current thought of future pleasure?

VS34. It is not so much our friends' help that helps us, as it is the confidence of their help.

If I understand it properly (that it's not the actual help provided but just the certainty that help WILL BE provided that is helpful), then it's definitely related.

But to go all Ciceronian, I think that technically since the CONFIDENCE is occurring in the present moment, and that it is the actual source of the pleasure, I'm not sure that it counts as a future pleasure.

Seriously though, I do think it's the exact type of thing I was looking for - a pleasure gained from the thought of something happening in the future that isn't actually tied to whether it happens or not. It makes a possibility for disappointment, but as long as your confidence is founded, the risk is worth the pleasure to be gained from trusting in your friends' support.

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

### [Quote from reneliza](#)

I can happily agree with all of this if I just swap out the word "desire" for "interest" or "motivation" (although technically motivation is WHY you want to do a thing, not just what you want to do - I think it still works here and is sometimes even more useful to know) but I still get hung up on the one word.

Can you explain that a little further? We probably need to focus on using the word "desire" since that is the word with the explosive connotations that people are used to debating about, but I would like to be sure I understand your concern.

Really just what I've been saying - that I have no conception of desire that is without any pain. I don't know if it's a difference in language, or experience, or even just personality or neurotype (ie me as a kid in misery waiting for xmas presents) but it's not something I can wrap my head

around. Although as you reduce the distance (in time, effort, etc...) between the desire and fulfillment, the pain can certainly be negligible.

Going to Godfrey's example (which I'm still thinking on!) - at the store yesterday I considered buying a pineapple, but didn't, and him bringing it up - that it's even already prepared! - made me wish I had some pineapple. It's not going to upset the balance of my night (or my dinner) to not have it, but it is a bit of a pain if I dwell on it. The grocery store doesn't close for an hour so I could pack up the kids in the car and go get it and then get home and peel it and core it and slice it, but that's a lot of distance between me and that pineapple, so the pain is minor, but noticeable (if I bother to notice it). If my circumstance was already prepared pineapple in the fridge, I wouldn't even notice the pain, I would just go eat the pineapple. Heck, I might not even eat it. I might just hoard it.

You may have noticed I'm not very patient (again see: xmas presents), but I also delay gratification for myself so often that I've become known for treats going bad while I wait to enjoy them. This is probably something worth examining! Perhaps the pain of desire as I experience leads me to reduce that distance as much as I can for a variety of possible desires.

Or possibly I'm a masochist.

My argument would be that desire is inherently painful but that circumstance can make the pain negligible. But you could just as easily make the claim that desire is not inherently painful but that circumstance can make it so and I don't think there's necessarily a right or wrong. But I DO necessarily think that Epicurus did not mean to refer to something that was inherently painful, as he even specified.