

Thoughts on Categorizing Desires: Natural, Necessary, and Vain

Post by "Titus" of October 11, 2022 at 8:51 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

Thank you Titus for your feedback. I decided not to use "natural but unnecessary" category to see if I could create something very direct and usable.

Due to my short-reading 😊, I just even recognized you 've introduced your own categorization (necessary for happiness and health of the mind) and skipped the "natural but unnecessary" category.

My anew reading leads me to new points. I remember Epicurus distinguishes the "natural and necessary" desires in another three categories, saying in Menoiceus

"and of the necessary some are necessary for happiness, others for the repose of the body, and others for very life."

Propably, one could asume your two categories as part of this triad.

There's also the way of reading them related to aponia and ataraxia as your categories sum up many of material features of them.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I agree with that but especially in the context that it is always a matter of comparing the resulting pleasure to the resulting pain and never a strict out-of-context analysis

I think this is one of the reasons, Epicurus is arguing in abstract terms rather than presenting a list made of concrete. But I also recognize these abstract terms being related to an idea of basic principles of the nature of man. While this may set a focus (e.g. keeping your body healthy, care for your personal relations) I agree it's a matter of ongoing comparing and evaluating pleasures and pains.

There's a fun fact story I would like to share. Aproximately 10 years ago I read an academic article criticizing the pleasure calculus of Epicurus. The author argued, in the search for happiness one would have to constantly evaluate, which he condemned as quite unrealistic. How else would a costumer visiting a supermarket make his choices?! 😊