

Is the Natural and Necessary Question Objective or Subjective?

Post by "Don" of November 21, 2022 at 11:46 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

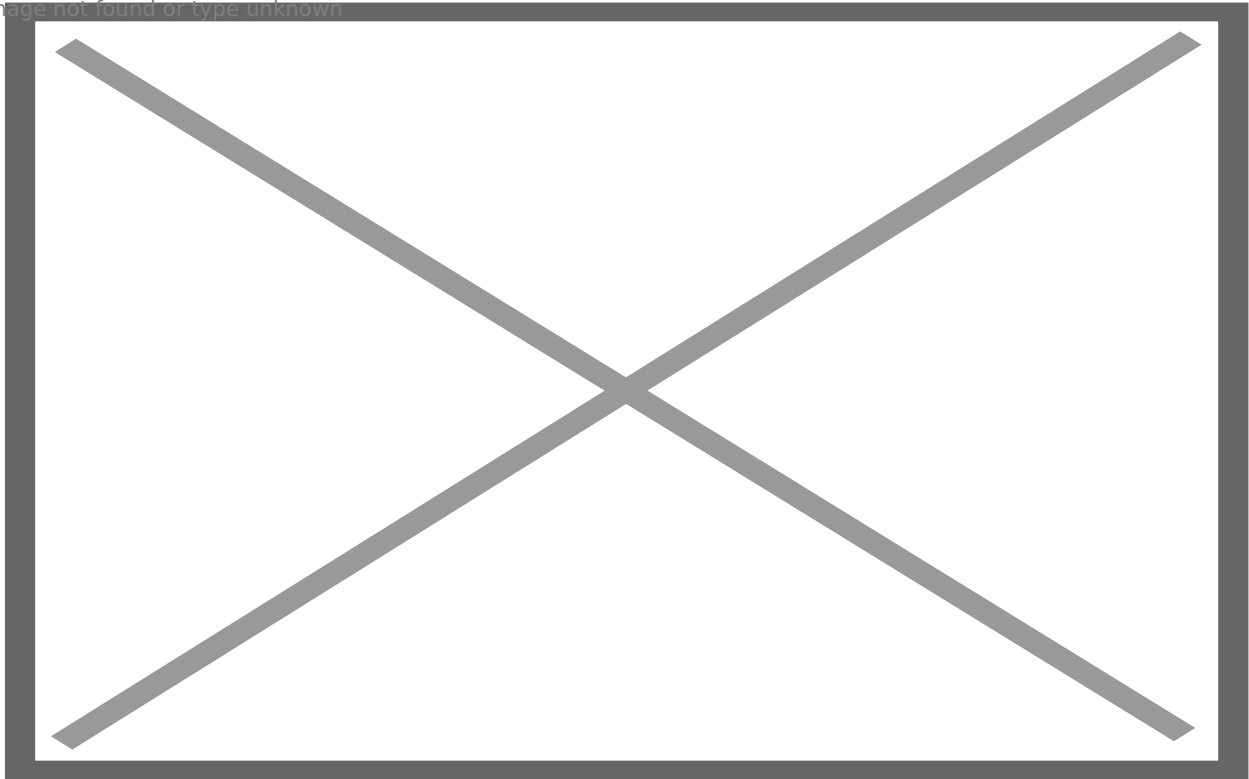
When deciding what to pursue, don't look for an objective list that applies to everyone as such a list existed and was handed down by God or by Platonic forms. Look instead simply to your own circumstances, evaluate how hard it is going to be to obtain those desires, and measure your decision on whether to pursue them by asking whether the reward to you will be worth the cost to you.

As it is, many of us seem trapped in the Aristotelian model and think that there must be a list that everyone has to check off in order to be happy. The way out of that trap is to realize that no such single list exists. And so we should reject the "objective" natural and necessary analysis that Aristotle and other pre-Epicurean Greeks had suggested, and instead substitute the Epicurean natural and necessary model, which is primarily subjective

I would say the "list" has both objective and subjective aspects. For example, Epicurus states that friendship is an immortal good. He obviously thinks friendship is necessary for a pleasurable life. That's objective to me. How many friends, what you do with your friends, etc.: That can be subjective. Are you naturally outgoing? Maybe you want lots of friends and to do adventurous things. More introverted, maybe less friends are necessary and you do quieter things. We're all combinations of introvert and extrovert with varying needs and desires. But friendship, as an example, is necessary. That's even born out by psychological research. Loneliness is extremely detrimental to one's health.

As to "happiness," I expressed my misgivings about that word at the 20th last night. The word used in the texts is eudaimonia by Aristotle, Epicurus, et al. Happiness has become a buzzword and comes along with lots of semantic baggage. The definition in positive psychology research seems to be "subjective well-being" which sounds right to me. It may be clunky, but it also is a better translation of eudaimonia in my opinion.

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[What Is Happiness and Why Is It Important? \(+ Definition\)](#)

Do you think happiness is the same thing to you as it is to others? Find out!
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