

Is pleasure as the natural goal of life falsifiable?

Post by "Cassius" of February 8, 2023 at 9:42 AM

[Quote from A Gardner](#)

My current understanding is that it is more of a "fruit" that comes from following the tree of pleasure and Epicurean teachings.

Yes, a fruit, or a side benefit, or just one of many other aspects of how pleasure can be enjoyed in life. Most certainly not some special state, the achievement of which everything in life, and every other goal in life, is subordinate.

Once again it's a matter of whether the term is being used as normal people might use it. I have no issues with it in a broad or loose way, in regular conversation, or even in a technical sense if someone wants to define the best life as a jar of beans in which every last pain bean has been removed and replaced with a pleasure bean (which is what I think "the limit of pleasure" really was intended to reference). But the problem is the sense in which it is batted around in much discussion of Epicurus by professional commentators, as the be-all and end-all of life, which gives rise to the kind of question you ask such as:

"How can I do X if it will be disturbing?"

The answer to which, I would suggest, is just the way Epicurus said, that you sometimes choose pain (even the pain of disturbance) in order to achieve a greater PLEASURE. If there were no greater way to look at pleasure than "absence of disturbance" then I would agree, and why would you ever get out of bed in the morning at all?

And if someone says "But I have to get out of bed because if i don't go to work I'll be disturbed even more!" Then I would say to them "If 'being calm and undisturbed' is the best way you can think of to spend your 75 years on earth, I feel very sorry for you. You are surely a natural-born Stoic."