

PD09 - Condensed Pleasure

Post by "Hiram" of March 26, 2019 at 10:23 AM

"associated with the whole organism or the dominant parts of it" tells me that pleasure happens IN THE BODY (even mental pleasures), that (different parts of) the body have the wisdom to produce (different types of) pleasure, and that any study of the variation of pleasure must be bodily rooted.

Also: We can't experience intense pleasure 24-7 because we have to sleep, plus ***the experience of intense pleasure requires intense energy consumption***. Take the orgasm, and consider the after-effect, the post-coital fatigue that comes from reaching the intensity of orgasm. This fatigue is indicative that a HUGE AMOUNT of energy was just consumed by the brain and the body in producing that experience. And so we conclude from observation that intense pleasures require energy, which is not unlimited.

Because the body only has a limited supply of energy available, we conclude that nature has placed certain limits to the amount of pleasure the organism can experience.

Also, concerning the neuroscience of pleasure, you may want to read "Buddha's Brain". I wrote a book review here:

<http://societyofepicurus.com/reasonings-about-neuroscience/>

AND concerning the impossibility of inaction, consider this:

Quote

Most men are insensible when they rest, and mad when they act. – [Vatican Saying](#) 11

which (I think) means that most people need to learn or train themselves to experience pleasure both while active and passive, and that therefore Epicurean philosophy presumably is part of that curriculum.

When we study the brain in this manner, we frequently speak as if the organism was a passive recipient or processes and there was no agency (this is probably part of what leads many like Sam Harris to conclude there is no free will--simply because they don't know how to fully account for how this agency emerges, but the fact is that it is there). It's as if you couldn't choose to take five minutes to stop, draw a deep breath, engage in a gratitude practice, and reset your attitude from time to time. **Attitude regulation** is a HUGE part of Epicurean practice, if we are to believe Diogenes of Oenoanda and Philodemus of Gadara, and I am convinced that without gratitude it is impossible to profit from EP.

So the factor of how does the sentient being actively engage in the production of his or her narrative must also be considered, and not merely the processes in the brain and the body that produce pleasure.