

Practical Pleasure-Pain Perspectives: How Different is 99% Pleasure From 100% Pleasure?

Post by "Godfrey" of October 5, 2023 at 3:26 PM

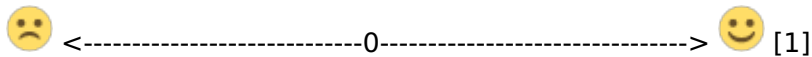
[Quote from Cassius](#)

We refuse to believe, however, that when pleasure is removed, grief instantly ensues, excepting when perchance pain has taken the place of the pleasure; but we think on the contrary that we experience joy on the passing away of pains, even though none of that kind of pleasure which stirs the senses has taken their place; and from this it may be understood how great a pleasure it is to be without pain.

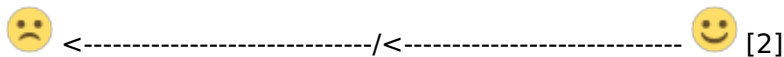
This quote is of major importance in terms of the way that I've been trying to visualize [PD03](#). I had been thinking in terms of the affective circumplex [here]([RE: How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain by Lisa Feldman Barrett](#)) and trying to reconcile that with [PD03](#) by using a graphic representation. What I find puzzling is that pleasure has a maximum, but pain seems capable of increasing until one passes out or dies.

With the circumplex, maximum pleasure are at opposite ends of an axis of affect, the zero point of the axis would be the imaginary "neutral state":

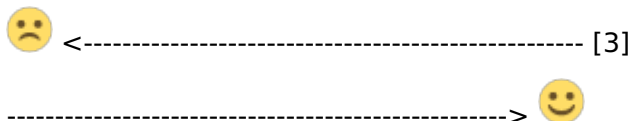
max pain max pleasure



[PD03](#) "The limit of enjoyment is the removal of all pains. Wherever and for however long pleasure is present, there is neither bodily pain nor mental distress." This could imply that if pain decreases to the right in this illustration, the "/" point, where pain is removed, denotes maximum pleasure. But pleasure then decreases to the right from the "/" point, which doesn't seem to make much sense.



Or you could have an illustration where pain and pleasure have an overlapping relationship:



At which point I become totally befuddled, and I realize why Epicurus didn't give mathematicians and geometers any credence: math and geometry aren't very useful for describing biological phenomena. But the quote above is quite concise in describing the

relationship of pleasure and pain.