

# Should we Feel Pity for someone Dying Young? 'The Human Predicament' by David Benatar

Post by "Blank\_Emu43" of November 4, 2023 at 4:00 AM

## [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

The other part of this is understanding the nature of pleasure. When we correctly understand pleasure, and we see how our own life no matter how long or how short it is, is permeated by the correct understanding of pleasure and the correct practice of the enjoyments of life, then we don't need to feel sad if we ourselves are dying at a young age.

This is what I was thinking. Epicurus mentions in letter to Menoikeus that the wise man chooses the most pleasurable food instead of the greatest amount, and that he'd do the same when it comes to life. Would it be right to say that a person who lives for five years can have the same amount of pleasure in their life as someone who lives for eighty years? I guess you could argue that the person who lives for five years has a more pleasure-filled life than someone who lives for eighty, simply because they most likely wouldn't have experienced as much pain in their life.

## [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

Now when it comes to another adult person, they may not have come to this way of thinking and so they may feel great anxiety regarding death. However, perhaps children have a different perspective "on life and death" - often times they have a kind of fearlessness since they aren't fully enculturated yet (I base this on a story I heard of how a young girl with cancer was not afraid at all).

That could be true. Speaking from experience because I did have Leukaemia when I was 3-years-old for three years. I was never afraid of death but I also didn't know why I had to get chemotherapy or why I went to the hospital often. I knew I was different from other kids my age, but the ignorance of the situation meant I wasn't afraid of dying because I didn't know that that was a possibility. If I were to get it again or some other cancer, I'd know what the outcome could be, but I wouldn't be afraid anyway since I discovered Epicurus and his philosophy (and before that, Stoicism).

And if we do feel sad either for the child or maybe 'for the situation' as Cassius said, does that mean we are acknowledging that death is bad? Which is what the author is getting at. If so, then that would mean Epicurus is wrong in stating that death is nothing to either the living or the dead.

### [Quote from Don](#)

This is a very good question. I have thoughts, but I'm not going to just write off-the-cuff on this one. I think we're going to have to think about a potential life vs the non-existence of the one that died. More later. Thank you for initiating the conversation!

I can't wait to read your reply! I've read a lot of your posts and I always learn something new.

