

Are the Gods Totally Painless? Does Calling Us To "Continuous Pleasure" Mean Totally Painless?

Post by "Elli" of April 3, 2019 at 12:11 PM

[Elayne Coulter](#) to [Cassius](#) Amicus, well, in the sense that without the danger signal of pain we would die from tissue damage at a young age-- as people do who are born without the ability to feel pain-- that is how pain allows life, which is necessary for pleasure. But I do not think it is similar to matter and void. Then you would require pain in your cup of pleasure, just as void is required between the constantly moving atoms.

Although pain as a warning is necessary, the events which cause us pain are often not necessary, and we should attempt to avoid pain when the pleasure of an action is not greater. Agreeing to pains for greater pleasure is not because the pain brings balance or is necessary, but because it happens to be a result of a particular action. The pain of the death of loved ones is a necessary risk associated with the greater pleasure of deep love. But we will also love many people whom we will not grieve-- they instead will grieve us. So our pain would not have been needed for those loves.

I had another thought this morning upon waking-- if we took the approach of her last paragraph, we would be following the currently prescribed stages of grief, which is an acceptance of pain in an almost resigned manner.

My usual approach is more defiant-- I refuse to submit to pain and insist upon acting for the goal of pleasure. I don't refuse to feel pain of grief-- I just refuse to let it win.

I can't go into some of the specific occasions here... but an example is that when I was told my son would never improve from his schizophrenia enough to leave a group home, I grieved that he had an incurable illness but I refused to submit to doom. I kept searching until I found a place that agreed to try harder, and I took him there. Because I didn't give up, although he is not cured, he has a real life in the community. He has freedom, and friends. I see this as us having defied pain and insisted on pleasure, in spite of not being able to eliminate the pain.

I have done a similar thing when grieving deaths-- I have thought about how I hope my friends and family will not cave in to grief when I die and will live on seeking pleasure, including happy memories of me.

It has a more invigorating result.

[Elli Pensa](#) to Elayne Coulter : My friend [Elayne](#), you are a genuine Epicurean !!! 

[Cassius Amicus](#)

" in the sense that without the danger signal of pain we would die from tissue damage at a young age-- as people do who are born without the ability to feel pain-- that is how pain allows life, which is necessary for pleasure. But I do not think it is similar to matter and void. Then you would require pain in your cup of pleasure, just as void is required between the constantly moving atoms. "

This is a very interesting discussion I am going to have to think about. I totally agree about fighting pain every step of the way. On the other hand, I can see the possibility that we both fight it every step of the way and yet be glad that the *mechanism* is there.

I think in general we have to be alert that there can be multiple levels in what Epicurus was teaching. There is the (1) practical advice for normal intelligent people of good will, and there is (2) dialectical logical responses for the stubborn eggheads who refuse to understand that logical puzzles are not the most important thing in life. Epicurus had to deal with both types of people.

It seems possible to me that what we are discussing might be flipping back and forth between the two perspectives. Clearly (to me) it is right to fight pain every step of the way. But in the heat of battle with egghead Platonists, it might be appropriate to focus at least for that moment on the aspect from which pain is an intrinsic and inseparable aspect of human life.

Of course dealing with egghead Platonists is pretty close to pain / undesirable in itself!



[Elli Pensa](#) to [Cassius](#) : please read carefully what Elayne wrote : "My usual approach is more defiant-- I refuse to submit to pain and insist upon acting for the goal of pleasure. I don't refuse to feel pain of grief-- I just refuse to let it win".

In the above thoughts by our friend Elayne I found similarities of what Nietzsche has said :

"I have given a name to my pain and call it "dog." It is just as faithful, just as obtrusive and shameless, just as entertaining, just as clever as any other dog--and I can scold it and vent my bad mood on it, as others do with their dogs, servants, and wives". -Nietzsche, The Gay Science.

Nietzsche's book "The Gay Science" is written after a period of illness, so, Nietzsche makes embodiedness a central tenet of his philosophy, and pain a necessary component of that embodiedness. His relationship to pain, namely treating his pain as if it were a dog to be trained and disciplined, turns pain from a thing that he submits to into a thing that has been submitted to him.

However, Elayne as a genuine Epicurean lady that she is, first thing first that she points out is : <<the goal of pleasure>>. Elayne does not point out a kind of gratitude, she does not move

among the opposites, she does not point out anything of these things, but she points out the power of pleasure that is the right guide by Nature for her to train and disciplined any pain internal or external, so with this procedure any pain has been submitted to her like an obedient doggie ! At this point, all the genuine Epicureans shout out loud: Hooray ! This is the great moment of the evidence of the POWER that epicurean SWERVE has !!!!

