

Welcome Rivelle!

Post by “Rivelle” of April 4, 2019 at 6:57 PM

Ellie,

In historical context, Epicurus’s great genius lay in the natural scientific grounding of his system. Understood as a *modus vivendi*, this means the human being as a knowing subject is equally a **corporeal** subject. Thus **pleasure** can serve as our guiding light on our paths as we seek the True and the Good, within which our lives must also dwell. Our bodies are ever-present in our lives and therefore if we know the nature of true pleasure, properly understood, we will have happiness, truth and ethical guidance.

This is in marked contrast to the disputational, dialogical and dialectical natures of rival philosophical schools. Here we are, two and half thousand years later and Plato and his interlocutors have still not stopped arguing!! And what’s even worse, they are **still** arguing about **first** principles!! (I exaggerate for comic effect of course, but hopefully my point is clear).

Of the mental, emotional and affective disorders prevalent today, some can be seen to be historically new and unique to our modern 20th and 21st century historical period - (eating disorders; other types of body dysphoria; “germaphobia”; OCD; personality disorders are always just as historical as are the prevailing and typical personality types of the contextual historical period.)

Whilst other types of disorder can be observed to have occurred throughout recorded human history. Depression (otherwise known by other names such as “melancholy” etc) is a longstanding condition that humans seem to have been prone to for millennia. Your pointing to the causes as being superstition, religion, fear of the gods etc is a very Epicurean thing to say. But it fails to take into account the **usefulness** and valuable function that depression and sadness can play in an otherwise normal, healthy and functioning life.

Briefly put, a mental illness is the condition wherein a cognitive and emotional faculty becomes disassociated and then, further, hyper-activated such that it becomes problematic for well-being.

But depression has been with human beings for so long as it also has a very **useful** emotional and mental function. It is good to stop taking a path of action which has become a bad one, possibly become “depressed” about one’s previous actions, stop and take stock and then, ideally, reflect and choose a better and brighter path.

