

What If Anything Has Changed About Human Nature In the Last 2000 Years?

Post by “Godfrey” of January 7, 2024 at 1:31 AM

Re the Epicurean conception of pleasure vs values:

Principal Doctrine 5: *"It is not possible to live joyously without also living wisely and beautifully and rightly, nor to live wisely and beautifully and rightly without living joyously; and whoever lacks this cannot live joyously."* (From [here](#))

Compare that with this:

[Quote from BrainToBeing](#)

I do many things that are ethically appropriate but do not derive to my personal pleasure. For example, in my medical career I could have made a boatload more money if I practiced for my "pleasure". But, I didn't. I did what I thought was ethically appropriate for patients, illness, and the healthcare system. Many, many times this made my life harder.

In Epicurean terms, one would weigh the potential pleasures of a boatload of money vs the pleasure of knowing that you did no harm, and/or the future pleasure (which is what you would be/are experiencing now) of living guilt free, knowing that you did the right thing. Additionally, one would measure the pains involved, such as you describe, in addition to the future pain (again, now) of guilt and regrets for the harm you may have caused. In this way and others, one finds that the Epicurean way of life is one based on personal responsibility. I would suggest that you actually acted in alignment with [PD05](#) without being aware of the doctrine. Because this how Epicurus basically saw biology as working. This reality is far different from the picture painted by Cicero and others throughout the ages who refuse to accept a definition of pleasure as other than titillation.