

# Epicurean versus deceptive (“modern”) Stoic decision making

Post by “Godfrey” of August 11, 2024 at 1:43 AM

## [Quote from Julia](#)

To you and quite possibly to most people, this might be splitting hairs, but to me it makes all the difference that it is not the desired object-or-event itself which motivates me. What motivates me, is the pleasure of having accomplished my desire. For example, the knowledge that I desire a new car and true love does not motivate me one bit. What motivates me – and indeed the only thing about that which motivates me! – is the pleasure I can predict to experience once I have attained a new car or true love.



That's a good hair to split, as we're trying to come to clarity. I agree with your conclusion.

## [Quote from Julia](#)

Desire is not the motivator, according to [VS71](#) desire is the thing to be evaluated (“Every desire must be confronted by this question: [...]”). Pleasure – if it is predicted to arise from attaining the desired object-or-event – should be the motivator (pleasure is the guide to life – not desire!).



Well said. And this is where the categories of desire fit in, as one way to evaluate the desire.

## [Quote from Julia](#)

In my understanding of language, a desire which was determined to lead to pain ceases to be a desire, and will henceforth be, variously, an addiction, a compulsion, a confusion, an obsession, an urge, ...

I wouldn't go this far... I would call some of these unnatural desires, but they're still desires. An urge, I believe, is synonymous with a desire. Some desires lead to pain if unfulfilled, these are natural and necessary. Some lead to net pain and these are unnatural desires. Some lead to short-term pain in order to obtain net pleasure, these I think would be considered natural and unnecessary desires.

This last category would include something like "I'm going to go work out, which I hate, and which will bring me pain. But I'm doing it for the net pleasure of fitting into my old jeans or

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3990-epicurean-versus-deceptive-modern-stoic-decision-making/?postID=31729#post31729>

having a wild affair or going on a ski vacation &c."