

Epicurean versus deceptive (“modern”) Stoic decision making

Post by “Julia” of August 11, 2024 at 11:26 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I do not view that as referring only to, or primarily to, "passionate longing"

I agree, and I also agree with that, ultimately, words always mean something a little different for everyone. But whether we call it desire or kxtzqptrr, what I wanted to stress was: It helps a lot to be precise and honest with oneself about what it truly is one wants, and why.

For the linguistically inclined, trying to grasp the word via Latin didn't get me far: to **desire**, **desidero**, of/from the stars (figures of speech like heavenly/shooting star/...). Related with **consider**, **considero**, with the stars (less clear, but I speculate it is meant as: in agreement with the constellations).

However, looking at the Old English word which is replaced was more illuminating: The root of **wilnung** (the desire; -ung is a noun-forming suffix) and **wilnian** (to desire; -nian is a verb-forming suffix) is still familiar to us in words like "**welcome**", which means "**desired-one-who-came**". It is rather something related to our **will**, our **volition**, related to things which we **are willing** to do, experience or be participant of, and related to things which we would consider **well** if we did, had or experienced them.

Would you consider it to be **well**? Then it is desirable.
Are you **willing** to do/have it? Then you desire doing/having it.

That's how I understand the word. That's why I do not desire to take the trash out, but I desire to have a clean kitchen so much that I endure undesirable tasks to get there - and that distinction changes everything, because taking the trash out for the sake of it is very much a Stoic attitude in my mind, which would soon make me lie in bed to stare at the ceiling all day long... 😊