

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

Post by “Todd” of August 11, 2024 at 2:21 PM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

The point is that we can use

desire = the object of desire

and we can also use

desire = choose

While I acknowledge that these are common usages, I disagree with both of these equivalencies when discussing Epicurean philosophy. For the sake of clarity, we should not redefine common words, but we also can't just allow a given word to have any of several different meanings in a given context.

In my opinion, and I believe this to be consistent with Epicurus' usages...

A desire is a state of mind: a belief regarding a potential future state.

More specifically, a desire is a belief (maybe false) that pleasure could be increased in the future (maybe the very immediate future) by substituting one state of affairs for another.

To say, "I desire a car," is to describe your mental state. You are stating your belief that your future pleasure would be increased if you had a car. You have not "chosen" a car until you have performed some action toward the end of acquiring one. In fact, by failing to act on your desire, you are implicitly choosing "not-car" (unless doing nothing is somehow expected to lead to you acquiring a car).

Plenty of people go through life desiring things that they never choose.

Also...nice to see many you here again after my long hiatus.