

# An Anti-Epicurean Article - "The Meaning of Life Is Not Happiness" (For Future Reference)

Post by "Cassius" of November 17, 2024 at 3:37 PM

## [Quote from SillyApe](#)

That's why I like the teachings of Epicureanism on how to cultivate a good life: they are tangible and "real", not based on some abstraction or transcendence. Sensations are here and now, being way more reliable than abstract concepts.

I definitely agree with that as to transcendence, and as to "abstractions" I have used that formulation myself.

i write to talk about the meaning of "abstractions" probably not being clear enough would explanation. Mental pleasure is certainly recognized by Epicurus as being as much, or more, significant to us than "bodily" pleasures (the quotes are because all pleasures are ultimately of the body, and yet it is useful to distinguish the five senses from what we are talking about as "mental").

I think what we are concerned mostly about in attacking the writer's concept of meaningfulness is that he and many others are postulating that there is some 'higher' (transcendent) set of values that override the values of real living people. That's simply untrue - false - wishful thinking, and needs to be refuted as such.

On the other hand, there are mental pleasures - friendship would be one - that are extremely important to us, and are not to be dismissed because they are "abstract." I've probably been "guilty" in earlier years here on the forum of calling the problem "abstractions" when I probably should have called the problem "idealism" or "transcendentalism" or similar wording. Maybe there are even better words to describe what we are talking about, but the issue i think is, as you say, the "here and now" which is important to us, and not fictionalized idealism. The term "abstractions" probably includes feelings that are indeed real to us in the here and now, so we have to sort out whether they arise from things that are true and real (the reality of nature, including human nature) vs those things that are purely invented in our minds (the idealism of the supernatural and the idea that some things transcend nature).