

Why Minimizing All Desire Is Incorrect (And What To Do Instead)

Post by “Cassius” of December 5, 2024 at 2:15 PM

I think Post 8 is the right direction, parsing the exact meaning of the word "desire" and examining the context in which the desire occurs. As with everything else, it's not like there's some ideal form labelled "desire" floating out there in the atmosphere somewhere with a "good" or "bad" label attached to it.

In fact I would ask this:

Is there anything that is ALWAYS Pleasurable except PLEASURE? I would say no.

Is there anything that is ALWAYS painful except PAIN? Again I would say no.

At this very high level it seems to me like **everything** else, including *desire*, is going to be contextual, and needs to be seen as a tool for achieving pleasure or avoiding pain.

And if that is the case then as Kalosyni says, any particular desire, and in fact desire in general, must be seen as something that has to be judged in context.

And that would also lead to the conclusion that too *little* desire can be every bit as bad a thing as too *much* desire.

And that's something that I strongly think is the case, and strongly think is a widespread problem with common modern discussion of Epicurean philosophy.

The tone of many generalist articles on Epicurus on the internet too often rings of *suppression* of desire that has more akin to Buddhism or Stoicism. It seems to me that what Epicurus taught was to look to what a particular desire brings, rather than viewing desire itself as bad or painful.