

# "Pleasure" vs "Pleasant Experiences"

Post by "Cassius" of February 4, 2025 at 10:31 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

I firmly believe that Epicurean philosophy should be easily explained without having to re-define a common word.

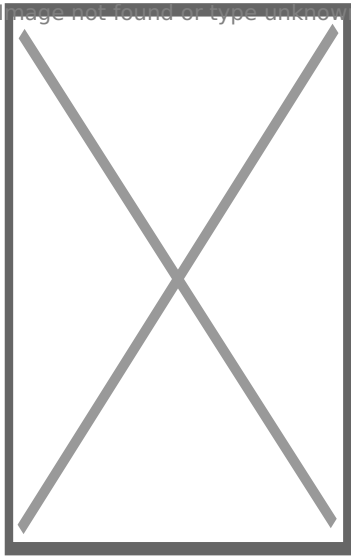
And you're on exactly the same page as Cicero, and you'll want to do more reading from Torquatus and decide whether Cicero's position or Torquatus' makes the most sense! 😊

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this is Plato's *Timaeus*. But Epicurus, in my opinion, has no intention of not speaking plainly and clearly if he can, nor is he discussing a recondite subject like natural philosophy, nor a technical subject such as mathematics, but a lucid and easy topic, and one that is generally familiar already. And yet you Epicureans do not deny that we understand what pleasure *is*, but what he means by it; which proves

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not that we do not understand the real meaning of the word, but that Epicurus is speaking an idiom of his own and ignoring our **accepted terminology**. For if he means the same as Hieronymus, who holds that the Chief Good is a life entirely devoid of trouble, why does he insist on using the term pleasure, and not rather 'freedom from pain,' as does Hieronymus, who understands his own meaning? Whereas if his view is that the End must include kinetic pleasure (for so he describes this vivid sort of pleasure, calling it 'kinetic' in contrast with the pleasure of freedom from pain, which is 'static' pleasure), what is he really aiming at? For he cannot possibly convince any person who *knows himself*<sup>a</sup>—anyone who has studied his own nature and sensations—that freedom from pain is the same thing as pleasure. To identify them, Torquatus, is to do violence to the senses; it is uprooting from our minds the knowledge of the meaning of words imbedded in them. Who is not aware that the world of experience contains these three states of feeling: first, the enjoyment of pleasure; second, the sensation of pain; and third, which is my own condition and doubtless also yours at the present moment, the absence of both pleasure and pain? Pleasure is the feeling of a man eating a good dinner, pain that of one being broken on the rack; but do you really not see that intermediate between those two extremes lies a vast multitude of persons who are feeling neither gratification nor pain?" "I certainly do not," said he; "I maintain that all who are without pain are enjoying pleasure, and what is more the highest form of pleasure." "Then you think that a man

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