

Is there Choice without satisfaction? What's the name of the pleasure of Choice itself?

Post by “Julia” of March 17, 2025 at 2:53 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

would you ever be able to get anything done if you were trying to actually live this way?

I already am living this way as best I can. The reason is that as soon as I stop doing this I end up living similar to what Rand describes here:

Quote from Ayn Rand

Thinking is not an automatic function. In any hour and issue of his life, man is free to think or to evade that effort. Thinking requires a state of full, focused awareness. The act of focusing one's consciousness is volitional. Man can focus his mind to a full, active, purposefully directed awareness of reality—or he can unfocus it and let himself drift in a semiconscious daze, merely reacting to any chance stimulus of the immediate moment, at the mercy of his undirected sensory-perceptual mechanism and of any random, associational connections it might happen to make.

My days work like this:

I decide on something (Choice/Avoidance), write it down, set a timer (5-60 minutes), and start doing what I decided upon. Once the time is up, I do that same thing again (which might result in simply continuing what I was doing). Without the timer, I get distracted with something different entirely, or lose myself in a pointless detail, so it acts as a fail-safe (worst case I lose 59 minutes). Without having to write down my Choice/Avoidance result, I lie to myself, and pretend that eating a box of ice cream was my Choice, even though it's 9am, I'm not hungry, and know full well I'll only regret it before I'm even half done. Or I'll lie to myself, saying that my Choice is to now research window wiping techniques on Youtube for three hours (which I'll only regret), instead of just cleaning my bathroom mirror (which would have brought me satisfaction plus other pleasures).

I'm not writing an article, I am trying to get my head straight and relearn how to function properly as an adult human. The point is not to turn myself into a robot, either. For example, I often write down: "Take a break" and set the timer to 30 minutes. The point is to stop sleepwalking through my life, drifting from one Pavlovian conditioning or object-action association to another, like some kind of zombie seeking immediate gratification, which in the

vast majority of time ends with me doing things that I regret as soon as I dare to think about them -- such as wasting countless hours on nonsense, eating because I'm bored (instead of because I'm hungry), or doing something that doesn't need doing simply because the object caught my eye's attention ("Oh look, the vacuum cleaner. Haven't used that in a while!"). Most things worth doing require some level of delayed gratification (putting in a little work to make a pizza from scratch; actually cleaning the mirror), and most things that offer immediate gratification aren't worth doing (calling for delivery; the dopamine release of watching a mind-numbing infomercial).

I'm dotting my I's and crossing my T's for purely personal reasons, to make sure I'm not somehow breaking the Choice/Avoidance by checking for "What's the expected satisfaction/relief that'll come from this?"

[Quote from Eikadistes](#)

I think that the pleasure that is having choice can be properly called freedom.

In that sense, the pleasure of having freedom is different from the pleasures had from doing things while free. In that regard, I might argue, then, that freedom is a katestamatic pleasure.

I very much agree. My problem is, that I have the pleasure of a lot of freedom (but I won't have that forever, so it pains me to not be using it), and instead of using it to my advantage, I waste it with things I regret, because I simply don't think and am not deliberate in my actions. I'm technically conscious and aware, but I'm also...not. It's a very odd thing, that happens due to a virtually complete lack of outside interruption, outside demands, external structure. How would you keep yourself from wasting your time on immediate gratifications, if there were zero demands? There is no boss, no people, no pets, no deadline, no nothing. I suppose a lot of people fall into a slumber when they retire for that very reason, and unless they can find something external to structure their days, it'll be a tough nut to crack. I haven't retired, and there's no fishin' buddies to hang out with, either, so I need to keep myself on track, and this is how I do it:

By anchoring myself around a timer and a daily planner, and asking: "Will this bring either satisfaction or relief?"