

Confusion: "The feelings are only two"

Post by "Cassius" of May 26, 2025 at 8:27 PM

[Quote from Rolf](#)

When I'm in a "neutral state" - not sick, injured, etc. - and I focus on my body's senses, I pretty much always notice some kind of ache, tenseness, stomach pain, itchiness, or some other uncomfortable feeling that I'm generally able to ignore when I'm not fixating on it. This isn't some new sensation either - this has been my general experience for as long as I can remember, and I don't have any kind of underlying medical issues (that I know of) that would cause this kind of thing.

I think a lot of people would say this, and I wouldn't disagree. What I would cite in response is the example of Epicurus on his last day or the hypo of being in the bull of Phalaris. Your mind should never be in neutral - it always has the capacity to generate positive feelings which are (or should be) more significant to us than those aches and pains you are speaking about. This would be another reason why I would emphasize the importance of the "philosophic approach" over and above any implication that we can find what most people think of as bodily pleasure simply by minimizing bodily pain.

These two examples (Epicurus last day and the bull of Phalaris) combine well with the hand of Chrysippus to lead in this direction. There's no magic underlying feeling that suddenly leaps to the fore when we eliminate pains -- we have to mentally appreciate being alive in order to generate the result we are looking for. The person who does not apply Epicurean philosophy in this way will find nothing but emptiness when he drains his experience of feeling, and that's when he (the non-Epicurean) starts looking for "meaning" and supernatural escape.