

# Confusion: "The feelings are only two"

Post by "Cassius" of May 27, 2025 at 2:32 AM

## [Quote from Don](#)

I would disagree with Cassius 's wording. Your mind can never be in neutral. Your mind doesn't "generate" positive feelings, it experiences them before you can think about generating

We should talk further about (1) how to regard idle or non-Epicurean thought processes, and (2) whether it is appropriate to consider the mind as generating pleasure and pain. I am in general agreement with Don's post, but I think how we choose to use our minds does generate pleasure or pain.

Also, while I think it is very reasonable and justifiable to divide all feelings between pleasure and pain, and to insist that there is no neutral state, I am not prepared to say that Epicurus' categorization plan is the only one that can be proposed and discussed. Cicero and Plato have a different definition of pleasure than does Epicurus, and they call absence of stimulation 'neutral.'

I think they are wrong to regard it that way, but does that mean that their position cannot be acknowledged and discussed to explain the problem they cause for themselves? Is Epicurean philosophy best seen as the best choice for how to live because it generates the most happiness, or is Epicurean philosophy best seen as the way everyone in fact lives whether they admit it or not?

The latter view sounds to me like that "psychological hedonism" argument that I find extremely unhelpful, and yet I acknowledge that the argument exists. So too I would accept that it is possible to view the world as does a Stoic or a Buddhist, even though I would classify that view as wrong because it is harmful.

But for now I have no problem rewording "should never be in a neutral state" to "should never be considered to be in a neutral state."