

Confusion: "The feelings are only two"

Post by "Rolf" of May 27, 2025 at 4:10 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

Anything can certainly be proposed and discussed. The question, to me, is "Does the idea correlate to reality or not?" Epicurus' categorization, to my current understanding, correlates to reality while Cicero, Plato, "St." Paul, etc. do not. I think some ideas in Buddhism are interesting, but overall it has too much other baggage. But that was why I considered myself a Buddhist for a number of years. It made the most sense to me and conformed to my understanding of reality at the time in contrast to all the other philosophies and religions I had studied up to that point. Then I discovered Epicurus.

100% agree. I aim to be pragmatic, and to me Epicurus' philosophy is the most pragmatic. Even from my beginner's standpoint where I don't fully grasp all the concepts yet, it requires little to no leaps in logic compared to the vast majority of other philosophies I've looked into.

Speaking of which - a vaguely related thought I want to bring up. There are times when I find myself doubting whether Epicurean philosophy can truly *work* for me — not because I disagree with its core ideas, but because I live with a persistent undercurrent of physical discomfort. I start to wonder if Epicureanism assumes a baseline of health that I just don't have.

In those moments, other perspectives become tempting. The "surrender to the flow" of Taoism, or the radical acceptance of Stoicism, can seem like a way to bypass the whole problem of pain — to dissolve it in detachment. And yet, they ultimately drift from reality by denying that pleasure and pain matter.

Regardless of what I feel, it is clear as day to me that pleasure and pain *do* in fact matter, and that Epicurean philosophy is an accurate reflection of reality. Life is clearly about pleasure and pain at its core, without any kind of romanticisation of the latter. Pursuing pleasure is always going to be the optimal "strategy", regardless of any lingering pains that may or may not be able to be stamped out. Even for somebody experiencing truly severe chronic pains, following the reality of Epicureanism is going to be far more effective than chasing mirages with Stoicism and the like.