

Sunday, June 8, 2025 - Discussion Topic - "Practice" In Relation To Pain, Pleasure, and Happiness

Post by "Cassius" of June 4, 2025 at 12:49 PM

In this current week's Lucretius Today Podcast (released June 3, 2025), we read an interesting section of Tusculan Disputations in which Cicero discussed the usefulness of "practice" or "exercise" or "experience" in handling pain - certainly bodily pain, at least. In this section he did not specifically criticize the Epicurean position, and the position I took in the podcast was that the Epicureans would likely have agreed with Cicero's point, which was largely to the effect that practicing certain types of exercise or other experiences can help prepare you to deal with pain when it arrives.

The section that has the most of this from **14-17**. I won't quote the full thing here, but let's use this particular text as the starting off point, because it talks specifically about training from youth, exercise, past exposure to pains, etc:

[Tusculan Disputations 2.14](#)

At the very least, there are parallels here with Epicurus saying to Menoeceus that

Quote

[131] To grow accustomed therefore to simple and not luxurious diet gives us health to the full, and makes a man alert for the needful employments of life, and when after long intervals we approach luxuries disposes us better towards them, and fits us to be fearless of fortune.

This very likely has relation also to the issue of "condensing" pleasure as discussed in Chapter 10 section 11 of DeWitt's book.

My suggestion is that we discuss the issue of "practicing" in regard to how we deal with pain and pleasure. It's probably valid to discuss "practicing pleasure," but maybe we should start with a discussion of whether to view diet, exercise, "working out," "fasting," and like less-than-pleasant activities as practices to enhance happy living.