

What amount of effort should be put into pursuing pleasure or removing pain?

Post by “Rolf” of June 24, 2025 at 3:15 PM

Hmm, I'll try to put this into words. With all due respect to Kalosyni, “effort” seems like a strange way to conceptualise the pursuit of pleasure. I suppose in a sense the answer is “as much effort as possible” - what else could be more important?

Just as it would be strange for a Christian to ask how much effort they should put into loving god or whatever it is they do, an Epicurean asking how much effort they should put into maximising pleasure seems to imply that there is something *other than* pleasure that they'd rather be experiencing.

Something else that springs to mind is that ultimately this question comes down to hedonic calculus. If the “effort” you're putting into the pursuit of pleasure is leading to more pain than pleasure, then one “should not” put that amount or type of effort into that particular venture.

I also just find that the term “should” clashes with Epicurean ideas. Should according to what standard? One can only decide for themselves what is prudent.