

# A Discussion On Pleasure and the Zero State

Post by "Cassius" of June 18, 2019 at 6:48 AM

Theo: "I don't think that life with absence of pain is possible. maybe fleeting pain-less moments. especially since Epicurus includes all kinds of possible pains as to be avoided. the quest for pleasure should be constant. Cyrenaics are not the real but the original hedonists. I like' em cause they are more into fun."

Cassius Amicus:

As to Theo's "I don't think that life with absence of pain is possible. maybe fleeting pain-less moments. especially since Epicurus includes all kinds of possible pains as to be avoided. the quest for pleasure should be constant."

I agree that the quest for pleasure should be constant, with the realization for us humans (as opposed to [Epicurean gods](#)) that what we can hope to achieve is NET pleasure but not the elimination of all pains.

This comment is another occasion to stress that I feel sure Epicurus would agree. This calls back the central point of the analysis stated above - that the entire "absence of pain" issue is a response to a debating point asserted by Plato - that pain has no limit. "Absence of pain" is the "limit of pleasure" and is thus the logical point which refutes Plato.

Understood as the logical point which refutes Plato, which Epicurean students would have understood given the availability of their teachers and texts, the "absence of pain" argument is critically important in winning the "logic wars" with the anti-Epicureans.

Understood as a full and complete definition of the word "pleasure" or of "the Epicurean goal of life," then "absence of pain" is disastrously incomplete and leads to total reversal of the philosophy.

That problem was the fault of Epicurus or the Epicureans, and despite Cicero's insistence of it being confusing, it probably did not cause unnecessary trouble as the Platonic argument and the Epicurean response survived in tandem for people to understand the issue.

The problem is ours, that our society has been so thoroughly Judeo-Christianized, and so thoroughly Stoicized, that very few people are aware of the details of the original debate and why the issue of "absence of pain" was so important in the ancient Greek Schools.

Again, the best history and analysis of this in detail, by far, is Gosling & Taylors' "The Greeks on Pleasure." Their points gave rise to the [Nikolsky](#) article.