

# Episode 295 - Plutarch's Absurd Interpretation of Epicurean Absence of Pain

Post by "Eikadistes" of August 28, 2025 at 8:19 PM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

The Epicurean texts don't describe "the best life" in any but very general mental and bodily terms, culminating in the description of 100% pleasure 0% pain, which we ought to recognize is the best terminology that by definition can be achieved.

Indeed! I read this earlier today by coincidence: "He (sc. Metrodorus) [writes] that, although he likes the idea that **the [best] life** is the one that is [accompanied by tranquillity], peace, and cares that cause minimal trouble, it does not seem that this goal is achieved at least in this way, namely, if we avoid all those things over which, if they were present, we would sometimes experience difficulties and distress. For in truth many things do cause some pain if they are present but disturb us more if they are absent. Thus, health does involve some care and effort for the body but causes unspeakably more distress when it is absent" (Philódēmos, [On Property Management](#), Col. 12-13)

Later (of interest) he adds, "one must not avoid all things that, if they are present, may cause all kinds of troubles, concerns, and worries. On the contrary, [one must accept] some things, among which is in fact wealth, that are less of a burden when they are present" (*Ibid.*, Col. 13)