

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

Post by "Patrikios" of September 6, 2025 at 3:27 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[Quote from Rolf](#)

Would you say then Cassius that "the absence of pain being the limit of pleasure" is not something I have to hold in my everyday mind as something practical? It's more just something for use in philosophical reasoning and debate

I think that **having a mental image of the most desirable state is highly practical** and even essential and is similar to projecting this as a "godlike life." For that reason I would say that it needs to be held in mind In the same way Epicurus tells Herodotus to keep an outline in mind and to be able to flip back and forth from high level to detail at a moments notice.

And I would also say that the expansive definition of pleasure to include appreciation of all nonpainful life, particularly **mental appreciation of the benefits of a true philosophy, is also a daily or even hourly thing.**

This isn't just for times of debate.

[Rolf](#) thanks for your series of questions to better understand the pleasure/pain concept, and how to apply it.

As you were asking for practical examples, here is how I have been trying to apply this concept on a daily/hourly basis, as [Cassius](#) suggested above.

We know that even if we have no physical pains or ongoing mental disturbances, every day life is going to present us with perturbations.

I try to start my day with the "**mental appreciation**" of the Epicurean framework.

As I review my schedule and any interactions I will have, I try to mentally preview those interactions, as an Epicurean wise man might conduct himself. That helps me set an open-minded view towards those upcoming meetings or planned calls.

Another example to apply these concepts is when I take my daily walk near downtown, with lots

of construction these days. Instead of being upset about all the sidewalks along my normal walking routes being closed, I set a mental attitude of **choosing** the most pleasant street and shady sidewalk, while trying to **avoid** areas with construction workers. So, holding the Epicurean concept in your mind as you go about an active day can lead to a day with more pleasant than painful experiences.

Do examples as this help you, [Rolf](#) ?