

Episode 299 - TD27 - Was Epicurus Right That There Are Only Two Feelings - Pleasure And Pain?

Post by “Adrastus” of September 18, 2025 at 1:05 AM

Thank you very much for this discussion on an extremely important issue in Epicurean Philosophy, and another well elucidated debate within this episode.

Maybe this belongs more in a highly practical, or religious practice area of the forum; but I use this list a friend of mine but together, to realize the "why not hundreds of emotional states?" and drill back down to whats standing in the way of the ataraxic, unmixed, unalloyed Pleasure of which I feel like katastematic pleasure, as a concept, is avoiding in the issue of "neutrality" in emotion.

I bring in some degree of taxonomy using the breath of language, like in this chart, to name and resolve the personal, desire-based reasons and social reasons for such seemingly complex feelings and resolutions to those feelings. Is feeling 'restless' bodily and/or categorically different than feeling "contemptuous"? If we can categorize them as pains, then perhaps the taxonomy can help us understand what to do about the mental displeasure to make moves to alleviate it.

I ultimately come down on that side that Doctrinally, it makes more sense to just consider the Pleasure of the katastematic state, and the kenetic pleasures that help us tend to our reasonable human needs, set against the various psychic and more apparant physical Pains; makes a great deal of sense from a constructive, rather than other deconstructive, dialectical or highly analytical and divorced from the body, philosophical perspectives. The pleasurability brought about by clearing the mind and setting the Epicurean student on the reasonable approach to life using the Doctrine and other sources of Epicurean philosophy, ought to be, philosophically and teleologically, a distinct state of affairs from the myriad of ideas one could bring to the table about Pleasure and Pain and *pathos* in general.

