

Latest Thoughts On Natural and Necessary Classification of Desires - Adding A FAQ entry

Post by "Cassius" of November 30, 2025 at 3:41 PM

[Quote from Joshua](#)

You have to do the math yourself, for yourself!

.... because only YOU can measure the pain or pleasure that results from any action.

It is exactly wrong to do what the Benthamites tried to do and reduce the calculation purely to mathematics.

However, so long as you realize that the mathematics is only an aid, and cannot be applied as the final factor, I would say that lining things up statistically does make some sense as a tool of analysis.

So I'd still maintain that in any difficult decision it probably does make sense to sit down and try to enumerate the options as a spreadsheet. If you don't, you're not making your best effort to think things through. But you have to remember that the assignment of units of pain and pleasure is entirely relative to you.

Therefore I would not say "don't even try to add them up because it can't be done."

i would say "plotting out the possibilities in detail is the only rational way to proceed, but you have to remember that there is no "necessity" in ethical decisionmaking. You can't treat your projection as applicable to anyone else or even to yourself at a later time. A moment by moment analysis is all that is possible,

Post

[A Draft Epicurean Pleasure Maximization Worksheet](#)

Feelings cannot be reduced to numbers, and there are important limitations in the use of a "worksheet" as an aid in evaluating choices and avoidances. However it may be helpful to some people to visualize an illustration of the weighing process that some term the "hedonic calculus." Here is a draft example for your consideration and comment. Scores included here are of course fictional and for example only. A version of the spreadsheet in xlsx format is attached for downloading.



<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/4811-latest-thoughts-on-natural-and-necessary-classification-of-desires-adding-a-faq/?postID=37997#post37997>

Cassius

July 11, 2019 at 10:25 PM