

# What Is Happiness? How Does Our Conception of It Derive From Eudaemonia and Felicitas? Should Happiness Be The Goal of Life?

Post by "Cassius" of December 16, 2025 at 9:59 PM

And after responding to Don's very good comment I also want to repeat that I think one of the things Emily Austin points out is the importance of being able to articulate why don't want to die until "our time" arrives. Yes it's because we want "pleasure," but we have to convey the seriousness of what that means.

I'll cite again the understated line in the article I like so much:

*Occupying an argumentative space in which one lacks reason to avoid easily and ethically avoidable deaths should, I think, be a last resort.*

I think what we're talking about is sort of the same thing in reverse. What we want to identify is an argumentative space in which we clearly identify the positive reasons why we want to live, for motives other than that we are "afraid" of dying. "Fear" is not the primary focus of Epicurean philosophy. It's demoralizing and terrible "optics" to talk as if that were so. I read Lucretius and the other Epicurean texts as upbeat and positive, not as depressed in any way.

We've been robbed of the experience of talking about these things in both a serious and upbeat way, and that's what we have to get back. I doubt there's any way to do that other than to re-establish our own pattern of communicating about these things over and over ourselves.

Whatever the name we give to it, the phrasing has to convey how we can be so even while dying from kidney disease, or even while "on the rack." That's the level of seriousness we're talking about, as Don is correctly saying, it's not "giddiness" at all.