

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

Post by "Don" of December 18, 2025 at 10:56 PM

This is intriguing, [Cassius](#) . I was not aware of Sextus' text. This, to my reading, supports an "idealist" concept of the gods: arising from dream images, expanding the idea of the "happy man" to an enlarged state - physical as well as immeasurably happy.

## Quote

since the idea of the happy man is of one who shares in happiness. But according to them happiness (eudaimonia) was a divine (daimonia) and godly nature, and the word 'happy' (eudaimon) was applied to someone who had his deity (daimon) disposed well (eu).

This is one of the primary reasons I like translating eudaimonia as "well-being" being almost a literal translation with at least a reasonable parallel to a modern understanding of the word. Here's the LSJ entry for daimon:

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, δαίμων](#)

It doesn't stretch my imagination to consider one's daimon as that part of one's mind we might call our "conscience." I could easily see that being personified, the better angels of our nature (to use a more modern phrase). One's daimon - one's conscience - if pushing one to live a moral, noble life is a eu-daimon. Hence, one lives a eudaimonic - a happy - life. If one's daimon - one's conscience - if more aligned with steering one's life in a negative direction - it's a kako-daimon.

I don't think it has to be circular. It's starting out from a human-centric position and expanding the potential of one's daimon to the extreme: blessedness and imperishability. The gods - the super-daimons - live a life of uninterrupted blessedness and uninterrupted imperishability - no backsliding ever ever. It's aspirational but unachievable for a mortal being. We can live as if we are gods but we will still not BE gods. We can have tastes and glimpses of a divine imperishable blessedness but we live in a mortal physical body that will experience pain.

I remain intrigued, but I feel Sextus doth protest too much.