

"But when we do not feel pain, we no longer need pleasure"

Post by "Kalosyni" of December 24, 2025 at 4:28 PM

Some thoughts on a practical application of the phrase: "...but when we do not feel pain, we no longer need pleasure."

The following is Bailey translation:

[128] "The right understanding of these facts enables us to refer all choice and avoidance to the health of the body and (the soul's) freedom from disturbance, since this is the aim of the life of blessedness. For it is to obtain this end that we always act, namely, to avoid pain and fear. And when this is once secured for us, all the tempest of the soul is dispersed, since the living creature has not to wander as though in search of something that is missing, and to look for some other thing by which he can fulfill the good of the soul and the good of the body. For it is then that we have need of pleasure, when we feel pain owing to the absence of pleasure; (**but when we do not feel pain), we no longer need pleasure.**"

I've been thinking about how the ending of this paragraph pertains to eating food. When I was a kid and teen, and also in my 20's, food to me was very "unimportant". Growing up my family rarely went out to restaurants, and my mom often did not use spices or salt in her cooking, and there were very few snacks kept on hand. In my 20's living on my own, I cooked very simple food and sometimes skipped lunch just because I was too busy. Then approx. in my early 30's I started shopping at Trader Joe's (lived in California at that time)... and this was for me a beginning of a California "foodie" culture (healthy, sometimes organic, but also special cheese and specialty snacks.) And I think as time went on the American culture also really amped-up the concept of "food enjoyment" through various products and advertizing for restaurants.

Now what do you do when when the quantities of food available are so great, and eating becomes a desire for experiencing various tasty things... "just one more bite" or "just one more taste of this or that"...and suddenly you are carrying around 10 extra pounds of "love-handles" or a "muffin-top" belly that you can't seem to get rid of (and eating too much brings on a bloated feeling or lethargy) -- all of which is not conducive to living well and most pleasantly.

Now, here is where this seems to be a phrase that seems to be a kind of remedy -- **when we are genuinely hungry we will feel pain, and when we no longer feel that pain from hunger then we no longer need the pleasure of eating.**