

Epicurean Virtue

Post by "Cassius" of February 8, 2026 at 6:49 AM

[Quote from Matteng](#)

to pursue philia and pleasure

In the end Epicurus is defining pleasure so broadly that in the end it's not really logically consistent to say "friendship and pleasure" given that. Friendship or anything else is either pleasurable (or leading to more pleasure than pain, even if some pain is required to obtain it) or there is no reason to pursue it.

The point I think needs to be made is that you can't just say that your whole goal is to avoid pain. If so, then you can just kill yourself. Your goal is to live pleurably, which requires that you live, being alive being a good/pleasurable thing unless you are in a situation where you are guaranteed more pain than pleasure). Treasuring life in such a way is a positive activity.

I would say that yes there are ways of looking at life as "avoiding pain," especially if you want to emphasize that there are limitless ways to live pleurably, and you want to emphasize the limitless aspect of it. But at some point you have to acknowledge the way words are used in your society, and if you just say "My highest goal is to avoid pain" in 2026 English, then the majority of people are rightly going to say that the only way to guarantee success in that is to kill yourself. Of course that's not what we mean, but if you're going to communicate clearly you have to make yourself understood.