

Neither "ataraxia" nor "not ataraxia", but "Joy as the goal"

Post by "Kalosyni" of February 27, 2026 at 7:49 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

As Epicureans, we do seem to fall into two "philosophical camps"...those that hold to the importance of ataraxia and aponia (free from physical and mental pain) and those that hold to the importance of a life filled up with prudent pleasures (both active and static, and more pleasures than pains).

I would like to argue that we should not fall into either of these two camps...

I wanted to mention that at the last Wednesday night Zoom (for Level 03 and above members), we did have a very good discussion on pleasure/happiness/ataraxia. And in the meeting it was said that it isn't an "either/or" because both sides of this are included in the goal of pleasure...and I agree. I still hold that there is a subtle "either/or" for individuals studying Epicurean philosophy in that they hold either a goal of removing pain (relief from pain) as being more important than "sensory pleasures / mind pleasures" or they hold that "sensory pleasures / mind pleasures" are more important than removing pain (relief from pain). I have heard it said that there is a label for those who place "sensory/mind pleasure" as being of higher importance as "maximalists". For those who put ataraxia as being of higher importance, they are called the "minimalists".

What got me thinking about this again, is my curiosity about what the Garden of Athens Epicurean philosophy group is doing, and I found this post about an introductory book that was published:

Post

[RE: "Epicurean Philosophy: An Introduction from the 'Garden of Athens'" edited by Christos Yapijakis](#)

I have just recently received an email from Christos Yapijakis indicating that he has read through this thread. His comments that I am pasting below were drafted as a private communication to me, rather than as an exhaustive commentary on the various points raised above, so please understand that they are written in that context. I asked him for permission (which he granted) to repost these so as to include them in the discussion.

It has been some time since this thread started and I have not...



<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/4959-neither-ataraxia-nor-not-ataraxia-but-joy-as-the-goal/?postID=38868#post38868>

Cassius

January 27, 2023 at 6:54 PM