

Is There A "Paradox of Hedonism"?

Post by "Cassius" of April 6, 2026 at 7:29 AM

[Quote from LAMAR 44](#)

So friendship is defined as pleasure created when two or more beings cooperate, as it benefits all parties in fulfilling their own needs, but it emerges into something greater? Either weak emergence where we still map it onto satisfying personal pleasure, but we gain pleasure from viewing the other person's needs as our own, or is it strong emergence where as the value of friendship now is above just the value of pleasure?

I don't think Epicurus would consider "the value of friendship above the value of pleasure"

His wider framework is clearly to divide all feelings into pleasure and pain with only pleasure desirable in and of itself. So I think that observation answers your specific question about ranking - friendship is among the pleasures, not "above" pleasure. (Remembering of course that for Epicurus "pleasure" is an extremely broad term that covers everything in life that is desirable.)

I am not familiar with Epicurus dividing emergence into weaker or stronger - only in the materials we have been qualities that are necessary to the identity of the things vs those that are "events" that can change without the thing itself being destroyed.

Certainly pleasures are not all identical, in that they effect different parts of the body, have different intensities, and different durations. And Epicurus refers to "greater pleasure" in the letter to Menoeceus so it would not be necessary to think of friendship as being more than one of the greater - or perhaps greatest - sources of pleasure.