

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

Post by "Matteng" of May 2, 2026 at 3:57 PM

[Quote from Eikadistes](#)

He was definitely "happy" in the general sense of neither grieving nor complaining, and he "expired undauntedly" (*On Death* 39.15), but I wouldn't say that he was enjoying "perfect happiness" or "pure pleasure" just because his mind was untroubled. *Ataraxia* is just half the formula.

I understand how an interpretation of absolute eudaimonia can be easily criticized by opponents of Epicureanism.

Aponia, as never having pain in life is not reachable. Maybe this is even more unrealistic as the Stoic Sage of perfect Virtue.

There is no absolute avoiding of pain possible, even to avoid greater pain, we have to choose some pains what Epicurus also teaches, so this he couldn't have meant.

But a process view makes sense, every living being is naturally avoiding pain, searching for example always pain would destroy every organism.

So Aponia as a goal is complete rational but more as a quantitative / relative goal than an absolute.

To have more Aponia than Ponia/Pain in life makes sense and another point of defense of Aponia / Epic. Eudaimonia is that mental Pleasure can "counter" bodily pain and overshadow it.

So maybe in a specific sense Epicurus had until his death complete Eudaimonia ?

Or can we have Eudaimonia and loose it ? But when Eudaimonia is about the whole life then there is maybe just one answer, but maybe this answer lies only in one person and that is the feeling person.

The question " Did/Do I have a happy life" ? Can I agree with me and live in harmony with myself, my "good self", my eu daimon ?