

Flourishing / Pleasure as the goal

Post by “Matteng” of June 30, 2026 at 5:27 PM

Hi together,

I had a discussion with a Stoic and he challenged me in stating that "flourishing" would be a "better" goal of life than Pleasure (I know with flourishing he mean "Virtue"). His points:

1. Evolution: Pleasure/Pain are signals but instrumental for living and the self-preservation of bodily/mental functions. Seeing the inner decision-making self as the pure self than self-preservation as goal fits with Evolution, it would be the Evolution of the Virtuous Self.
2. Following Pleasure directly, leads not always to happiness but sometimes to misery (sugar, drugs, anti-social behaviour). Following to aim at the good life has not that problem (Virtue).
3. Following human flourishing means social activities, following Pleasure could lead to unsocial immorality actions, when that (unjust activities) give Pleasure, an Epicurean could not have Objections.
4. Pleasure is only an temporary End but in life there is no end but is everlasting activity. Evolution gives no everlasting happiness based on pleasure. Eudaimonia was defined by Aristotles as an activity not an end state. Does a happy person or god do nothing when reached everlasting Absence of Pain ?

What would be your points / objections against this ? Why is or is not "Life / Living" the greatest good in Epicureanism ?

Or maybe it is ? Pleasant living ? Maybe Flourishing / Pleasure is a fals dichotomy ? Like a Flow state ?

How fits Pleasure as goal to our current knowledge about evolutionary processes / psychology and social acts ?