

Flourishing / Pleasure as the goal

Post by "Cassius" of June 30, 2026 at 8:57 PM

[Quote from Matteng](#)

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).

This one is the kind of objection raised by someone who just refuses to read what Epicurus had to say and to think things through categorically and logically, Here's the sequence:

Pleasure and Pain are the only two feelings. Every experience falls in one of those two categories, just like all of the universe is divided into bodies and space.

Epicurus says the goal is Pleasure, because that includes all that is desirable, given that the feeling of pleasure is the only measure of desirability. However there are times that in order to achieve what is desirable (pleasure), we must endure pain in order to obtain greater pleasure. The ONLY reason we are enduring that pain is to achieve pleasure, so the logic of the goal being pleasure is not violated. The amount of pain we choose to endure is less than the pleasure we expect to receive. The logic of pleasure as the goal is not violated by sometimes choosing pain.

And again since the feeling of pleasure is the only measure of what is desirable, there is no "good life" (happiness) other than a life of pleasure. Virtue in Epicurean terms is whatever course of conduct leads to pleasure. Virtue has no absolute abstract meaning as these other people are asserting. Asserting something to be "the good life" without defining the good life as pleasure (which they refuse to do) is absurd.