

# Rebuttal to a Stoic who stated that "flourishing" would be a "better" goal of life than Pleasure

Post by "Matteng" of July 1, 2026 at 5:14 PM

I saw, many of the recent Lucretius Today podcast episodes revolve around these questions too; I'm going to listen to them again, starting to rehear from episode 280 😊

**To 3. Following human flourishing means social activities:** I think that comes because of the Stoic definition of Human Nature as rational and social. Is it reasonable to speak of a Human Nature ?

And why Rational/Social ? That is not distinct to animals but a matter of degree I think.

For example I could state: Only humans are comedians so Human Nature means to become the best comedian one can be 😄

On the one side there are feelings involved in social situations, praise and blame, pity, philia..... On the other, we need justice and security because not everyone behaves friendly to one self....

**4. Pleasure is only a temporary End but in life there is no end but is everlasting activity.**

I think this comes from the framework or understanding that Pleasure is only a superficial extreme/stimulating feeling. To do things is a kind of Pleasure, living with no or minimal Pain is a Pleasure....

Donald Robertson once wrote me, that avoiding all Pain leads to experiential avoidance what causes mental health problems and is boring.

I responded that boredom is a form of pain and that Epicureans choose Pain when it makes sense, and sometimes treat it like a good (this is maybe even a point for cognitive therapy, reframing) and that they teach to not fear Pain. ( Letter to Menoceus).

Even though Pain is evil, of course it is sometimes choiceworthy (worth/value measured by feeling, pleasure) that is what Stoics not understand. Good must be always good, bad always bad. To choose the bad like in the Stoic sense Vice would contradict their definitions.

But in the context of a life of Pleasure (as seeing as the good) it makes sense to choose pains for greater Pleasure. It is more about relative relation than an absolute.