

Welcome Max Duboff

Post by "Max DuBoff" of July 2, 2026 at 8:59 AM

Ohhhh, yes, I wasn't denying that the absence of pain (i.e., tranquility and the absence of bodily pain) **is** pleasure. The question is, in large part, what "pleasure" means. What it **doesn't** mean (in my view) is that tranquility feels great in the way that caviar or a beautiful view does. Epicurus doesn't have a preset idea of pleasure, shared with everyone else, that he then asserts ataraxia is an example of. Rather, he thinks pleasure is the good, but he has a distinctive idea of what pleasure means. It is very clear that the good is pleasure and vice versa, but it is not at all clear what pleasure(s) actually determine a blessed life. Only the absence of pain does that; but he expects that lots of other pleasures will be present in a blessed life.

Two of my more complicated views (can say more later):

- 1) in Epicurus's epistemology, a pleasure is whatever plays the functional role of appearing good to us and motivating us to pursue it (DL 10.33, pathos is one of the criteria)
- 2) Epicurus is a hedonist because he thinks only pleasures appear good to us evidently [i.e., with enargeia]