

Welcome Max Duboff

Post by "Max DuBoff" of July 7, 2026 at 1:32 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

On friendship, you said its contribution to blessedness runs through security against future fear. But doesn't that just relocate the problem rather than solve it? More security, and a richer stock of memories to draw on, would seem to be exactly as "additive" as more ice cream. Is there a natural limit to how much friendship or security is "enough," past which more of it stops contributing to blessedness, the way Epicurus treats natural and necessary desire as self-limiting? If there is such a limit for friendship, I'd like to hear what it is and where it comes from. If there isn't, then I don't see how friendship escapes the very rule you're using to exclude other additive pleasures from counting.

On what you would actually tell someone to do differently, I am looking for a concrete case where "refer your actions to the goal of nature as tranquility" and "weigh total pleasure against total pain" would recommend different choices. You answered by questioning whether katastematic and kinetic pleasure share a common scale at all. That doesn't answer the question I asked. Can you give me one actual choice where *your* priority rule and the ordinary whole-life pleasure-pain calculus come apart? If you can't produce one, I think that's itself telling us something: that this may be a dispute over which word gets to be called "the goal," and not a dispute that changes a single thing about how a person should actually live.

Last thing: you've now told me twice, in almost the same words, that you don't know why an additive pleasure can't be the foundation of a blessed life. That's not a side issue - it seems like the foundation of your priority for tranquility. Everything else in your position rests on it. It seems to me that since Epicurus says that he would not know what good is without a list of what is essentially additive pleasures, additive pleasures - normal sensory pleasures including joy and delight - are a very clear foundation for a "blessed life" or "eudaemonia" or "happiness" or whatever other word we want to use to describe the real goal that normal people are looking to hear about.

Friendship isn't a pleasure, i.e., intrinsic good; friendship is an instrumental good. So it's not subject to the same problems. Epicurus praises friendship because it's an extremely important instrumental good; and it frequently provides intrinsic goods.

The limit of security is not being afraid anymore.

Ok, I'm not sure this is what you mean, but here's an attempt at a case where "refer your actions to the goal of nature as tranquility" and "weigh total pleasure against total pain" make different recommendations. Consider an exceptionally good Twentieth meal. If I eat moderately, I'll have 10 units of kinetic pleasure and 0 units of pain. If I eat excessively, I'll really appreciate the flavor of this exceptionally fine vegan cheese, so I'll have 30 units of kinetic pleasure but 3 units of pain. "Refer your actions to the goal of nature as tranquility" indicates I should eat moderately, because I want to minimize pain. "Weigh total pleasure against total pain" indicates I should eat excessively, because the pleasure far outweighs the pain. (The only way this wouldn't happen is if we add a whole extra rule about minimizing pain; but then we're basically at the other standard.)

Yeah, I take that passage from Epicurus's *On the Goal* to be a statement about hedonism: experience shows us what's good, and kinetic pleasures contribute to showing that pleasure is the good. What I don't understand is why Epicurus is committed to the claim that a blessed life must be a complete/perfect life. *Given that assumption*, it's quite clear why he thinks additive pleasures can't make a life blessed (because it'll never be complete/perfect).