

FollowUp On Quote Submitted By Pacatus - "It is not a sign of good health to be well adjusted to a sick society."

Post by "Joshua" of July 10, 2026 at 12:57 AM

Here is an example from Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* of what a virtue-ethics alternative might look like:

Quote

Wherefore, if, as you granted in the beginning, infamy is worse than pain, pain is certainly nothing; for while it appears to you base and unmanly to groan, cry out, lament, or faint under pain — while you cherish notions of probity, dignity, honour, and keeping your eye on them, refrain yourself — pain will certainly yield to virtue, and by the influence of imagination, will lose its whole force. — For you must either admit that there is no such thing as virtue, or you must despise [*that is, regard as nothing*] every kind of pain. Will you allow of such a virtue as prudence, without which no virtue whatever can even be conceived? What then? will that suffer you to labour and take pains to no purpose? Will temperance permit you to do anything to excess? Will it be possible for justice to be maintained by one who through the force of pain discovers secrets, or betrays his confederates, or deserts many duties of life? Will you act in a manner consistently with courage, and its attendants, greatness of soul, resolution, patience, and contempt for all worldly things (*rerum humanarum despicientiae*)? Can you hear yourself called a great man, when you lie groveling, dejected, and deploring your condition, with a lamentable voice; no one would call you even a man, while in such a condition: you must therefore either abandon all pretensions to courage, or else pain must be put out of the question. [*N.B. That is to say, pain must not be regarded as an evil.*]

When Epicurus 'set sail in his own little boat', it wasn't to emulate this view of things, it was to wholly reject it.