

Welcome Max Duboff

Post by "Don" of July 13, 2026 at 11:21 PM

[Quote from Max DuBoff](#)

I might disagree about exactly how much ataraxia is under our control--it's quite unclear, I'd say. Clearly there are some sources saying we can have it under many different circumstances; but PD 4 seems to imply that fatal pains might be pretty rough for a short time, and there's the evidence in DL 10 that not all circumstances can lead to a good life.

Ah, this might be a good way to get at *why* or *how* we might have a different perspective on this. My understanding of our control over our own ataraxia stems from my view of tranquility/ataraxia being (possibly) less expansive than you.

I maintain that ataraxia is best understood specifically as the state of mind engendered by the eradication of false/empty beliefs and the fears and anxiety they produce. Once those beliefs are totally eradicated from our minds, pulled up by the roots, they don't come back and the tranquility - literally the undisturbed state - is solid. The eradication of those fears and anxieties is final IF we've really understood and internalized at the gut level, asleep and awake, the understanding that the gods present no reason for fear, that [death is nothing to us](#), that pleasure is the goal and should be the North Star by which we steer our little boat. Pleasure writ large as Epicurus defined it, which means we undergo some pain if we know there's pleasure on the other side of the pain.

If I remember, you include ALL fears and anxieties within ataraxia; which MAY be the case if it is understood that *there is no reason* for fear and anxiety IF we steer our boat by the goal of nature, which is pleasure. My understanding is that if one defines ataraxia/tranquility to be encompassing of every fear and anxiety, it has to be understood in that way.

I go back to Metrodorus, Fragment 5: "Metrodorus, in his book ***On the Source of Happiness in Ourselves being greater than that which arises from Objects***, says: 'What else is the good of the soul/mind/psykhe but the sound state of the flesh (τὸ σαρκὸς εὐσταθὲς κατὰστημα), and the sure hope of its continuance?'" I take this to mean the entire body - body & mind - taken as a whole, the Good of the Mind is inextricably linked with the stable state of the body

VI. Περὶ τοῦ μείζονα εἶναι τὴν παρ' ἡμᾶς αἰτίαν πρὸς
εὐδαιμονίαν τῆς ἐκ τῶν πραγμάτων.

5. Clemens Alexandrinus Strom. II, 131 p. 498 P. Ὁ τε Μητρό-
δωρος ἐν τῷ Περὶ τοῦ μείζονα εἶναι τὴν παρ' ἡμᾶς αἰτίαν πρὸς
εὐδαιμονίαν τῆς ἐκ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀγαθόν, φησί, ψυχῆς τί
ἄλλο ἢ τὸ σαρκὸς εὐσταθὲς κατὰστημα καὶ τὸ περὶ ταύτης
πιστὸν ἔλπιμα.

PD4 does say that fatal pain is bad, but fatal *physical* pain is short (per Epicurus' writings) and we know from his example that eudaimonia is still possible under pain.

I'm curious to explore what you refer to when you mention "not all circumstances can lead to a good life." I certainly don't disagree, especially if you're referring to chasing after empty desires. We're not guaranteed a good life if we persist in empty desires, and we're not guaranteed a completely pain free life if we're mortal.