

Managing Expectations In The Study of Epicurus

Post by "Don" of May 9, 2020 at 4:00 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

(1) In item three, the "BUT." I explain it the same way, but why is our description so focused on "buts" which imply that what we have said before is not clear. Why is it not clear enough to say "choose pleasure and avoid pain" without having to emphasize the BUT DON'T choose unwisely (or some variation). We end up looking like the "wisdom" is the end goal rather than the pleasure, and we end up sounding sometimes like we are talking to stubborn children. Is it really necessary, once we say that pleasure is the good, to have to harp on the fact that some pleasures are going to come at a cost that is not worth that pleasure? (To repeat, I am not complaining about your formulation, I am complaining about our not being in a position to have this more easily understood).

I hear you. It would be nice to put that more positively or integrated instead of **X... BUT Y...** It looks like we're hedging our bets or something.

I must admit that I think I'm liking DeWitt's contention that the *summum bonum* of Epicureanism is **life** itself and that the *telos*/goal is pleasure. I'm still wrapping my brain around that idea but *feel that* I like it.. I think. Maybe that's a way to go? Maybe we're starting too far along the path so we have to use the BUTs...

Quote

(2) Your item 6 ("thus leading to pain")

This is another part of the "rhetoric" issue we face. The act of being alive "leads to pain" so we cannot expect to pursue many of the pleasures we value most without some cost in pain. So the continuing underlying issue is HOW we stack the pleasure up against the pain and decide how much pain is worthwhile.

Excellent point! The "HOW" could lead to those "recipes". I've also seen the HOW as exemplified by the Principle Doctrines and other list type epitomes. The problem is there is no one HOW for everyone but (AH! There's that BUT!) we can provide principles you can apply to your life.