

# Gosling & Taylor, The Greeks on Pleasure.

Post by "Cassius" of June 24, 2020 at 8:59 AM

## [Quote from Don](#)

And I think I see your perspective on those last points. So then which comes first: The realization that pleasure is worthy of pursuit? Or the realization that there's no afterlife and it's acceptable to then pursue pleasure in the here and now? Or do they arise together? Or do we build each up as on the "Canon, Physics, Ethics" tripod? If this, then that. This isn't a criticism of your points. I'm just working through how we arrive at answers to those questions you posed. This is why I think it's important to see Epicurus's context and thought process in opposing the Cyrenaics and what they disagreed with in his philosophy. How did we get where we are?

To address this specifically I would say this:

I don't think that we can understand the nature of pleasure without first having a basic understanding that the universe is natural and not supernatural, and I don't think we can understand that without a basic framework of knowledge in which we accept that it is correct to have confidence in certain conclusions, even though we will never have all of the detailed evidence we would like to have. Both of those concerns can be addressed with some basic Epicurean arguments as to the physics and to the senses and the role of reason. Once you are then clear that there is no possibility of a supernatural god or an absolute virtue, then it becomes clear that feeling (pleasure) is the appropriate guide of life. I think they all go hand in hand, with the best approach being what I gather Epicurus held about being clear and being quick to make the important points at first (rather than hiding the point like Socrates). Then the details are expanded in outline form to the extent that the individual person has time and inclination to pursue them.