

# My Plans For 2021

Post by "Cassius" of March 16, 2021 at 12:02 PM

This is an excerpt, with my quick comments, from Tim Okeefe's entry on Epicurus in the internet encyclopedia of philosophy. It's my view that any set of core principles of Epicurus needs to at least lay the foundation, if not make totally clear, that these conclusions are wrong:  
<https://iep.utm.edu/epicur/#H5>

## b. Types of Pleasure

For Epicurus, pleasure is tied closely to satisfying one's desires. <sup>1</sup> He distinguishes between two different types of pleasure: 'moving' pleasures and 'static' pleasures. 'Moving' pleasures occur when one is in the process of satisfying a desire, e.g., eating a hamburger when one is hungry. These pleasures involve an active titillation of the senses, and these feelings are what most people call 'pleasure.' However, Epicurus says that after one's desires have been satisfied, (e.g., when <sup>2</sup> one is full after eating), the state of satiety, of no longer being in need or want, is itself pleasurable. Epicurus calls this a 'static' pleasure, and says that these static pleasures are the best pleasures.

<sup>3</sup> Because of this, Epicurus denies that there is any intermediate state between pleasure and pain. When one has unfulfilled desires, this is painful, and when one no longer has unfulfilled desires, this steady state is the most pleasurable of all, not merely some intermediate state between pleasure and pain.

Epicurus also distinguishes between physical and mental pleasures and pains. Physical pleasures and pains concern only the present, whereas mental pleasures and pains also encompass the past (fond memories of past pleasure or regret over past pain or mistakes) and the future (confidence or fear about what will occur). The greatest destroyer of happiness, thinks Epicurus, is anxiety about the future, especially fear of the gods and fear of death. If one can banish fear about the future, and face the future with confidence that one's desires will be satisfied, then one will attain tranquility (*ataraxia*), the most exalted state. In fact, given <sup>4</sup> Epicurus' conception of pleasure, it might be less misleading to call him a 'tranquillist' instead of a 'hedonist.'

1 and 2. No, Epicurus does not make this distinction, Diogenes Laertius does. See Nikolsky's "Epicurus on Pleasure" and Gosling & Taylor's "The Greeks on Pleasure."

3. Only true to the extent of measuring quantity, not quality, as explained by Gosling & Taylor. Error here comes from reversing cause and effect and saying "because of this...." - Okeefe has it reversed. Epicurus started with the observation that in general there are only two states, and because of THAT the presence of one equals exactly the absence of the other. He does not start by asserting that static pleasure is the most pleasurable of all.

4. Epicurus is a "tranquillist" only in the minds of people who redefine pleasure, like Okeefe