Epicurean Worldview, Personal Identity, and Creating Community

Post by “Kalosyni” of January 19, 2022 at 1:00 PM

> Quote from smoothiekiwi
>
> When I interact with people, there's a disturbance- different opinions and worldviews collide and influence one another.

You wrote this in reference to tranquility. So just the act of conversing with people can bring the opposite of tranquility. And I think it depends on the situation, and we have choices that we can make to either move toward something (move toward what feels good) or to move away from something (move away from what feels painful).

When I went to visit my parents last year. One of my sisters was also visiting my parent's house at the same time. She sometimes has a very nervous high-strung way of speaking, and views events and the world as negative, focusing on problems. I was feeling tremendous emotional distress, and the opposite of tranquil. After she left and I was still at my parents house, things were much quieter and relaxed, but I still felt untranquil. My parents also have some conversational quirks that make things "less than wonderful". So knowing this about my family, I don't expect anything different, and I visit once a year out of my own need to maintain the family bond...out of my own added material "security" (since there isn't very much emotional "security")...it gives me an added feeling of security in my life, but that requires that I also give a certain amount of attention and consideration to my parents, even though I am not "friends" with my parents. (As for my sister, we talk on the phone at a minimum, and I do so out of compassion). So we don't choose our family, but with friends we can make choices, and we can choose to surround ourselves with people who are happy and supportive, and don't cause us emotional distress.

So with friends...as the highest aim is pleasure...we can ask this of every social situation: "How can I make this more pleasureable?" Then let your mind open up to creative ideas for making things feel good. That will include making a request... to invite the other person (or persons) to join in your new idea. That could be as simple as "I apologize, but could we change the topic to something more easy-going? Like, let's talk about where we want to go to get lunch (or x,y,z, etc...to put the focus on enjoyment of life).

The hard part is when you have a friend that has a very strong worldview in support of the supernatural or some other very different worldview, and then you might choose to no longer meet up with that person.

So finding friends who have a common worldview will create more joy and ease.