

Martin's personal outline

Post by “Martin” of January 31, 2024 at 10:17 AM

I have chosen

- pleasure as the goal of my life
- materialism as the adequate attitude toward the world
- the scientific method as the only reliable method to gain fundamental knowledge for understanding the world by iteration of improved models and new observations enabled by the improved models and new tools.

I aim at pleasure by choosing carefully which desires to fulfill, willingly accept temporary pain if it is a side effect of actions (e.g. hard study, hard work, delay of enjoyments) to maximize future pleasure which is worth the endured pain or to minimize future pain, hold up the no-harm principle and trust my reasoning capability and my intuition on love, friendship, compassion and justice to avoid counterproductive egoism and the limits of scientism.

These items of my philosophy of life are identical with corresponding items of Epicurus' philosophy when it is interpreted consistently by resolving apparent contradictions between different quotes of the extant texts instead of being misrepresented as primitive hedonism or ascetic hedonism depending on which subsets of quotes are neglected or misinterpreted as absolute statements.

I differ from Epicurus in at least the following aspects, which are sufficiently minor that I call myself an Epicurean:

- I do not claim that my chosen philosophy of life is true philosophy or that any scientific theory is true because no school of philosophy can reasonably claim truth for itself, and whereas the adequacy or superiority of a theory can be demonstrated, there is no way to prove that it is true, although in the banalities of daily life sufficiently covered by common sense, there might be no obvious difference between adequacy and truth. Truth is fundamentally limited to the validity of logical constructs and truthfulness of protocols of events.

- Scientific progress has made parts of his metaphysics obsolete and has in particular refuted his physics of the gods and the images the brain would receive from them.

In other interpretations of Epicurus than the one which is typically supported at [epicureanfriends.com](http://www.epicureanfriends.com), additional differences might be:

- I may do things to extremes without moderation.
- I aim for ecstatic pleasure occasionally.
- I claim that romantic love is conducive to and potentially a required ingredient for maximized pleasure.
- I found marriage to be consistent with Epicurus' philosophy but probably I do not qualify as a sage, so the statement of Epicurus against marriage for Epicurean sages in typical cases might not be applicable to me anyway.
- I do not do gluttony for extended periods.
- I can do asceticism but usually, I am not ascetic.