

Toronto Canada Meetup Group (Discussion on Implementation)

Post by "AxA" of February 25, 2025 at 12:54 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

And also, "Congratulations" (just as Don said above) because it's pretty awesome, and I've thought about starting a group myself, but I'm feeling that where I live may make it a bit difficult. (Also, to come up with answers to people's questions right off the cuff, could prove challenging...the forum gives space and time for answering 😊)

[Quote from AxA](#)

Some of the objections that came up:

- Pain as a source of meaning vs boring bland state of continuous pleasure (I did not even get into the whole "pleasure as absence of pain" definitional issue, and this came up at the end and was never really addressed)

Perhaps this was a reaction to a phrase such as "living a life of simple pleasures" ? (...would need to know what exactly they were reacting to)... or simply the idea of "continuous pleasure" which comes up in Cicero's Torquatus section as a goal for an Epicurean. I could see the idea of continuous pleasure as being just a kind of idealized goal, or perhaps it would be said of the wise elder or Epicurean teacher).

As for pleasures, all pleasures...both ones which are sensory, vary with intensity, location, and duration, as well as those of good health, good internal feeling, and satisfaction with one's life. The sensory pleasures are always in flux, and pain will come because of the natural state of living.

Also, I think that there are two (or more) flavors of Epicurean philosophy (and Epicureans). 1) the early time when Epicurus was alive (or early Garden, and generations close to the time of Epicurus) and would include the lifestyle of Epicurean philosophy students. 2) later Roman times which were removed from the core studies and included wealthy Romans.

We see in Diogenese Laertius Book 10, that Metrodorus (who was Epicurus' closest student) left for 6 months to journey across the Aegean Sea to visit his family in his home town of Lampsacus. This of course would have likely had some level of risk, but the Epicurean would wisely minimize risk by making the journey at the safest time of

year for crossing.

Regarding "pain as a source of meaning" - that possibly could be a remnant left over from Christianity: If God is all powerful then why does he allow suffering to exist in the world? Their answer: because he wants to test you and teach you important lessons. (No wonder the world is so screwed up, because the "perfect love" of God is itself evil. As humans (human animals) we inherently dislike pain and suffering, so then to try to extract some meaning from it seems twisted.(for [more on the Trilemma you can check out this](#))

Display More

I encourage everyone to do something in person anywhere in the world. I believe it only takes one other person to join to make it worthwhile!

I would suggest that it's not necessary for the host to be an authority on Epicurean philosophy and be able to answer any questions at all. It can simply be a gathering of people who are interested in studying it and trying it out in practice in one way or another. Somebody asked me what is the Epicurean position on animal or non-human consciousness, and I said I don't know and I'd have to look into it.

The idea of endless pleasure being boring is an interesting response, one that never occurred to me. But I think there would be enough variation of pleasure (that point was never raised), and enough pains are sure to come up anyway along the way, in addition to all the pains that are deliberately chosen because of the greater pleasure they allow. So once again, it's a matter of perspective.

If pain itself had value, why not bang your head against a wall when you're feeling bored and meaningless? I think it's more that pain can be connected with things that are considered meaningful, like overcoming obstacles, achieving difficult tasks, etc. So the mistake would be to glorify the pain itself rather than seeing it as a tradeoff where we accept pain in order to gain the greater pleasure of a job well done.

But the culture of "hard work", "discipline", "overcoming our natures", etc. etc. runs deep.