

New Religious Landscape Study from Pew Research

Post by "DaveT" of March 28, 2025 at 2:35 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

I sincerely don't care if Epicureanism is defined as "psychological hedonism" or Axiological hedonism or Ethical hedonism or whatever-ical hedonism or hedonism at all. Epicurus had an insight into the motivation of all living beings that they move toward pleasure and move away from pain, and he used this starting point to shed light on how living beings interact with their world and ultimately what is the goal of life of living beings, with humans being able to take that information and to move toward eudaimonia.

The meaning of the telos or the "supreme good" is that thing which is the telos or the "supreme good" is that for which ALL actions are ultimately motivated by. One may say virtue is their ultimate motivating factor, but why? Keep asking why? And it is going to be that it gives them a sense of satisfaction that they're doing what's right. And what is a sense of satisfaction? It is pleasure. One can dress up their motivation and their rationalizations and their justifications. They move toward the supreme good which is pleasure.

People lie all the time to themselves to get through the day and through their life. People can convince themselves of almost anything!

I am not saying we MUST convince everyone we come in contact with that "Pleasure is the supreme good and why you do what you." We pick our battles. But the more I look at the world and how people act, I can see them trying to comfort themselves, to mask their insecurities, to belittle others to aggrandize their own self-image. They are in pain and are trying to move toward pleasure. The feelings are only two after all. BUT Epicurus calls us to make prudent choices, to live nobly, well, and prudently, to try to fill our lives with more pleasure than pain. That's what I believe ALL living beings are doing. And Epicurus was brilliant in his attempt to explain this. Not everyone is going to listen. Not everyone is going to be convinced. Not everyone is going to accept that universal truth. But that is exactly what I believe is going on in the psyche of every living being.

To me, this is a near perfect recitation of what I look for in Epicureanism. I look at every living thing as seeking to maximize their potential (for humans--happiness). This is the beauty of the teaching. Indeed, one might say everything down to the smallest particle of matter or energy is following its nature to maximize its potential to be what it is. That looks a bit weird as I write it, but nothing needs to be sentient to naturally seek its potential, its highest potential as declared

by Epicurus.