

Welcome Rolf!

Post by “Rolf” of April 15, 2025 at 12:06 PM

Sure thing! I'm a student in my mid-20s, currently taking a painting course -- not because I'm some great artist, but simply for the joy of it. As an avid fan of Wikipedia, my interests are pretty wide-ranging, but I'm happiest when watching a good film, listening to music, or hanging out with animals - ideally sheep, goats, or cats, though dogs aren't too bad either.

For the better part of the past decade I've been (somewhat obsessively) chasing down an answer to the question, "How should I live?". I'm admittedly not the most academic person, but over the years I've dipped my toes into Buddhism, Taoist, Christianity, Absurdism, and Stoicism, among other ideas. And yet, nothing has ever felt quite right, at least not for extended periods of time. With every philosophy of life I've tried on for size, there has been some small (or large) thing nagging away at me, telling me that "this doesn't quite fit".

Somehow, Epicureanism had completely flown under my radar. I stumbled across it a couple months ago, and right away it just made sense. Perhaps it's not the flashiest or most dramatic philosophy -- it's not that of the action heroes I watch in the movies or the tortured musicians I listen to -- but it feels like a practical philosophy for *actual humans*, one that doesn't ask us to *deny our nature*, as so many other ideologies seem to do. That alone was a breath of fresh air.

I'm hesitant to throw myself headfirst into any single worldview (past experiences have made me cautious), but Epicureanism has felt more grounded and relatable than anything else I've found. Currently I'm reading Austin's book *Living for pleasure* as recommended here, alongside various articles and forum posts. I'm trying to understand the ideas of Epicurus and his fellow philosophers as they originally intended -- not through the filter of modern self-help trends, as has happened with Stoicism. At the same time, I don't want to turn Epicurus into some kind of divine and enlightened secular saint. It's important to me that I see him as a fellow human who, impressively, got a lot of things right.

Honestly, I wasn't planning to post at all—I find the idea a bit intimidating. Not because I'm asocial (I do love meeting new people), but something about the permanence of a forum post gives me pause. Still, I found myself stuck on a few Epicurean questions, and figured that solo study only gets you so far. So here I am. 😊