

What kinds of goals do Epicureans set for themselves?

Post by “Kalosyni” of January 26, 2026 at 1:50 PM

I've just come up with this question: "What kinds of goals do Epicureans set for themselves?"

This could be within general categories or specific things.

If we look to the [Principal Doctrines](#), Vatican Sayings, Letter to Menoeceus, etc.

And in the Letter to Herodotus, it says this:

Quote

"Indeed it is necessary to go back on the main principles, and constantly to fix in one's memory enough to give one the most essential comprehension of the truth. And in fact the accurate knowledge of details will be fully discovered, if the general principles in the various departments are thoroughly grasped and borne in mind; for even in the case of one fully initiated the most essential feature in all accurate knowledge is the capacity to make a rapid use of observation and mental apprehension, and this can be done if everything is summed up in elementary principles and formulae. For it is not possible for anyone to abbreviate the complete course through the whole system, if he cannot embrace in his own mind by means of short formulae all that might be set out with accuracy in detail."

"Wherefore since the method I have described is valuable to all those who are accustomed to the investigation of nature, I who urge upon others the constant occupation in the investigation of nature, and find my own peace chiefly in a life so occupied, have composed for you another epitome on these lines, summing up the first principles of the whole doctrine."

So from this text, I would deduce that the **investigation of nature** would be an Epicurean activity and a goal that an Epicurean would set for themselves. And perhaps this goal would be a life-long goal - one that would never end since nature is vast, especially now in our modern understanding. The reason that this goal is important (and I think that this is addressed in *De Rerum Natura*) is so that one understands that god/gods are not creating all the phenomenon of the world but that they come from naturally occurring processes. And a second reason why this is important is so that one understands the causes of things, thereby leading to better decision making and choices - we can't pray things into existence for ourselves, but instead must take concrete actions.

And...there are other Epicurean goals, which are hinted at in the other texts I mentioned.

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/4924-what-kinds-of-goals-do-epicureans-set-for-themselves/?postID=38596#post38596>