

Marriage & children seem less pleasurable today: financial worry, relational problems, high rates of divorce. Are they worth the pain (tarakhē τάραχή) they entail?

Post by "Cassius" of July 1, 2026 at 9:28 PM

I have pinned this thread to the top of the "Relationships" forum. There are a huge number of issues that can be picked out of Raphael's post and discussed. If this thread gets long and goes off in different directions we can break it into sub-threads over time so don't worry too much about staying on topic with the most recent post in the thread.

At a zoom meeting tonight we discussed that the topics we need to cover include:

- How does Epicurean philosophy respond in non-political ways to these issues. The wider society issues are part of the facts but not something we ourselves can change. What we CAN change is what we do in response to those facts.
- What considerations need to be included in evaluating total pleasure and pain factors arising from these issues?
- How do we balance the fact that any one person can have only a limited impact on society with the history we have of Diogenes of Oinoanda and Lucretius and Epicurus himself devoting much time to "outreach" beyond their own immediate families / circles of friends?
- Is it possible to generalize on the value of spouses and children? These always involve gambles. Do we read Epicurus and Lucretius as saying that the gamble of marriage and children is stacked against us so that we should generally NOT take such chances? Or are decisions like this always contextual? If so what aspects of the context do we generally look toward?