

Welcome Namcisumeht!

Post by "Don" of March 1, 2020 at 4:40 PM

[Quote from Namcisumeht](#)

Thanks. I find that Epicureanism resonates the most with modern theories of human behavior and the science of happiness(e.g. Daniel Gilbert).

Welcome!

i would agree that positive psychology and the modern science of happiness have echoes of Epicureanism especially when it comes to the importance of social interactions and friendship. I find some of the books and research by Gilbert, Seligman, Csikszentmihalyi, and others very interesting. I've even tried making my way through the free Coursera Science of Happiness course from Yale.

However, I read an article not long ago that made me realize that Epicureanism is NOT identical with positive psychology in its popularized forms:

<https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/...gion-secularism>

"Seligman's inclusion of material achievement in the components of happiness has also raised eyebrows. He has theorized that people who have not achieved some degree of mastery and success in the world can't be said to be flourishing. He once described a "thirty-two-year-old Harvard University summa in mathematics who is fluent in Russian and Japanese and runs her own hedge fund" as a "poster child for positive psychology." But this can make well-being seem exclusive and out of reach, since accomplishment of this kind is not possible to all, or even most."

Whether that's a correct interpretation of Seligman's work is up for debate. If it is, that all sounds very Aristotelian or Peripatetic to me. Epicurus wanted eudaimonia to be accessible to everyone! I think we can learn from a variety of sources - and the more people explore what it takes to truly be happy, the better - but we just have to be ready to read and learn with critical eyes.