

Episode One Hundred Forty-One - Proclaiming Epicurus To The World: Diogenes of Oinoanda (Part One)

Post by "Cassius" of September 20, 2022 at 6:59 PM

Welcome to Episode One Hundred Forty-One of Lucretius Today. This is a podcast dedicated to the poet Lucretius, who wrote "On The Nature of Things," the only complete presentation of Epicurean philosophy left to us from the ancient world.

I am your host Cassius, and together with our panelists from the EpicureanFriends.com forum, we'll walk you through the ancient Epicurean texts, and we'll discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. We encourage you to study Epicurus for yourself, and we suggest the best place to start is the book "Epicurus and His Philosophy" by Canadian professor Norman DeWitt. If you find the Epicurean worldview attractive, we invite you to join us in the study of Epicurus at EpicureanFriends.com, where you will find a discussion thread for each of our podcast episodes and many other topics.

At this point in our podcast we have now examined both Lucretius and the major letters of Epicurus, and we will now turn our attention to one of the other leading advocates of Epicurus in the ancient world: Diogenes of Oinoanda. We won't make any effort to go through all the fragments, but we will look at what Diogenes chose to highlight as the key aspects of the philosophy that both he - and the ancient Epicureans as a whole - thought it most important for the world to know. We will use both [the translation by Martin Ferguson Smith](#), as well as [the translation by C. W. Chilton](#), and we highly recommend that you start your review of the inscription at the excellent site devoted to it from Catalonia which you will find linked in the show notes ([Enoanda.cat](#))

Now let's join Martin reading today's text:

Fr. 1 Diogenes the Oinoandian and friend of Athens. Epitome on nature.

Fr. 3 [And I wanted to refute those who accuse natural science of being unable to be of any benefit to us.] In this way, [citizens], even though I am not engaging in public affairs, I say these things through the inscription just as if I were taking action, and in an endeavour to prove that what benefits our nature, namely freedom from disturbance, is identical for one and all. And so, having described the second reason for the inscription, I now go on to mention my mission and to explain its character and nature. Having already reached the sunset of my life (being almost on the verge of departure from the world on account of old age), I wanted, before being overtaken by death, to compose a [fine] anthem [to celebrate the] fullness [of pleasure]

and so to help now those who are well-constituted. Now, if only one person or two or three or four or five or six or any larger number you choose, sir, provided that it is not very large, were in a bad predicament, I should address them individually and do all in my power to give them the best advice. But, as I have said before, the majority of people suffer from a common disease, as in a plague, with their false notions about things, and their number is increasing (for in mutual emulation they catch the disease from one another, like sheep) moreover, [it is] right to help [also] generations to come (for they too belong to us, though they are still unborn) and, besides, love of humanity prompts us to aid also the foreigners who come here. Now, since the remedies of the inscription reach a larger number of people, I wished to use this stoa to advertise publicly the [medicines] that bring salvation. These medicines we have put [fully] to the test; for we have dispelled the fears [that grip] us without justification, and, as for pains, those that are groundless we have completely excised, while those that are natural we have reduced to an absolute minimum, making their magnitude minute.

Fr. 2 ... [observing that most people suffer from false notions about things and do not listen to the body] when it brings important and just [accusations] against the soul, alleging that it is unwarrantably mauled and maltreated by the soul and dragged to things which are not necessary (in fact, the wants of the body are small and easy to obtain — and the soul too can live well by sharing in their enjoyment — while those of the soul are both great and difficult to obtain and, besides being of no benefit to our nature, actually involve dangers). So (to reiterate what I was saying) observing that these people are in this predicament, I bewailed their behaviour and wept over the wasting of their lives, and I considered it the responsibility of a good man to give [benevolent] assistance, to the utmost of one's ability, to those of them who are well-constituted. [This] is the first reason [for the inscription]. I declare that the [vain] fear of [death and that] of the [gods grip many] of us, [and that] joy [of real value is generated not by theatres] and [...and] baths [and perfumes] and ointments, [which we] have left to the masses, [but by natural science...]

Episode 141 - The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda (Part One) is now available!

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/51406979>

Post by “Joshua” of September 25, 2022 at 9:39 AM

Quote

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2672-episode-one-hundred-forty-one-proclaiming-epicurus-to-the-world-diogenes-of-oino/>

Epicureanism found the field most favorable for expansion in the East, especially Asia Minor and Palestine. It was late arriving in Italy but spread rapidly in the last century of the republic. The movement was fully matured before the poem of Lucretius was published.

-Notes on the History of Epicureanism, by Norman DeWitt

Post by “Don” of September 25, 2022 at 10:01 AM

For anyone who's interested, here is the Greek text for the inscription:

[DCLP/Trismegistos 865216 = LDAB 865216](#)

Post by “Cassius” of September 25, 2022 at 11:27 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

These medicines we have put [fully] to the test; for we have dispelled the fears [that grip] us without justification, and, as for pains, those that are groundless we have completely excised, while those that are natural we have reduced to an absolute minimum, making their magnitude minute.

Kalosyin brought up in this episode that the phrasing apparently referring to "groundless pains" might not be consistent with our recent discussions of talking about "groundlessness" and "emptiness" in terms of "desires."

So one thing we will need to talk about will be how to incorporate this phrasing into the recent discussions we have had with [Godfrey](#) and [Don](#) and others on this topic.

Post by “Cassius” of September 25, 2022 at 11:28 AM

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2672-episode-one-hundred-forty-one-proclaiming-epicurus-to-the-world-diogenes-of-oino/>

[Quote from Don](#)

For anyone who's interested, here is the Greek text for the inscription:

DCLP/Trismegistos 865216 = LDAB 865216

And that's exactly what we need to address Kalosyni's question! Thank you!

Post by “Don” of September 25, 2022 at 12:31 PM

Check this out, too:

[L'inscription philosophique d'Oenoanda - Persée](#)

It has drawings of the fragments of the inscription! 👍 👍

Post by “Don” of September 25, 2022 at 2:41 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[Quote from Don](#)

For anyone who's interested, here is the Greek text for the inscription:

DCLP/Trismegistos 865216 = LDAB 865216

And that's exactly what we need to address Kalosyni's question! Thank you!

Fragment 2, column 6, lines 5-14

γύρω ματαίως [κ]ατ[έχον-]

τας ἡμᾶς φόβους [ἀ-]

πελυσάμεθα, □ vac. 1□ τῶν τε

λυπῶν τὰς μὲν κενὰς

ἐξεκόψαμεν εἰς τέ-

λειον, ἢ vac. 1 ἢ τὰς δὲ φυσικὰς

εἰς μικρὸν κομιδῆ

συνεστείλαμεν, ἔλα-

χιστιαῖον αὐτῶν τ[ὸ]

μέγεθος ποιήσα[ντες]

λυπῶν τὰς μὲν κενᾶς = *lypōn tas men kenas*

λυπῶν = pain (of mind or body), suffering, affliction, distress

κενᾶς = same word used throughout Epicureanism for void, empty, groundless, vain, etc.

Post by “Kalosyni” of September 25, 2022 at 4:08 PM

So the Wall of Diogenes of Oinoanda may be the only place where we see the idea of "pains which are groundless", and "pains which are natural"?

Post by “Cassius” of September 25, 2022 at 4:20 PM

Good question!

Post by “Cassius” of September 25, 2022 at 4:22 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

Check this out, too:

L'inscription philosophique d'Oenoanda - Persée

It has drawings of the fragments of the inscription! 👍 👍

I definitely don't think I have seen that one before so thank you!!

Post by “Kalosyni” of September 25, 2022 at 5:01 PM

[Cassius](#), I want give you credit for your mentioning the following idea:

The phrasing at the end of fragment 1, "pleasure / pain" is not being differentiated from "desire for pleasure / pain" so he must be talking loosely. If you feel pain there is always a reason for that pain, and the desire to remove that pain -- so that is how we get either groundless or natural

So this wording on the wall is a quick way to wrap up the whole idea quickly.

Post by “Cassius” of September 25, 2022 at 5:06 PM

Ha thank you but that is only my first thought. I am waiting on the Greek expert (Don) and the desire experts (Godfrey et al) before making a final call.

Post by “Don” of September 25, 2022 at 9:17 PM

I was curious to see where Epicurus uses λύπη "pain, distress, etc" or its variants elsewhere and found:

PD3 Ὁρος τοῦ μεγέθους τῶν ἡδονῶν ἢ παντὸς τοῦ ἀλγοῦντος ὑπεξαίρεσις. ὅπου δ' ἂν τὸ ἡδόμενον ἐνῆ, καθ' ὃν ἂν χρόνον ἦ, οὐκ ἔστι τὸ ἀλγοῦν ἢ τὸ λυπούμενον ἢ τὸ συναμφότερον.

The limit of the magnitude of pleasure (is) the whole of the removal of that which causes pain. Where that which gives pleasure exists, during the time it is present, there is neither pain nor

that which causes pain in body or *in the mind* nor either of these together. ([Don](#))

[PD10](#) Εἰ τὰ ποιητικὰ [τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἀσώτους ἡδονῶν] ἔλυε τοὺς φόβους τῆς διανοίας τοὺς [τε περὶ μετεώρων καὶ θανάτου καὶ ἀλγηδόνων], ἔτι τε τὸ πέρας τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐδίδασκεν, οὐκ ἂν ποτε εἶχομεν ὅ τι μεμψαίμεθα αὐτοῖς, πανταχόθεν ἐκπληρουμένοις τῶν ἡδονῶν καὶ οὐδαμόθεν οὔτε τὸ ἀλγοῦν οὔτε τὸ λυπούμενον ἔχουσιν, ὅ περ ἐστὶ τὸ κακόν.

If the things that produced the delights of those who are decadent washed away the mind's fears about astronomical phenomena and death and suffering, and furthermore if they taught us the limits of our pains and desires, then we would have no complaints against them, since they would be filled with every joy and would contain not a single pain or distress (and that's what is bad). (Saint-Andre)

Menoikeus 125

οὐθὲν γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ζῆν δεινὸν τῷ κατειληφότεν γνησίως τὸ μῆθὲν ὑπάρχειν ἐν τῷ μὴ ζῆν δεινόν. ὥστε μάταιος ὁ λέγων δεδιέναι τὸν θάνατον οὐχ ὅτι λυπήσει παρών, ἀλλ' ὅτι λυπεῖ μέλλον. ὁ γὰρ παρὸν οὐκ ἐνοχλεῖ, προσδοκώμενον κενῶς λυπεῖ. τὸ φρικωδέστατον οὖν τῶν κακῶν ὁ θάνατος οὐθὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἐπειδήπερ ὅταν μὲν ἡμεῖς ὦμεν, ὁ θάνατος οὐ πάρεστιν· ὅταν δ' ὁ θάνατος παρῆ, τόθ' ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐσμέν. οὔτε οὖν πρὸς τοὺς ζῶντάς ἐστὶν οὔτε πρὸς τοὺς τετελευτηκότας, ἐπειδήπερ περὶ οὓς μὲν οὐκ ἔστιν, οἱ δ' οὐκέτι εἰσίν.

For there is nothing terrible in living for the one who truly comprehends that there is nothing terrible in not living. So, the one who says death is to be feared is foolish, not that there will be pain and distress when it is present but that there is pain in anticipation; because that which is present does not trouble, disquiet, or annoy, and anticipation itself pains and distresses one fruitlessly. Death, that which causes utter horror, which causes one to shudder, that "most utterly horrifying of pains" as it is understood by the hoi polloi, then is nothing to us. On the one hand, at the time when we are (that is while we are living), death is not present; on the other hand, whenever death is present, then we are not (that is, we don't exist). Death is neither a concern for those who are living nor for those whose lives are ended.

I found κενῶς λυπεῖ interesting because one of the best ways to translate that is "distressing one fruitlessly" which may give a sense of Diogenes' wall.

Post by “Godfrey” of September 26, 2022 at 1:29 AM

I'm joining late as I've had post-booster brain fog for most of the day.

Quote

These medicines we have put [fully] to the test; for we have dispelled the fears [that grip] us without justification, and, as for pains, those that are groundless we have completely excised, while those that are natural we have reduced to an absolute minimum, making their magnitude minute.

The way that I read Epicurus, as a Feeling a pain can never be groundless, nor can a pleasure. All pains and pleasures are natural and are true. Only what leads to a pain or a pleasure can be groundless. Also, if some desires are to be considered pains, some must also be considered pleasures. But to do that invites Ciceronian obfuscation and should be avoided.

So, using multiple explanations, since I'm not very familiar with Diogenes: 1) [Don](#) has probably the best explanation in the previous post. 2) Diogenes seems like an enthusiastic student and not a teacher, so his terminology may be looser than we're accustomed to from the other extant texts. 3) It could be that [Joshua](#) is correct and desires are pains. To some extent this is correct, but with all due respect I don't see this as being what Epicurus was saying. 4) It could also be that by the time of Diogenes, EP had evolved to include desires as pains.

Until we have more evidence, my guess is that the wording comes partly from the translator and partly from the use by Diogenes of less specific word choices.

Post by “Cassius” of September 26, 2022 at 3:39 AM

I. sorry if I missed it but Don did you agree with MFS' translation? I don't see any brackets there so preumably this part is not reconstructed (?)

Post by “Don” of September 26, 2022 at 7:20 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I. sorry if I missed it but Don did you agree with MFS' translation? I don't see any brackets there so preumably this part is not reconstructed (?)

Yes, I'd agree with Smith and your assumption that this part is not reconstructed. Using that French link, we can see that large stretches of the wall are actually intact.

In looking at Menoikeus 125 in conjunction with the wall, I'm definitely leaning toward seeing "τῶν τε λυπῶν τὰς μὲν κενὰς ἐξεκόψαμεν" as referring to completely excising pains that are fruitlessly or unnecessarily experienced. Those pains that one needlessly experiences, probably stemming from trying to satisfy groundless desires.

Post by “Kalosyni” of September 26, 2022 at 11:05 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

I'm definitely leaning toward seeing "τῶν τε λυπῶν τὰς μὲν κενὰς ἐξεκόψαμεν" as referring to completely excising pains that are fruitlessly or unnecessarily experienced. Those pains that one needlessly experiences, probably stemming from trying to satisfy groundless desires.

This does bring up the additive vs the subtractive. The word "desires" has a sound of adding in something. Where as "removing pains" is getting rid of something. I think all of this is open to further contemplation. We are going to be engaging in choices and avoidances that sometimes are one and sometimes are the other. And we may have differences in which direction we tend to go in (removing pain/adding in pleasure). We will be on the right track, as long as our choices are not bringing great pain (bad results).

Post by “Godfrey” of September 26, 2022 at 3:16 PM

Quote from Kalosyni

The word "desires" has a sound of adding in something. Where as "removing pains" is getting rid of something.... And we may have differences in which direction we tend to go in (removing pain/adding in pleasure).

[Kalosyni](#) could you elaborate on this? Are you saying that desires add in pleasures? Or that desires equate to pleasures? Or desires are additional to pleasures and pains? I'm not clear as to what you're thinking here.

Post by “Godfrey” of September 26, 2022 at 5:19 PM

Another explanation to add to my post 14 above:

5) Since the purpose of the inscription was evangelism, saying that we've excised and minimized pains is much more appealing to the average passersby than saying we've excised and minimized desires. Working with desires is a way that pain can be minimized, but that detail can come later.

Post by “Kalosyni” of September 26, 2022 at 8:17 PM

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

Are you saying that desires add in pleasures? Or that desires equate to pleasures? Or desires are additional to pleasures and pains?

There are some desires for adding in experience of sweetness and enjoyableness, and there are some desires which are to stop the experience of pain. Eating chocolate cake is a desire which brings in extra stimulation beyond just the removal of hunger -- and if it was just for removal of hunger then we could eat bread instead of cake. If we eat too much cake we may start to feel overly full, and so we then stop eating cake to stop the discomfort. But there are other desires for additive pleasures besides just eating cake.

And some people may be more oriented (motivated) to stop pain rather than seek pleasure. For example a person who calls up a friend to talk because they feel lonely (and want to remove the pain of loneliness) vs a person who calls up a friend because they enjoy telling jokes and laughing together (desire for adding in fun).

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

Since the purpose of the inscription was evangelism, saying that we've excised and minimized pains is much more appealing to the average passersby than saying we've excised and minimized desires. Working with desires is a way that pain can be minimized, but that detail can come later.

lol -- this made me laugh, and yet there could be truth to it. But of course this brings up the whole "tranquility problem" -- which for me seems unresolvable. To be tranquil or not to be

tranquil - perhaps we have to move beyond the "either/or" -- because sometimes we will take on pains if future pleasures will be greater.

Post by “Godfrey” of September 26, 2022 at 8:25 PM

Quote from Kalosyni

To be tranquil or not to be tranquil - perhaps we have to move beyond the "either/or"....

Exactly!

Post by “Don” of September 26, 2022 at 9:28 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

the whole "tranquility problem"

See, I don't see this as a problem at all. I'm more and more thinking ataraxia is more akin to mindfulness as an adequate translation than "tranquility." Tranquility conjures up mystical mind states (not that mindfulness doesn't nowadays, but bear with me), but mindfulness is a way of interacting with daily life.

Post by “Kalosyni” of September 26, 2022 at 9:35 PM

Instead of tranquility or mindfulness, how about clear-mindedness and ease...lots of other possibilities?

Mindfulness sometimes could end up being too focused inward or on inner sensations.

Post by “Don” of September 26, 2022 at 10:30 PM

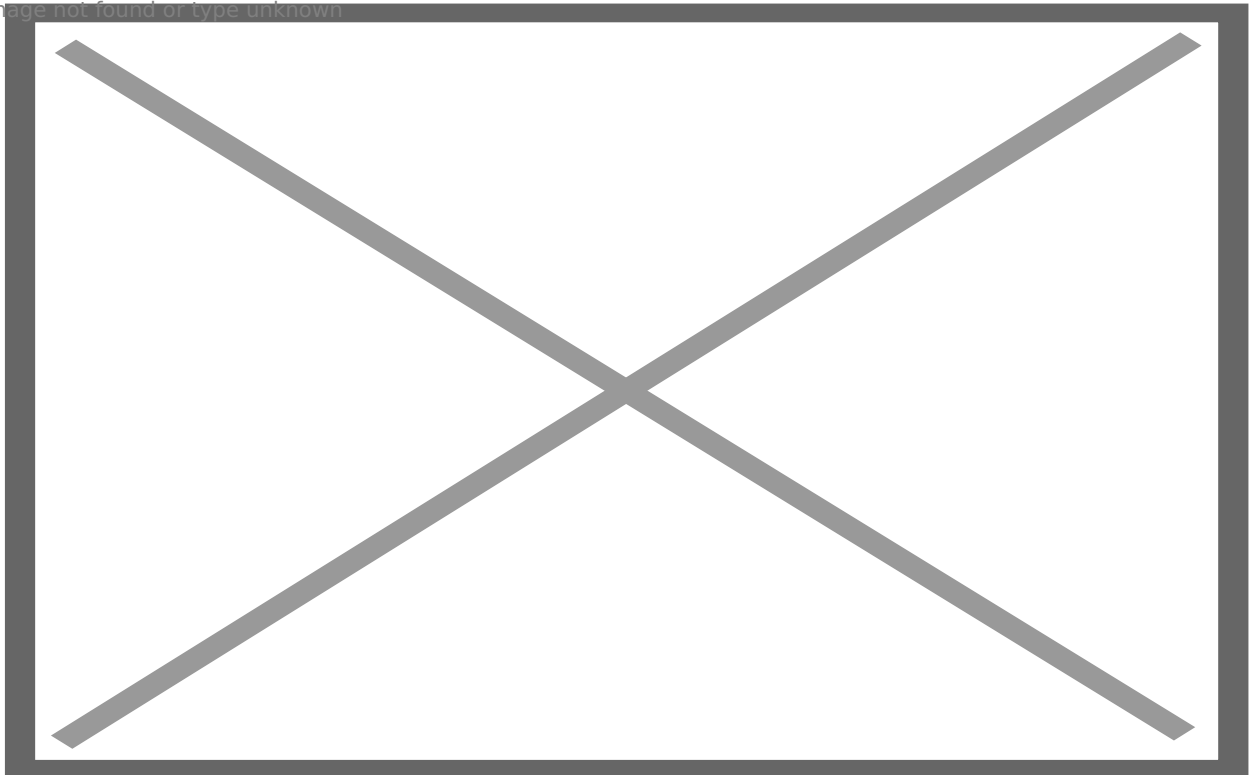
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[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

Mindfulness sometimes could end up being too focused inward or on inner sensations.

I don't think so. In listening to Siegel's audiobook, I'm seeing mindfulness as a way of interacting with everyday experience, not something that comes and goes or has a singular focus or is something someone "does" but rather how they experience their lives (while practicing the skill to make it more readily available in everyday life). This page from Positive Psychology sort of gets at where I'm beginning to come from:

Image not found or type unknown



[What Is Mindfulness? Definition + Benefits \(Incl. Psychology\)](#)

What mindfulness is, how it originated & why it has become so popular.

positivepsychology.com

Quote

According to the American Psychological Association (APA.org, 2012), mindfulness is:

"...a moment-to-moment awareness of one's experience without judgment. In this sense, mindfulness is a state and not a trait. While it might be promoted by certain practices or activities, such as meditation, it is not equivalent to or synonymous with

them.”

As we can see, mindfulness is a state that can be brought on through practice. It's not static, nor are some people 'born more mindful' than others. It involves awareness, and impartiality about what we gain from this awareness. In an age of social media, where opinions, likes, and commentary are more than forthcoming, it's easy to see how non-judgmental reflection can be a welcome change.

and later

Quote

Cambridge Dictionary

“[Mindfulness is] the practice of being aware of your body, mind, and feelings in the present moment, thought to create a feeling of calm.” (Emphasis added)

This idea of a grounded, calm awareness from which to clear-headedly (is that a word?) assess what is happening to you to better decide what to pursue and what to reject seems - to me - to be why Epicurus would lay just emphasis on "that which neither pains the body nor troubles the mind" (Menoikeus, 131) and on "the health of the body and... the tranquility of the mind" (Menoikeus, 128)

Post by “Godfrey” of September 27, 2022 at 1:49 AM

As I understand it, mindfulness *practice* begins with building your concentration, typically through sitting quietly and focusing on an object (typically your breath). The thing to figure out before anything else is how you can sit most comfortably, preferably with an upright but relaxed spine. As for what you do once you're settled, everybody uses the word "curiosity", which drives me nuts due to its overuse. What I find happening when I do this meditation is that, in order to keep my mind from wandering and to not go crazy, I need to find something interesting to observe about my breathing while I'm sitting there. For instance what part of my breath am I consciously controlling and what part is unconscious, or maybe what is happening at specific places in my body.

Further, this practice isn't necessarily tranquil: all sorts of mental and physical stuff can happen while you're sitting there. This is part of the point however, because often this is stuff that needs to be sorted out in order to make positive choices and avoidances for leading your most pleasant life. As your concentration improves and you can focus on what's coming up, you

eventually can arrive at useful insights about these things.

I have found, however, that I do often come away with the pleasures of feeling more relaxed, yet energetic, after I "have a sit" for 20 minutes. Tranquility is a pleasant, potential byproduct of mindfulness but it's not the goal, it's not the process and, depending on the situation it's not always possible. But I'm finding that the practice can be useful for Epicurean living.

Post by "Don" of September 27, 2022 at 6:24 AM

Thanks for sharing that, Godfrey. It sounds like you've found one way to get at making sound choices and rejections.

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

Tranquility is a pleasant, potential byproduct of mindfulness but it's not the goal, it's not the process and, depending on the situation it's not always possible. But I'm finding that the practice can be useful for Epicurean living.

See, that's where using the word "tranquility" presents issues. I'd like to emphasize that using that word sets up several hurdles to overcome in really integrating ataraxia and aponia in one's life (to even better experience joy and other daily pleasures).

To me, Epicurus is calling us to be more "mindful" of - to be more aware of, to pay attention to - the pleasure that surrounds us every day all the time. As references, I'd cite:

**His reminder that "bread and water" can bring as much pleasure as a luxurious meal if we're hungry. Don't miss the pleasure of a simple basic everyday meal.

**To laugh and administer our household affairs at the same time as we expound our love and practice of wisdom.

**"Meditate day and night then on this and similar things by yourself as well as together with those like yourself. And never, neither awake nor in sleep, throw yourself into confusion, and you will live as a god among humans; because no person who lives among eternal pleasures is like a mortal being."

We miss SO many pleasurable experiences if we're distracted, anxious, worried, angry, selfish, friendless, dishonorable, unjust, etc. That's what being mindful means! Pay attention to what's happening to you and stop being distracted. The pathē - the "feelings" - are literally in the Greek "what is happening to you."

Mindfulness is NOT the *act* of meditating. Mindfulness can grow out of meditation (in various forms) but mindfulness (itself a loaded term these days) is also NOT something special, or something one sets time aside for. It is fully paying attention to our daily lives, to truly experience what is happening without being distracted. Meditation - including working to memorize the [Principal Doctrines](#) or deeply studying a particular text or even reliving the details of a pleasant memory - is one way to strengthen that attention, but the *goal* is to carry that ability to pay attention throughout one's day and one's life. We are constantly distracted, tossed about on waves of anxiety, by planning for this or by regretting that or by instantly being angered by some perceived slight and wallowing in our self-righteous indignation. Calming *those* waves is what I interpret ataraxia and aponia to mean. There are studies that show mindfulness can help even with chronic pain management which gets at the aponia of that equation. That's the daily experience of "tranquility" - a pleasure in and of itself - I think that Epicurus is pointing his students toward. That's how we can rival the gods, by paying attention to the pleasure, the joyful experiences, that surround us in everyday life. We don't have to strive and struggle and work *for* pleasure. It surrounds us in our everyday experiences IF we just pay attention and calm the waves that toss our little boat around the sea.

(Note: I need to admit I'm only recently coming around to this perspective after thinking about Epicurus's philosophy these past several years, but it's the one that resonates with me. And I am NOT in any way shape or form a paragon or epitome of ataraxia, mindfulness, or anything else. But... I can see the value in it for trying to lead a more pleasurable life, so I'm going to try to integrate it into my life a little at a time.)

Edit: in thinking more about this this morning, I want to add that my understanding of mindfulness is that it is not passivity. It's not being a doormat and passively "taking what comes" in a fatalistic attitude. It's NOT Stoically accepting fate. If someone or something is going to harm you, it's being aware of the danger and acting skillfully to avoid or confront the danger. Not panicking, not "losing it." If something makes you angry, to be aware of the "sting" of anger but not to get carried away by it but to skillfully work with it and not get swept away in rage and do something you'll regret. All that, to me, equates with having a calm mind, allowing one to skillfully and wisely make choices of what to avoid and what to pursue.

Post by “Godfrey” of September 27, 2022 at 10:18 AM

Well stated [Don](#) !

Post by “Don” of September 27, 2022 at 12:11 PM

For the record, I don't *think* I'm being syncretic or building some "cafeteria-style" Epicureanism in having this perspective. Mindfulness is not native to any one culture. It is not some esoteric spiritual thing. Research in secular settings has shown its applicability separated from any one tradition. "Flavors" of it show up in any number of traditions and cultures, both Eastern and Western. And I think it's inherent in human nature, just suppressed, ignored, or not encouraged. And I find evidence for it in the extant texts as I mentioned above as a sample.

I didn't mean that to sound as defensive as it does btw 😊 but there you go.

(Steps off soapbox)

Post by “Pacatus” of September 27, 2022 at 1:46 PM

The Wikipedia article on ataraxia describes it, in part, as “a lucid state of robust equanimity” – apparently drawing on Adrian Kuzminski’s book on Pyrrhonism.

This seems closer to Don’s mindfulness than some passive tranquility. I wonder if equanimity could be a better one-word translation? Or just calm mindfulness?

Post by “Cassius” of September 27, 2022 at 2:28 PM

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

This seems closer to Don’s mindfulness than some passive tranquility. I wonder if equanimity could be a better one-word translation? Or just calm mindfulness?

I agree with the substance of what I am reading in these posts but I am not sure that "mindfulness" is of much help given the noted looseness of that term. And of course I continue to think that using untranslated Greek words also is of little help. For the time being it seems to me to be most clear if we try to describe as precisely as we can what we are saying, even if it takes a number of words to do that. Words like attention and focus and clearheadedness such as are being used in the descriptions are much more clear without implying something with a "woo" factor that is desirable to avoid.

Post by “Don” of September 27, 2022 at 2:45 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

For the time being it seems to me to be most clear if we try to describe as precisely as we can what we are saying, even if it takes a number of words to do that

Yep, generally agree with your post. And the excerpt here is exactly what I'm trying to do. 😊

Post by “Cassius” of September 28, 2022 at 10:59 AM

Episode 141 - The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda (Part One) is now available!

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/51406979>

Post by “Godfrey” of September 29, 2022 at 3:24 PM

Well done, yet again!

I particularly enjoyed [Joshua](#)'s comments about the inscription being a bit weird, and wondering how his contemporaries reacted to it. It also strikes me as being rather "idiosyncratic": who is the person that took it upon himself to do this, and what *did* the locals make of it? Regardless, it's a great resource.

It's also interesting to me that it was constructed as late as it was, I just assumed that by that time it EP had been Latinized. Also interesting that it's in Ionia, the heart of so much materialist thought.

Post by “Joshua” of September 30, 2022 at 7:42 PM

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2672-episode-one-hundred-forty-one-proclaiming-epicurus-to-the-world-diogenes-of-oino/>

I always appreciate your editing [Cassius](#), and this week it was driven home to me when I listened to both the raw audio and, just now, the finished work. The process is transformative, and I thank you for it!

Post by “Cassius” of October 1, 2022 at 12:08 AM

You are very welcome Joshua! I put a lot of effort into the editing but I think the result is worth it. These episodes aren't meant just for us or just for now - I am hoping that they will be listened to for years to come as new people get introduced to Epicurus and look for a friendly and supportive presentation of the philosophy.

Post by “Julia” of October 26, 2024 at 11:06 PM

Just a brief note: It was fleetingly mentioned in the podcast that some people today are unhappy about the fact that ancient Epicureans had a bit of a missionary zeal. To those people, I would say that we likely owe much, if not most of our current knowledge of Epicurean philosophy to this, and further, I would urge them to consider the difference between flying one's banners and opening one's door to newcomers, versus actively seeking out strangers to the point of pestering people, because, as is usual, there are degrees, which implies taking caution against any absolute position.

Post by “Joshua” of October 26, 2024 at 11:21 PM

Very well said, Julia! I agree with everything you wrote.

Post by “Don” of October 27, 2024 at 6:14 AM

Quote from [Joshua](#)

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2672-episode-one-hundred-forty-one-proclaiming-epicurus-to-the-world-diogenes-of-oino/>

Very well said, Julia! I agree with everything you wrote.

Agree.

Along these lines, I would offer my translation (from a couple years ago now!) of the characteristics of the sage relating to how the sage presents their philosophy and leads their life. At the time, I included these in my "lathē biosas" section:

[Epicurean Sage - Living Unknown](#)

The Epicureans are said to have encouraged lathe biosas, living unknown or not calling attention to oneself. This is a controversial fragment, but Diogenes...

[sites.google.com](#)