

Welcome DistantLaughter!

Post by “DistantLaughter” of July 11, 2025 at 10:11 PM

Hello and thank you for the welcome.

I'm writing from Australia. I came to Epicureanism after struggling with loneliness and the sense that it's become increasingly difficult to find thoughtful, sincere friendships. Many of the people I meet seem caught up in chasing status or possessions, while others have turned to traditional religion, nationalism, or conspiracy theories—especially in the wake of the pandemic. Amid all that noise, Epicurus's quiet emphasis on friendship, modest pleasure, and freedom from fear felt like a lifeline.

I've read the *Letter to Menoeceus*, parts of Lucretius, and some modern commentary. I'm still exploring how to apply these ideas in daily life, especially around katastematic pleasure and simplicity. I'm glad to have found this community and look forward to learning more.

— *DistantLaughter*

Post by “Don” of July 11, 2025 at 10:31 PM

Thanks for the thoughtful opening post. Welcome aboard!

If you're interested in a deep dive into the letter to Menoikeus (my transliteration of his Greek name), I'll offer my translation and commentary available here: [Epicurus's Letter to Menoikeus - A New Translation with Commentary](#)

Post by “DistantLaughter” of July 11, 2025 at 10:43 PM

Thanks so much for the warm welcome, Don! I really appreciate you sharing your translation and commentary on Epicurus's Letter to Menoikeus — I'm definitely interested in a deep dive. I look forward to exploring your work and engaging with the nuances of the text.

Post by “Martin” of July 12, 2025 at 2:12 AM

Welcome DistantLaughter!

Post by “DistantLaughter” of July 12, 2025 at 2:36 AM

Thanks Martin! Happy to be here.

Post by “Rolf” of July 12, 2025 at 3:50 AM

Welcome to the forum! Happy to have you here. 😊

Post by “DistantLaughter” of July 12, 2025 at 4:47 AM

Thanks, Rolf! I'm glad to be here and looking forward to the conversations.

Post by “Cassius” of July 12, 2025 at 6:34 AM

Welcome [DistantLaughter](#) !

There is one last step to complete your registration:

All new registrants must post a response to this message here in this welcome thread (we do this in order to minimize spam registrations).

You must post your response within 24 hours, or your account will be subject to deletion.

Please say "Hello" by introducing yourself, tell us what prompted your interest in Epicureanism and which particular aspects of Epicureanism most interest you, and/or post a question.

This forum is the place for students of Epicurus to coordinate their studies and work together to promote the philosophy of Epicurus. Please remember that all posting here is subject to our [Community Standards and associated Terms of Use](#). Please be sure to read that document to understand our ground rules.

Please understand that the leaders of this forum are well aware that many fans of Epicurus may have sincerely-held views of what Epicurus taught that are incompatible with the purposes and standards of this forum. This forum is dedicated exclusively to the study and support of people who are committed to classical Epicurean views. As a result, this forum is not for people who seek to mix and match Epicurean views with positions that are inherently inconsistent with the core teachings of Epicurus.

All of us who are here have arrived at our respect for Epicurus after long journeys through other philosophies, and we do not demand of others what we were not able to do ourselves. Epicurean philosophy is very different from most other philosophies, and it takes time to understand how deep those differences really are. That's why we have membership levels here at the forum which allow for new participants to discuss and develop their own learning, but it's also why we have standards that will lead in some cases to arguments being limited, and even participants being removed, when the purposes of the community require it. Epicurean philosophy is not inherently democratic, or committed to unlimited free speech, or devoted to any other form of organization other than the pursuit of truth and happy living through pleasure as explained in the principles of Epicurean philosophy.

One way you can be assured of your time here will be productive is to tell us a little about yourself and your background in reading Epicurean texts. It would also be helpful if you could tell us how you found this forum, and any particular areas of interest that you already have.

You can also check out our [Getting Started](#) page for ideas on how to use this website.

We have found over the years that there are a number of key texts and references which most all serious students of Epicurus will want to read and evaluate for themselves. Those include the following.

["Epicurus and His Philosophy"](#) by Norman DeWitt

[The Biography of Epicurus by Diogenes Laertius](#). This includes the surviving letters of Epicurus, including those to [Herodotus](#), [Pythocles](#), and [Menoceus](#).

["On The Nature of Things"](#) - by Lucretius (a poetic abridgement of Epicurus' "On Nature")

["Epicurus on Pleasure"](#) - By Boris [Nikolsky](#)

The chapters on Epicurus in [Gosling and Taylor's "The Greeks On Pleasure."](#)

[Cicero's "On Ends" - Torquatus Section](#)

[Cicero's "On The Nature of the Gods" - Velleius Section](#)

The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda - [Martin Ferguson Smith translation](#)

[A Few Days In Athens" - Frances Wright](#)

Lucian Core Texts on Epicurus: (1) [Alexander the Oracle-Monger](#), (2) [Hermetimus](#)

[Philodemus "On Methods of Inference"](#) (De Lacy version, including his appendix on relationship of Epicurean canon to Aristotle and other Greeks)

"The Greeks on Pleasure" -Gosling & Taylor Sections on Epicurus, especially the [section on katastematic and kinetic pleasure](#) which explains why ultimately this distinction was not of great significance to Epicurus.

It is by no means essential or required that you have read these texts before participating in the forum, but your understanding of Epicurus will be much enhanced the more of these you have read. Feel free to join in on one or more of our conversation threads under various topics found throughout the forum, where you can to ask questions or to add in any of your insights as you study the Epicurean philosophy.

And time has also indicated to us that if you can find the time to read one book which will best explain [classical Epicurean philosophy](#), as opposed to most modern "eclectic" interpretations of Epicurus, that book is Norman DeWitt's Epicurus And His Philosophy.

(If you have any questions regarding the usage of the forum or finding info, please post any questions in this thread).

Welcome to the forum!

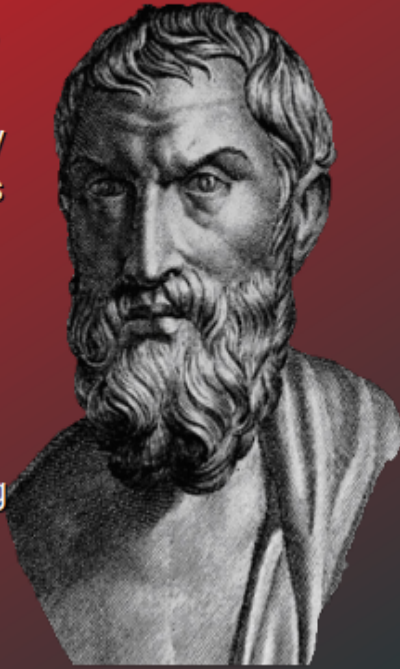
Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean

1. Not "flourishing," "human potential," "self-actualization," or "meaningfulness," but happiness grounded in the feeling of pleasure.
2. Not "absence of pain" as a full statement of the goal of life, but "the Feelings are two, pleasure and pain" and "Pleasure is the beginning and the end of a happy life."
3. Not virtue for the sake of virtue, but virtue as instrumental for the attainment of pleasure.
4. Not "the greatest good for the greatest number," but "Every desire must be confronted with this question: What will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished and what if it is not?"
5. Not "humanism," "transhumanism," "individualism," "collectivism," "egoism," "altruism," "social progress," "Marxism," "democracy," "tyranny," or any "one size fits all" political ideal of any kind, but social structure based on friendship which "is formed and maintained by means of a community of life among those who have reached the fullness of pleasure."
6. Not "hard determinism," but "some things happen from necessity, some from chance, and others through our own choice."
7. Not "supernaturalism," but "materialism."
8. Not "supernatural gods," or "life after death," but confidence in a fully material universe and "for those men for whom wisdom is possible, and who do seek it, such men may truly live as gods."
9. Not only "short term hedonism," but "it is to continuous pleasures that I invite you."
10. Not "rationalism," but "all reason is dependent upon sensations."
11. Not fearful of death nor careless of losing life, but valuing life for the opportunity of pleasure it brings.

Our Posting Policy At EpicureanFriends.com:

"No Partisan Politics," "No Supernatural Religion," and "No Absolute Virtue"

This forum is dedicated to promoting the philosophy of Epicurus, and not to any partisan political positions whether "left," "right," or "center." The task of rediscovering Epicurean philosophy requires that such discussions be held elsewhere. Posts violating this rule are subject to removal.



Epicurean philosophy firmly rejects the viewpoint that there are any supernatural forces or absolute virtues or Platonic ideals of any kind. Argument which is based on supernatural claims, or "absolute" virtues or ideals of any kind, are in violation of this rule and subject to removal.

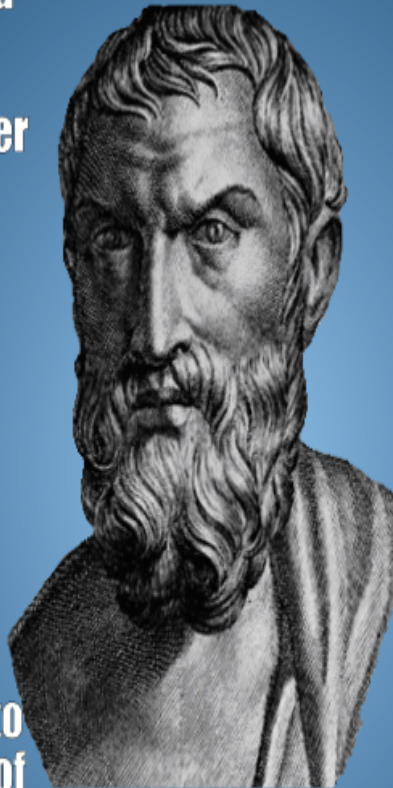
**Nothing can be created
from nothing.**

**Nature has no gods over
her.**

**Do not assign to the
gods anything that is
inconsistent with
incorruption and
blessedness.**

Death is nothing to us.

**There is no necessity to
live under the control of
necessity.**



**He who says “Nothing
can be known” knows
nothing.**

All sensations are “true.”

**Virtue is not absolute or
an end in itself - all good
and evil consists in
sensation.**

**Pleasure is the guide of
life.**

**By “Pleasure” we mean
all experience that is not
painful.**

**Life is desirable, but unlimited time contains no greater
pleasure than limited time.**

Post by “Cassius” of July 12, 2025 at 6:37 AM

Welcome Distantlaughter. Our timezone difference led to a delay in creating a new thread for you but thanks for going ahead and posting. Seems we get lots of visitors from your part of the world and it's good to have you here.

Post by “Kalosyni” of July 12, 2025 at 10:58 AM

Welcome to the forum [DistantLaughter](#) !

Just a note for something to look out for here on the forum regarding "katastematic pleasure" that there is some variance in how members here on the forum define and apply that.

I myself have ideas about it that I have yet to fully develop. Also, it is based on the larger context of "choice and avoidance" and it is going to be understood and applied differently depending on variations of extroversion/introversion (and also differences in physiological stress tolerance).

Post by “DistantLaughter” of July 12, 2025 at 4:32 PM

Thank you for the warm welcome Cassius and Kalosyni!

I came across this forum while searching for Epicurean material on YouTube and was pleased to find such a focused and active community. Many thanks to Cassius for compiling and sharing such a rich body of resources—it's already proven incredibly helpful.

I'm currently reading *Epicurus and His Philosophy* by Norman DeWitt and have read a range of both primary and secondary texts, including the *Letter to Menoeceus*, Lucretius, and Diogenes Laertius, as well as modern scholarship by Tim O'Keefe, Emily Austin, and the *Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism*. My understanding of the distinction between kinetic and katastematic pleasure has been shaped by Peter Preuss's *Epicurean Ethics: Katastematic Hedonism*, though I remain open to revising that view in light of the Gosling & Taylor material cited by Cassius, especially their argument that the distinction may not have been central for Epicurus himself.

Outside of Epicureanism, I've been influenced by Humean constructivism in metaethics (particularly the work of Sharon Street), and I lean toward free will skepticism, as argued by Galen Strawson. I'm also intrigued by Strawson's panpsychist position on consciousness, which posits that some form of experience is a fundamental feature of matter. I recognize that these views may sit uneasily alongside Epicurean materialism, and I'm curious to explore how—or if—they can be integrated without violating core Epicurean principles.

What draws me most to Epicureanism is its emphasis on rational pleasure, its rejection of metaphysical fear, and its commitment to a naturalistic and psychologically grounded ethics. I look forward to learning from everyone here and contributing to the discussion.

Post by “Cassius” of July 12, 2025 at 4:48 PM

That's a lot of experience to bring to the table - glad to have you!

Post by “Adrastus” of July 12, 2025 at 7:23 PM

Welcome, DistantLaughter!

Love the user name, btw and I hope you find some degree of comraderie here. There are lots of really nice, thoughtful and intelligent folks here.

Post by “Cassius” of July 12, 2025 at 8:17 PM

I see that we had some discussion of the Preuss book and position back in 2019 at the thread linked [here](#).

I don't have time to do an exhaustive review of the full Preuss book right now, but I've had a few minutes to look at certain parts, and I'll set up a new thread for future discussion of it.

I'm very aware that it's not very polite to say negative things about a book that someone has just praised, 😊 but I'm going to count on your exhaustive reading as good evidence that you're familiar with how much difference of opinion there is on this issue. I've clipped a couple of points where Pruess attacks the opinions of Sedley and Long, and Gosling & Taylor, and maybe over time we can extend the thread further. I see that Pruess also doesn't think that Epicurus was certain that there is no life after death, so like every other book it's a good idea for new readers to use caution in prejudging before reading the whole thing. Clearly it contains a lot of good citations so it's a valuable contribution no matter what one ends up concluding about it.

I've seen no reason since 2019 to change my opinion that it's a dramatic and harmful misreading to elevate katastematic pleasure to the goal of Epicurean philosophy. If anything, I feel more strongly than ever about that. However it's very helpful to step through the logic involved in arguing for and against that position. To the extent our current group of regulars is interested, now is as good a time as any reopen that conversation. it's an issue that will very

likely always be with us, so it's good to have an opportunity to go through it again.

Here's the new thread - [Preuss - "Epicurean Ethics - Katastematic Hedonism"](#)

Post by “DistantLaughter” of July 12, 2025 at 9:28 PM

Thank you so much, Adrastus, for the warm welcome! I'm really glad to be here and look forward to engaging with everyone on the forum.

Thank you for setting up that new thread, Cassius.

Post by “Cassius” of July 16, 2025 at 2:39 PM

[DistantLaughter](#) Laughter, please contact me directly (Cassius @ EpicureanFriends.com) before posting any further.