

Episode 291 - TD21 - Epicurus Pushes Back Against "Expect The Worst And You'll Never Be Disappointed"

Post by "Cassius" of July 16, 2025 at 3:31 PM

Welcome to Episode 291 of Lucretius Today. This is a podcast dedicated to the poet Lucretius, who wrote "On The Nature of Things," the most complete presentation of Epicurean philosophy left to us from the ancient world.

Each week we walk you through the Epicurean texts, and we discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. If you find the Epicurean worldview attractive, we invite you to join us in the study of Epicurus at EpicureanFriends.com, where we discuss this and all of our podcast episodes.

This week we continue our series covering Cicero's "Tusculan Disputations" from an Epicurean viewpoint.

Today we continue in Part 3, which addresses anger, pity, envy, and other strong emotions. Today we'll continue into [Section XIV](#), where we compare Epicurus' views on dealing with grief to those of other schools.

[media]<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/67112917/media>

Post by "Cassius" of July 20, 2025 at 8:29 AM

In the episode we are recording today we are going to find Cicero attacking - and in the course of that attack giving us a great deal of good information about - Epicurus' advice on how to approach the bad things that can and sometimes do happen to us.

Quote

VS55. We must heal our misfortunes by the grateful recollection of what has been, and by the recognition that it is impossible to undo that which has been done.

Cicero's focus on this indicates to me that [#VS55](#) is extremely underappreciated in most discussions about Epicurus.

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/4619-episode-291-td21-epicurus-pushes-back-against-expect-the-worst-and-you-ll-never/>

Post by “Cassius” of July 25, 2025 at 12:10 PM

Episode 291 of the Lucretius Today Podcast is now available. Today our episode is entitled: "Epicurus Pushes Back Against 'Expect The Worst And You'll Never Be Disappointed.'"

[media]<https://www.speaker.com/episode/67112917/media>

Post by “Patrikios” of July 25, 2025 at 4:14 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Cicero's focus on this indicates to me that [#VS55](#) is extremely underappreciated in most discussions about Epicurus

[Cassius](#) , excellent podcast on the important topic of how to deal with strong emotions, e.g. grief. The key seems to be finding a balance in planning for the future, remembering past pleasures or pains, but not dwelling on the past pains. We can use past pains to help guide us in preventing or mitigating those pains in the future.

I liked how [Joshua](#) brought in [#VS47](#) to show that Epicurus did compel us to squarely face the future and take actions today that protect us from probable harms.

Quote

VS47. **I have anticipated thee, Fortune, and entrenched myself against all thy secret attacks.** And I will not give myself up as captive to thee or to any other circumstance; but when it is time for me to go, spitting contempt on life and on those who vainly cling to it, I will leave life crying aloud a glorious triumph-song that I have lived well.

Post by “Cassius” of July 25, 2025 at 5:14 PM

Thanks [Patrikios](#). I am going to post about this further elsewhere but i spent some time today reviewing the remaining part of Section III of Tusculan Disputations (from where we are now to the end of the section).

For the next several weeks we're going to be reading some of the most intensely anti-Epicurean discussion anywhere in Cicero, but it's packed with important information that explains what the issues were all about and why Epicurus addressed them the way he did.

I'm going to post further and recommend that anyone who has time to read these sections would be doing themselves and us a favor, as there is a lot here the the podcasters are going to have to address and it would be good to see it discussed in detail here on the forum as we go through it.

We'll be starting in Section XVI next week:

[Cicero - Tusculan Disputations - EpicureanFriends Handbook](#)

.... and at least the next five or ten sections are packed with information on Epicurus.

I also had a chance to begin reviewing Part IV. That's going to take some strategic picking and choosing, as a lot of it is devoted to discussion Pythagorus and then the Stoics, but I've already picked up something significant that I did not realize.

Cicero takes the Peripatetics to task, and the Peripatetics and Stoics were at war with each other, apparently because the Peripatetics tried to say that these strong emotions are not bad in themselves, and they can even be useful (such as anger in wartime) so long as they are *kept within bounds - which I gather fit into their endorsement of all things in moderation*. At least in the part I have reviewed so far, Cicero sides with the Stoics and takes the Aristotelians to task for admitting that any amount of disturbance can be a good thing. It's easy to look upon those disputes between other schools as irrelevant, but when you see how the main debates were being framed by the older/larger schools it becomes easier to see how short or fragmentary comments by Epicurus were framed to engage in the same disputes. That short comment in Diogenes Laertius that the wise man will feel his emotions more strongly than others, but this will not be hindrance to his wisdom, becomes not just an isolated fragment but hugely important to seeing where Epicurus fit in these larger disputes.

Post by “Bryan” of July 26, 2025 at 11:20 AM

I feel as though a lot of modern psychology, with its focus on problems, makes this error.

Do you have an unpleasant feeling? They will give it a specific name, and focus on its source and ramifications!

Once your own personalized list of problems are labeled -- you can look after those problems more specifically and more effectively make them grow stronger!

All that is needed is to throw away the TV, and sleep and exercise a lot. Things grow with focus. Focus on the good!

Post by “kochiekoch” of July 29, 2025 at 11:04 AM

To listen to Ceceros' description of anticipating EVERYTHING that can go wrong, is to listen to a surefire formula for a severe anxiety problem.

Cecero would have LOVED the modern world! 😄