

The Atlantic: How to Build a Happy Life, episode 1

Post by “Don” of September 24, 2021 at 6:41 AM

Here's a possible draft comment... Unless I decide to live unknown 😊

I just came across this program on Instagram (I know! Social media does good!? Shocking!) and look forward to the podcast. The thing that struck me as I watched the video was how Epicurean (capital E) it sounded. The discussion of enjoyment as pleasure. The discussion of listening to your feelings. The importance of connection and friendship. The discussion of living through pain but not seeking it out. All these are Epicurean themes. It seems to me that the the podcast could be called "How to Build Eudaimonia" to use the ancient Greek word often translated as "happiness" but having connotations of so much more: fulfillment, satisfaction, well-being, etc. Epicurus's philosophy is often characterized (erroneously from my perspective) as asceticism but he really talked about living a fully human life: using one's feelings of pleasure and pain to make conscious choices of what to pursue and what to reject; the paramount importance of friendship in leading a pleasurable life; experiencing pain in the moment to experience something pleasurable in the long-run (my go-to example is exercise but it could go much deeper). I found myself nodding my head in agreement from an Epicurean perspective with almost everything you both talked about. Well done presentation, lots to dig into, and excited to see where your take the podcast.

(Revised text. Comments welcomed)