

# An Epicurean "Sanity Check"

Post by "Cassius" of February 4, 2019 at 9:02 AM

I was asked on EF how I would rewrite 7 myself. I think what Elayne wrote here "adjusting my life as necessary to maximize my pleasures," is particularly important.

I need to sit down and write out a paragraph like that myself, but the key point I think is that when we knew we have limited time, and we know that life is short, and if we are confident that there is no afterlife, then that knowledge would impel anyone to pack as much into this lifetime as possible. Of course it's still a good question as to what "packing as much into this lifetime as possible" should mean, but the bottom line is that there is no time to waste, and selecting any particular lifestyle had better be based on expecting it to bring the most net pleasure. We can debate whether "simplicity" is the key to that or not, and I don't think that will always be the case by any means, which is why I think Epicurus stated explicitly in [VS63](#) that "There is also a limit in simple living, and he who fails to understand this falls into an error as great as that of the man who gives way to extravagance."

I am sure that there is a lot of individual preference involved in what makes us the happiest as individuals. But I just personally recoil in horror at the suggestion that "live to the maximum net pleasure" equates to "live the simplest life possible."

And probably i should say further that I recall not only in horror, but in absolute flabbergasted amazement, then horror, then what I believe to be righteous anger at what I perceive to be a hijacking of Epicurean philosophy by its worst enemy - the ascetic- enemy-of-the-human-race mindset! 😬