

What is the future of friendship? (Some random thoughts prompted by ChatGPT)

Post by “waterholic” of February 20, 2023 at 7:58 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

it sounds like perhaps you see tranquility as an important goal within Epicureanism?

Thank you [Kalosyni](#) , I would place myself firmly in the "camp" of pleasure as the goal. But my logic in this post is based on my understanding of pleasure (always open for being corrected):

1. Fulfilling natural and necessary desires is the basic way to get pleasure from life.
2. In most societies (e.g. Athens, when Epicurus arrived there), social structures are in place to make sure that satisfying those natural and necessary desires is easy. Friendship (or community) is a way/tool to achieve the sense of security that no matter what, those basic desires will be met.
3. If we remove friendship from the equation AND insist that work is a necessary precondition for access to food/shelter, the chances of pleasure in life diminish.

Anxiety/tranquility dimension could be secondary here.

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

I believe that one needs to "keep the faith" so to speak -- keep the faith in friendships, and that friendship is possible.

Absolutely! My post might have come across as very pessimistic, but that was not the intention. My high school maths teacher used to say:"If you want to see how a function performs, check the performance in extreme cases, plug in 0 or infinity." That's my way of assuming the extreme to illustrate the inherent problem. The problem is not with Epicurean philosophy though, but with the way the community today is put together, or rather, the way it's progressing.

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

I envision Epicurean philosophy becoming a helpful tool for building community and friendship. We still have lots to do to prepare the teaching materials before we can create a program in which to introduce people to the philosophy.

A colleague of mine - a fellow economist, remarked once how economics lacks the goal, or the objective function (it is somehow assumed that economic growth is the goal, but absolutely no effort to explain why). Funnily enough, the whole theory collapses once the goal is unclear. I believe, philosophy (and of course, in my view - Epicurean philosophy, should fill that gap. So I completely agree, a lot of teaching is required.