

Purpose of the Forum

Post by "Cassius" of May 3, 2015 at 9:55 AM

Years ago when I (Cassius Amicus) first started reading Lucretius, I was struck by the intensity of Lucretius' personal devotion to Epicurus. It was clear from every word that Lucretius was not only writing a poem about philosophy, but that he personally believed what he was writing and thought that it was important that Epicurus' memory be preserved and treated with respect. It occurred to me that this was at least the kind of attitude we see displayed today in everyday life by people who value the traditions and history of the favorite sports clubs, and that Epicurus deserved at least as much respect and affection as the average home town sports hero - to say the least. While there are numberless places on the internet where people can go to discuss issues of general philosophy, there were very few places where the heritage of Epicurean philosophy was treated as the focus and with great respect. My goal in my internet activity was to increase that number, and I have tried to do that at NewEpicurean.com.

After the establishment of NewEpicurean.com, I became involved with several others (who know who they are) in what has turned into a great group of friends at the facebook [Epicurean Philosophy Group](#). The project is continuing to grow, and I expect it to remain the main focus of interaction with people who are new to the study of Epicurus or have not previously participated in Epicurean forum activity.

I now think it is time for me to launch a new project, and following on the "sports fan" analogy I plan to follow a new model: the "linux software" distribution model. Those of you who are familiar with linux know that the core software is developed by many individual groups of people who work together to provide support to each other and improve the way the software operates. Two of many examples of these are [here](#) and [here](#). The key to the model is that each group provides a free support forum organized in detail by topic where people can talk about issues as they occur, and more importantly, easily find where problems have been dealt with in the past so that the information can be reused.

Every collaboration model on the internet has strengths and weaknesses, and over time every sort, from blogs to wikis to standard web pages, have their uses. At this point it seems to me that we have identified enough of a core group of people interested in rediscovering Epicurean Philosophy that it is time to launch the EpicureanFriends.com website. The site is primarily a state-of-the-art "forum," powered by the "Burning Board" software from Woltlabs in Germany, which is optimized for use on devices for all sizes, from desktops to mobile phones and everything in between.

A key difference between this forum and the Facebook group is that Epicureanfriends.com will be tightly moderated for the purpose of building a reference bank of data prepared by a community of Epicurean leaders who share a focus on this primary goal. This site will not be the

place for attempting to reconcile and build bridges with conflicting philosophies. Our goal here will be to build a site worthy of something the ancient Epicureans - and Lucretius in particular - would be proud to see. The spirit of Lucretius was one of concern for all "hearts in darkness" who need philosophical assistance, combined with unwavering confidence that the path laid out by Epicurus is the correct one on which to provide that assistance.

As the website launches there will be only a few participants with full posting privileges. Everyone who desires, however, can register and submit posts, all of which will be considered for posting after review by the moderators. The goal here is not quantity, but quality.

There will be many rough spots in getting this off the ground, and I expect progress to be very slow. As quickly as I can, I am going to go back over my posts at NewEpicurean.com and add links to important articles in the particular places here. I also want to see the same thing done at other excellent Epicurean websites, such as SocietyofEpicurus.com and the Menoecus blog. I will work to get those up as quickly as I can, but here is one of the great advantages of the full forum system:

There is much more to be done that I or a few of us can ever do ourselves. The forum software allows anyone to assist us in the goal - simply register, collect the information you think would be useful, and submit it for consideration and approval.

Anyone who has followed NewEpicurean.com or the Facebook group knows that there are many different interpretations of Epicurean doctrines. As it is the goal of this site to promote the practical application of Epicurean living to the modern world, this site will accept as part of its core material only those posts which are consistent with that goal. Over time we will develop a full set of [Community Standards / Rules of the Forum](#) which will set this out in detail. For now, here are some examples of key attitudes to keep in mind when posting here:

An Epicurean does not have an "ascetic personality" which is drawn to viewing pleasure with suspicion and eliminating all but the most necessary of desires. An Epicurean can see that the definition of "happiness" is one of the most important aspects of philosophy, and that any definition of the goal of life which is not focused on pleasure is going to conflict with the chief goal set out for us by Nature. An Epicurean does not have a tendency to want to see some "greater good" above living pleasurably, so an Epicurean is not tempted by the "greatest good of the greatest number" analysis. An Epicurean is not enthralled with "logic" and "reason" which is the big temptation to the dark side that distinguishes Epicurus from Aristotle and Plato. An Epicurean is not tempted by "[flourishing](#)" and idol worship of Aristotle. An Epicurean is not tempted by the "merge our consciousness into the divine fire" kind of attitude. An Epicurean is an individualist who would refuse to take orders even if someone gave them, and who will tend to separate himself or herself from the kind of people who like to give orders. An Epicurean holds the evidence obtained through the three sets of faculties in the Canon of Truth to be the ultimate standard of truth, rather than speculative logic or speculation of any kind. An Epicurean is not seduced by all the many variations of philosophy which hold that reality is not knowable and that nothing is certain.

And an Epicurean is not tempted to be a "Tranquillist" and to believe that "avoidance of pain" is the goal of life or of Epicurean philosophy.

This statement of purpose and the associated Community Standards/Rules of the Forum will no doubt be rewritten many times, but it is necessary to start somewhere. All who are interested in supporting this project are invited to register so we can get started.