

Who to believe?

Post by "Kalosyni" of May 27, 2023 at 11:47 AM

[Quote from ThinkingCat](#)

The problem I'm having reading around the forum is that everyone seems to have their own interpretation of what Epicureans should be. I understand this is going to happen but reading between the lines people seem to hold quite different views. Some people quite into physical pleasure for its own sake calling themselves cyreaniacs (or something like that). This doesn't seem to fit with the Epicurean view at all and I'm finding it quite confusing and almost contradictory and rather go back to the source if possible.

The way that I take it is to always return to the extant writings and to contemplate them. Then you must work to apply them to your own life. For one person a very sensual pleasure may end up bring too much pain, as compared to another person - some people choose not to drink any alcohol where as others are able to choose to drink in such a way that it doesn't cause them future pains (they drink to enjoy the taste and not to "medicate" into drunkenness, although there may be a time a place for a slight drunkenness if one is able to still hold onto free choice while intoxicated, and wisely making sure not to drive a vehicle while drunk).

So we don't categorize things as "right" or "wrong" -

Principal Doctrine 8:

"No pleasure is bad in itself; but the means of paying for some pleasures bring with them disturbances many times greater than the pleasures themselves." So it is a case by case situation that only you can decide for yourself.

I just created this graphic which may help:

The Epicurean Understanding of Pleasure:

We fill up the vessel of our experience with pleasure in a manner in which it simultaneously removes the pain. And when the vessel is full then no more pleasure can be fit in.



We choose pleasures which neither pain the body nor trouble the soul - for the health of the body and confidence within the mind.