

# Does the philosophy change you?

Post by “Pacatus” of June 13, 2023 at 3:40 PM

I was raised in a milieu of Christian/Stoical/Kantian “virtue moralism” that I liken to a Pavlovian programming that leaves an array of reactive triggers in your subconscious – that can grab you decades later (at least for me). All of that was in continual struggle with my inherent tendency toward hedonism (as opposed, here, to asceticism); and an unchecked, rebellious hedonism led to borderline addictive tendencies.

Unfortunately, all of the philosophical/spiritual avenues that I explored and studied seemed arrayed on the side of that latent moralistic programming. And so, life remained a struggle most days, well beyond my midlife years – even with help from friends and a wise therapist. (I am nothing if not stubborn! 😡😭 )

Epicurus has finally given me some ease in all that – with a rational therapy that goes beyond mere intellectual philosophy (in the modern academic sense) and offers the practical means for a healthier hedonism (without the old guilt). 1/

I still struggle: those subconscious triggers still rear their hooded heads. But the old reactions are short-lived. Life is easier, serenity is more readily available on a daily basis.

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1/: I am reminded, in my random brain, of some lines by Rumi:

“As always, we wake anxious and afraid.

“Don’t go into the library!

“Take down your lute and play ...”