

Living off the land

Post by “Don” of July 26, 2023 at 10:40 AM

In reference to my post 11 above, it is not out of the question in my opinion to consider periodic fasting or intervals of [caloric restriction](#) to be well within Epicurean practice. I'm not ready to call for either as a regular lifestyle but could easily see the teachers and students of the Garden periodically taking part in these and comparing results with each other. When you pay attention to your feeling of pleasure, is your meal truly satisfying? When times of famine come (as they most definitely did in ancient Greece!), how much truly satisfies my hunger and removes my pain? What do I **need** as opposed to what do I **want**? Then go about your regular routine until the next experiment. Do I need as much as last time or does less satisfy me? Or do I really need more? What do I **need** to be healthy and happy? Was I fooling myself last time, trying to show off withstanding pain, like a Stoic?

This also has echoes of Epicurus sharing his bean crop in times of famine. He and his students were prepared to know what a reasonable or realistic ration was due to prior experience and experimentation.

This could be an interesting area for experimentation.

Edit/Addendum:

I wanted to add that nowhere do we read that Epicurus experimented in this way with clothing, housing, etc. He didn't experiment with living by begging or staying in a cave. He didn't go out with a flimsy cloak or barefoot in winter (like Socrates did to show how unencumbered by convention he was). He didn't try begging in the streets like Cynic. Epicurus had a modest house in the city, a large private productive Garden literally in the suburbs. Epicurus does write about fancy clothes and extravagant houses being unnecessary for well-being, but these could be enjoyed, just like a banquet, if opportunities presented themselves.