

Chatgpt on how to live the Epicurean life in todays society... overall not great

Post by "Martin" of October 24, 2023 at 5:41 AM

I agree with comments #2 - #4.

2. No! Pleasure is the goal, not moderation. Whereas moderation is often the most pleasurable choice, especially with food and other necessary desires, it is misleading as a goal in itself.

5. Intellectual pleasures may have some advantages over physical pleasures, but there is no justification to call out the highest form of pleasure to be intellectual. It is up to the individual to order pleasures into lower and higher ones or not to make that distinction at all. People who detest lifelong learning, reading, and philosophical exploration can still enjoy an Epicurean lifestyle with just a rudimentary understanding of the philosophy. The vast majority of ancient Epicureans in the Roman empire were probably like that because they lacked the education for intellectual pleasures. Even the Torquatus in Cicero's "On Ends" was not that deep into philosophical exploration as shown by the passage where he was not able to explain something when being pressed hard by Cicero and referred instead to a more intellectual Epicurean than him whom he trusted to know the proper explanation.

E.g., Forrest Gump was not intellectual at all but by the intuitive application of a few simple principles which he was taught by a few trusted people, his life turned out to be fairly close to an Epicurean life.

7. This misses out on the how-to of not fearing the state of being dead.

"the pursuit of enduring and meaningful forms of pleasure":

No! It does not matter how enduring or meaningful (!?) a pleasure is. E.g., the sensation of acceleration or high speed is usually not enduring and has no meaning but can be very pleasurable. Recalling the memory of that physical experience is a great mental pleasure into old age.

"It's a philosophy that emphasizes balance, ..."

This sounds like having no meaning.

"cultivation of a tranquil ... life."

Whereas Epicureans experience tranquility most of the time because of their wise choices, their lives are not necessarily tranquil. Epicureans who pursue lots of excitements within their means do not have tranquil lives. A tranquil life is not their choice.

"Your interpretation and practice of Epicurean principles can be tailored to suit your own values and circumstances in today's society."

This is probably the most excellent characterization of Epicurus' philosophy in that text by ChatGPT.