

# Can killing another human be justified under Epicurean philosophy?

Post by "Cassius" of October 25, 2023 at 3:07 PM

## [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

Here is a tough question: Can the killing of a another human being ever be justified under Epicurean philosophy? Thoughts?

## [Quote from Don](#)

It's all about context. Self-defense? To prevent them from killing others? Etc etc etc.

Don gives a very short answer - almost as if he is implying that the question isn't "tough" at all!



Actually I agree that the question as worded is not very difficult, and the answer is "yes," as illustrated by Cassius Longinus' decision to act in regard to Julius Caesar even as an avowed Epicurean.

But there is a lot of toughness that comes in as Don says when he says "it's all about context." And also that's another way of saying "*Justified to whom?*" Justified to the police or the courts? Justified to the dead man's family? Justified to god? Justified as not being a breach of some contention of absolute justice? Justified to Epicurus as a person? You'd have to know more facts to be able to give a thorough opinion on whether the deed was "justified" in the sense that you will reward and honor and respect the killer in the future, or whether you will hold him in disrepute and disrespect and want nothing to do with the killer in the future.

And I think that's the real question Kalosyni is asking. If we reword it as "Is there a "flat" rule against killing another human being in all circumstances?" It seems to me that that pretty clearly is answerable under Epicurean philosophy as "No - there is no flat absolute rule against all killing of human beings in all circumstances." Then you have to get into all the details of the repercussions in terms of punishment and regret and remorse (if any) after that, where the issues are very tough.