

Question from Dusty The Donkey

Post by “Julia” of May 9, 2024 at 4:55 AM

Today I am forwarding a question from someone else, and I hope we can collectively answer it.

Hello friendly strangers! 😊 My name is Dusty The Donkey 😞 I'm the light grey one in the middle of the picture, and I wonder very much if you might help me with some self-reflection, please?



You see, yesterday was World Donkey Day, which gave me pause to think about myself. I started to wonder: Are the frequently uttered allegations of me being a Stoic really true? After all, I very much feel like an Epicurean! So I observed myself, to see what my senses and conclusions tell me! Here's the proof I have collected so far:

- I'm epically curious! Whenever there's something new in my vicinity, I will spot it, prod it, explore it with all my senses – and quite probably end up playing with it! Even though I'm all grown up and an adult (as you can tell from the picture) I still love to play just the same.
- I'm a thinker! The humans say I'm just as smart as dogs or dolphins (they can't quite decide, and I haven't met a dolphin yet, so I don't know either! Dolphins are fish, right? 🤔), and they're certain I'm much smarter than horses! When I observe something I can't make heads or tails of – I'll simply observe it some more! I usually get it after a while, but until then, I sometimes remain very still and quiet, so I can focus and think better. Maybe that's why people call me stoic? They mistake me thinking ahead for being stubborn!
- I'm not brave for the sake of it – but I *am* fierce when threatened, and *will* defend my friends and myself, if need be. Of course, I'll call for help from friendly dogs, humans and other donkeys as soon as possible, and to warn everyone else to hide and protect themselves somewhere for the time being (Fox alarm! Chickens, coop yourselves up!)
- I like all the pleasures, active and inactive. I don't even mind work – when it's worth it! For example, in dry landscapes, I'll dig for water (I observe and think, so I know where to dig!), and when humans ask me for help, I'm usually quite willing, because from experience I know they always have some sort of a scheme that ends with me getting food for free – plus, it does appear to make them very happy and thankful, and what's more pleasurable than seeing your friends smile?! Sometimes, me and my friends play tag or just go for a stroll, and of course, who doesn't enjoy lazing around on the fields on a sunny day 😊
- I do appreciate luxury whenever it's there, but I'm also satisfied with some water, hay, and the sun shining nice and warm.
- Though the songbirds complain about my timbre sometimes, I like to express my feelings and don't hold back when communicating them vocally. After all, it's no harm and feels good, so what could be better than that!
- I like company! I am very sad, whenever one of my friends is absent, be that a donkey, a human, or someone else, and when they return, I will rush to greet them. I value staying in touch, and am quite empathic and communicative – chances are, I will know what's up before you even tell me! I like to talk, cuddle, laugh and cry together – community really is important to me.
- And I'm quite egalitarian. At first glance, It might seem easiest to only get along with others of your own kind – but sometimes it actually isn't, and so I happily consort with humans, sheep, goats, horses, chickens, cats, even friendly dogs – as long as they're nice and behave themselves, anyone is welcome to be my friend and if we were close once, I

will easily remember you for a long time, sometimes for decades!

(Donkeys have always been among my favourite animals. Everyone knows they exist, but few people in modern Western society still know what they're really like in person - they're truly incredible! This post aims to serve two purposes: 1. I hope it's a little amusing and 2. it might challenge preconceived notions, which in turn could help to see the principles of Epicureanism reflected in other animals, and thus make nature herself a strong, ever-present reminder about how to live well and wisely 😊 (Picture License: Creative Commons BY-NC-SA 2.0, "Donkey Bomb" by Michael Lanos, County Wicklow, Ireland, 2019))