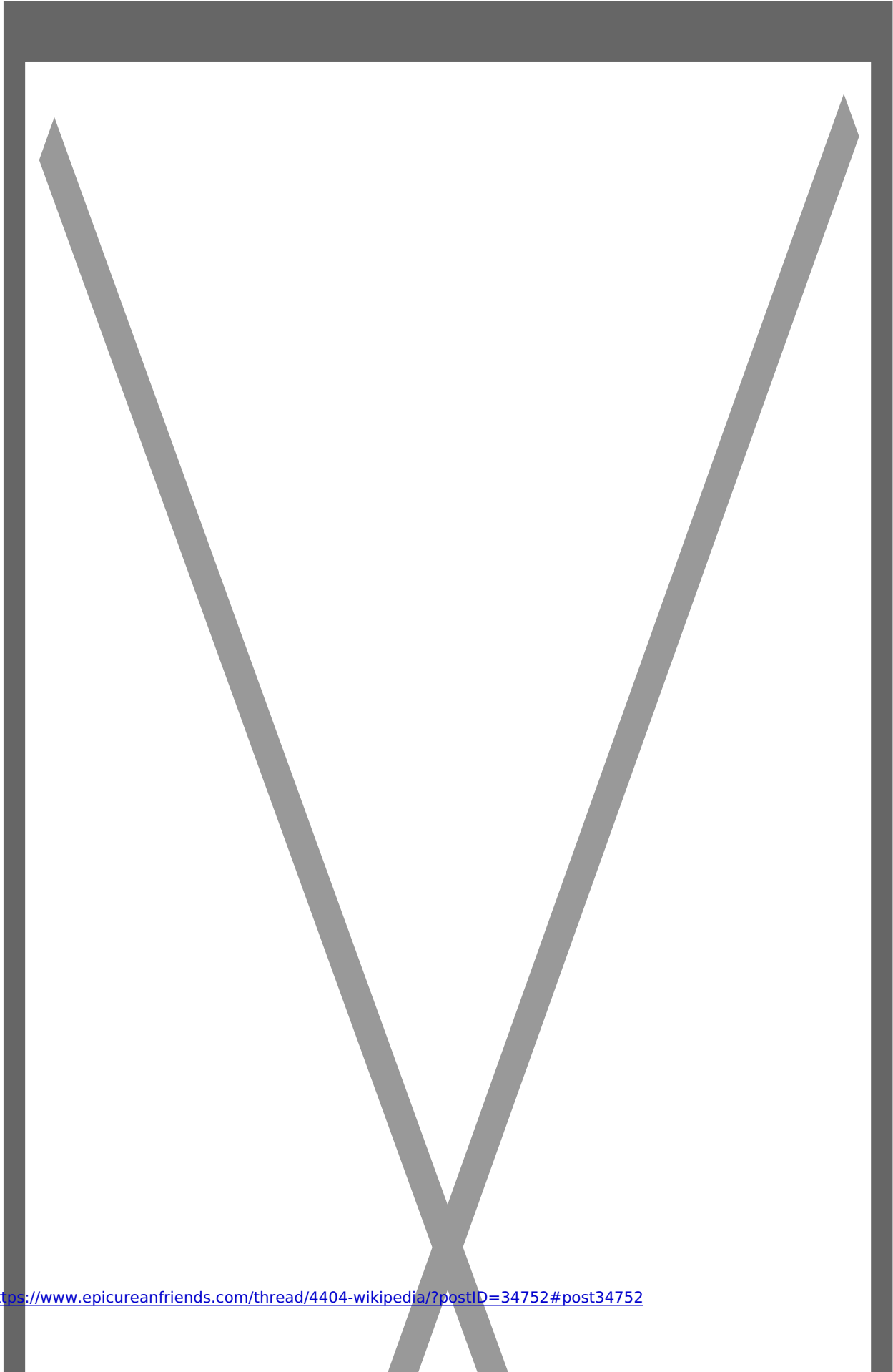


Wikipedia

Post by "Rolf" of April 16, 2025 at 4:16 AM

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I was skimming through the Epicureanism Wikipedia page and noticed some potential issues. Mainly, the popular interpretation that Epicureanism is all about reducing pain so that one can live in a pain-free, tranquil state. Is this worth revising? Wikipedia is such a commonly used reference and it could very well be the first stop for many people learning about the philosophy. Admittedly, I'm not the best when it comes to academic writing and I'm certainly no expert on the ins and outs of Epicureanism, but I figured it was worth forwarding this idea.

A few examples:

- “Epicureans had a very specific understanding of what the greatest pleasure was, and the focus of their ethics was on the avoidance of pain rather than seeking out pleasure.^[42] As evidence for this, Epicureans say that nature seems to command us to avoid pain, and they point out that all animals try to avoid pain as much as possible.”
- “While the pursuit of pleasure formed the focal point of the philosophy, this was largely directed to the "static pleasures" of minimizing pain, anxiety and suffering. From this understanding, Epicureans concluded that the greatest pleasure a person could reach was the complete removal of all pain, both physical and mental.^[52] The ultimate goal then of Epicurean ethics was to reach a state of *aponia* and *ataraxia*.^[52]”
- “*Natural but not necessary*: These desires are innate to humans, but they do not need to be fulfilled for their happiness or their survival.^[55] Wanting to eat delicious food when one is hungry is an example of a natural but not necessary desire.^[55] The main problem with these desires is that they fail to substantially increase a person's happiness, and at the same time require effort to obtain and are desired by people due to false beliefs that they are actually necessary.^[55] **It is for this reason that they should be avoided.**^[55]”
[Emphasis mine]
- “If one follows only natural and necessary desires, then, according to Epicurus, one would be able to reach *aponia* and *ataraxia* and thereby the highest form of happiness.^[56] Unnecessary and, especially, artificially produced desires were to be suppressed.^[57]”