

Did Epicurus Commit Suicide Due To His Disease? (Merger of Two Threads On When Voluntary Death Makes Sense)

Post by "Joshua" of April 30, 2025 at 5:59 PM

Quote

How could Epicurus know that it was the last day and why he called it blissful? To me, it sounds a bit like: "There's nothing much to be done, so I feel relief as I made a decision to pull the plug today and end the suffering".

It's difficult to separate the fact from the wish-thinking. I knew three different people to whom this kind of foreknowledge has been ascribed. A husband who sent flowers to his wife at work on the morning of his death. A woman who worked tirelessly to repeal a law she believed was immoral, and died in her bed with her hands clasped over her abdomen the day that law was repealed. A man who requested blackberry brandy and died after draining the glass.

I do not accept these uncritically, and would not suggest a cause outside of nature even if I did, but I don't think it's impossible for a person to know that the moment of their death is at hand. Maybe they feel that death is coming on in the same way that we feel a sneeze is coming on. Maybe they can even choose a time to stop struggling for life and let go. Fifty years after signing the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams both died on the 4th of July, the last living members of the committee that had produced that document.

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[Jefferson's Last Words](#)

What did Jefferson say shortly before he died on July 4, 1826.

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