

Epicurus' Hierarchy of Needs

Post by "Rolf" of June 2, 2025 at 7:56 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

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Finally, we have the snow sprinkled atop the mountain representing the natural but unnecessary "extravagant" desires. Once we have everything below, we may take joy in these pleasures and allow them to adorn our life, without feeling like we require them.

I personally would end up choosing a word other than "extravagant" (but not sure exactly what word).

Also, I wouldn't see this as a hierarchy, but instead that they can all occur at the same time.

I use the word "extravagant" as it's the word Emily Austin uses in her book to describe natural but unnecessary desires. I agree it's not the perfect word though - if I recall correctly, Austin doesn't think it is either.

Perhaps not a hierarchy in the sense of some things being better than others, but in the sense of priority. Maslow's hierarchy of needs places self-esteem above safety and security - this doesn't mean that self-esteem is more important than safety, however. And in the same way, it's obviously possible for one to have both self-esteem and safety simultaneously. It's less about a ranking, and more about ordering needs from basic to complex, and thus giving us some kind of roadmap.

That said, this is more of a visual representation than an actual theory.