

# Against using the word "corrosive" for the "unnatural/unnecessary" category

Post by "Elli" of November 18, 2025 at 4:24 PM

Very interesting discussion about how we describe the 'unnatural' desires. I agree that the word *corrosive* overloads the meaning, as if we are talking about permanent damage, while Epicurus simply speaks of vain or harmful desires which require strict control to not become *φάυλες συνήθειες* (vicious habits). The problem is not that they 'corrode' something good, but that they are empty of genuine pleasure and lead to pain.

Epicurus himself is clear:

- 'We must not force nature but persuade it; we persuade it by fulfilling the necessary desires, the natural ones if they do not harm, and the harmful ones we must strictly check.' (ES 21)
- 'Let us utterly drive from us our bad habits as if they were evil men who have long done us great harm.' (ES46)

He does not speak of corrosion, but of persuasion, of control, and of removing vicious habits that bring no pleasure. Here in Greece, after all, the phrase 'corrosion of character' is something we mostly hear from certain robed priests who think the soul rusts like iron and needs anti-rust spray... 🤪