

Possible use of the Pythagorean exercise called "evening review" for Epicurean purposes.

Post by "Patrikios" of December 23, 2025 at 6:18 PM

[Quote from Daniel188](#)

My intention wasn't necessarily to demonstrate that Seneca could offer any useful philosophical advice for Epicureans. Rather, I'm aiming to distill the specific exercise itself. In this case, regularly reviewing everyday events in order to learn from them.

In fact, I could have omitted Seneca's quote from this post altogether. I included it more as a curiosity that some ancient people used something like this.

[Daniel188](#) ,

Welcome, and thanks for your post.

From my reading, Epicurus did teach us a similar meditation practice himself. **Meleta** is the Epicurean practice of contemplation and philosophical exercise.

In "[Choosing to Remember and to Forget](#)," Hiram Crespo speaks of **nuktos meleta**, the evening practice that Epicurus himself prescribed. This appears to be the reflective meditation you describe. After the day has concluded, we sit in quiet contemplation and examine what has transpired. We ask ourselves the very questions you mention: Did we accomplish what we set out to do? Did we treat others with the kindness and fairness we expect for ourselves? Where did we fall short, and what might we do differently tomorrow to move closer to ataraxia?

This evening reflection serves a dual purpose. First, it allows us to learn from our actions and adjust our course—what Crespo calls "inner motion," the active exercise of reason and will toward future goods. We are not passive creatures drifting through life, but deliberate agents steering ourselves toward tranquility and flourishing.

Second, and equally important, this practice culminates in **zuowang**—sitting and forgetting. After honest reflection, we release the day's perturbations. We do not cling to regrets or ruminate endlessly on our failures. Instead, we acknowledge them, learn from them, and then consciously let them go. This is the art of forgetting as an active practice, not a weakness but a necessity for mental health and presence.

In my personal adoption of this meleta approach, I found that it adds another dimension to my daily meditations by providing a template for a more rigorous philosophical discipline—one that

simultaneously cultivates self-awareness and liberation from unnecessary suffering. While I may not be as rigorous in applying these techniques daily, I do find them useful to incorporate it multiple times a week, which helps keep me focused on my Epicurean priorities that lead to a life of mental and physical wellbeing.

You will find more rigorous Epicurean practices of teacher or self critique in the works of **Philodemus**, such as [*On Frank Criticism*](#), and [*On Anger*](#).

In addition, here are a couple of related postings by Crespo on the topic of Meleta.

- [**Meléta: Epicurus' Instructions for Students**](#)
- [**Epicurus' Instructions on Meleta, Part II**](#)

Those are just a few guides that I have been using as a new student of Epicurus, to apply in my personal life. Hopefully, you will find what works for you as you progress through your studies here with your **Epicurean Friends**.