

# Critique of the Control Dichotomy as a Useful Strategy

Post by “Don” of January 4, 2026 at 4:50 PM

[Matteng](#) You went right where I was going. Here's my translation of the start of 10.133 (emphasis added):

[133] "Seeing that, whom do you consider is better or more powerful than one who holds pious beliefs concerning the gods; one who has absolutely no fears concerning death; one who has rationally determined the τέλος of one's natural state; and the one who grasps that, on the one hand, good things (namely pleasures) are both easily attained and easily secured, and, on the other hand, evil things (or pains) are either short in time or brief in suffering; someone who laughs at Fate which is introduced onto the stage of life by many as the mistress of all things? For that person, even though *some things happen by necessity, some by chance, and some by our own power*, for although necessity is beyond our control, they see that chance is unstable and there is no other master beyond themselves, so that praise and its opposite are inseparably connected to themselves."

To me. There's almost a "trichotomy of causes" (not a dichotomy of control) for Epicurus:

- things that happen by necessity
- things that happen by chance
- things that happen by our own power

This goes back to there being no divine plan. If something happens to us and we might to mull or obsess about it, we can look at whether we did something to cause it or was it really by chance or necessity. If something pleasurable or painful happened, we can try to do it or not in the future. If, on the other hand, what happened really was a chance accident, it really was just chance.