

# Welcome Cornelius Peripateticus! (A name we'll consider generically rather than as being a dedicated Aristotelian!)

Post by "Cassius" of March 3, 2026 at 4:03 PM

Welcome Cornelius, who has sent me the following information about himself. He sounds fascinating and familiar with the forum rules, so for the time being we'll consider his name to indicate that he likes to exercise his legs, rather than as a statement of dedication to Aristotle!

Cornelius tells me:

## Quote

Hi, I'm Francesco, an Italian student at the University of Rome in Primary Education (essentially, I'm studying to become an elementary and preschool teacher). Having attended liceo classico (a high school in Italy that requires rigorous study of Greek and Latin language and texts), since my sophomore year (around age 16) I've been extremely fascinated by Epicurus's thought and how it was later reworked in a profoundly artistic way by Lucretius. I distinctly remember how my first reading of the Epistle to Menoeceus genuinely brought me to tears at the end, with Epicurus's final exhortation urging his friend, "Take and practice these teachings, and you will be a god among mortals, for to this is comparable the joy of one who enjoys immortal goods."

I've had a difficult life, especially since early adolescence, and Epicurus, somewhat similarly to Lucretius's description, has always been a beacon of light in my life (along with several other thinkers, but Epicurus was certainly the first to strike me in this way). I still find the idea behind Tetrapharmakon, the detachment from harmful, "artificial," and purely "comfortable" goods and pleasures that only generate a profound dose of pain in man (and society as a whole), to be avant-garde. I find the Samian master's exhortation to pursue a simple life of simple pleasures, as well as his definition of pain and pleasure, enlightening, however simple it may seem to the contemporary eye. Even today, in moments of suffering or difficult decisions, I find myself repeating what has become a mantra for me: "Not all pleasures should be pursued because they can lead to greater pain, just as not all pains should be avoided because they can yield unforgettable pleasures." I believe there are no thinkers like Epicurus who have shaped my way of looking at the world, ethics, and personal care, except Jean Jacques Rousseau (whom I won't discuss, however, because I've clearly read the forum rules: I don't intend to express contemporary political opinions, nor "ontological" or "ideal" human life-state opinions); it's no coincidence that the (brilliant)

starting idea of Epicurean philosophy was to care for a people like the Greeks, who had lost their identity as "free citizens of the polis" and become vassals and subjects of the Macedonian kingdom.

I believe his was the first explicit form of dissemination of applied philosophical thought, applied not so much as a search for truth but as a form of large-scale therapy open to anyone, for living a healthier life, physically, mentally, and even "spiritually" (by which I mean the balance that develops between the individual and the surrounding world once Epicurus' teachings have been properly assimilated, and to which I do not attach a religious value). I was immediately struck by the name of the forum, given the importance Epicurus placed on the concept of friendship, and I thought I could finally find a space where, even if only passively, I could meet like-minded people and perhaps find insights on how best to apply Epicurus' thought to everyday life.

Unfortunately, although I am surrounded by friends who are classicists like me, they are all mostly Stoic in their thinking, so, although there are points of connection between the two lines of thought, the conversation very often reaches an impasse. I apologize for the rather long introduction, even though a short one was requested, but I got carried away by what Horace would call "lactea ubertas," and I hope you'll forgive me for that.