

PD 25 meaning? by Woolf (2004)

Post by “wbernys” of May 11, 2026 at 8:54 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

But maybe it would help me understand where you are coming from wbernys if I understood:

What do you think it gains someone to make the point "Epicurus was a psychological hedonist" ?

That's the point I really don't understand. I feel like someone is thinking that this is a profound insight that leads to some really important conclusions or living a better life, but I just don't see the direction or the benefit in arguing for the label.

Great question, let me say a few things then!

First off, Psychological Hedonism is not exactly a huge issue to me, i certainly don't think it needs to be on any pamphlets as a major point or something. However, i think it may be helpful for two reasons.

Secondly, If this is Epicurus' position (which i believe it is) than it is important to know how to defend it from others like the Stoics and Religious who will say that this an evil doctrine, taught by a nihilistic and crude man, and both he and we are just projecting our own vile natures onto good people (something I've seen a few times). Like Paul says, we should be "**not ashamed of the gospel" (Romans 1:16)** of our sage and an important part of that is sticking with Epicurus when he says something, and knowing how to defend it, as the ancient Epicureans all did, or at least defending him from the charges of idiocy if he made a small error. **Being unafraid to defend Epicurus himself as a model i consider an essential part of the Epicurean mission. Main reason i like you guys so much, even when i think you overdo it.**

Thirdly, similarly to how people underestimate how important the gods were to Epicurean therapy i think the therapeutic element of Psychological Hedonism is something you may overlook in it's importance in Epicureanism.

A lack of clear end goal of all human behavior, i worry makes ethical discussion veer into something like the kind of skepticism i think Epicurus really despised as so vile, where the main goal humans should pursue is an ever elusive and unclear question, since people can just choose different goals with different criteria and come to different answers. Whereas if we push deep and realize nature's goal binds everyone, whether they admit it or not, we can both help them realize they are actually pursuing nature's goal (removing the stigma around pleasure and pain as vile, impious, or effeminate) and help them better achieve

it.