

Ongoing Discussion of Jack Gedney's "Untroubled" Substack Blog

Post by "Cassius" of May 16, 2026 at 6:04 AM

[Quote from wbernys](#)

Does Epicurus mean natural as innate or natural as in nature approves of it? I think Tim O'Keefe misreads natural desires as meaning innate, whereas it actually means "actually helps with pleasure", this is why natural desires can turn into vain or unnatural desires if they become sources of stress or likely to cause harm. It's natural and should be pursued when bringing more pleasure than pain but unnatural when not and should be shunned. There is also the fact that i think Epicurus just outright disagrees that sex or lavish food is necessary for happiness and can't be eliminated and he seems to say the opposite below.

Depending on how many further responses we get on this I may move Wbernys' comments and responses on this topic to a separate thread given that it seems to regularly be of interest.

Especially the second sentence I underlined:

Can a natural desire turn into an unnatural desire? If so, what does that mean?

Does that mean that the true defining criteria of what should be classified as natural or unnatural is not whether the desire in question is with us at birth, but something about the way we pursue it?