

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

Post by "Don" of May 16, 2026 at 9:42 AM

Good questions, [Cassius](#) . I'll circle back to those. However, I think we need to acknowledge that Epicurus didn't use natural and unnatural all the time. In the Menoikeus, he wrote:

Quote

Furthermore, on the one hand, there are the natural desires; on the other, the 'empty, fruitless, or vain ones.' And of the natural ones, on the one hand, are the necessary ones; on the other, the ones which are only natural; then, of the necessary ones: on the one hand, those necessary for eudaimonia; then, those necessary for the freedom from disturbance for the body; then those necessary for life itself.

Not natural and unnatural, but natural, "empty," and necessary. He didn't even use unnecessary in that text.

If course. [PD29](#) does use the familiar categories:

Among desires, some are natural and necessary, some are natural and unnecessary, and some are unnatural and unnecessary (arising instead from groundless opinion).

And VS20 as it appears in the manuscript:

Of the desires, on the one hand, there are the natural and necessary; then the natural ones and the not necessary ones; then the not natural and not necessary arising from empty belief.

MFS's recently posted translation of Oinoanda include:

[for us to show] which of the desires are natural, and which are vain.

Of the desires some are vain, others nat-

Now, those that are natural seek after such things as are [necessary] for our nature's enjoyment, [while those that are vain] ...

Yes, I'm picking nits but they're nits that deserve picking.