

Welcome Aristos!

Post by “Cassius” of July 20, 2026 at 2:59 PM

Welcome [Aristos](#)

There is one last step to complete your registration: All new registrants must email Cassius so that this Welcome Thread can contain basic information about your background and interest in Epicurus. In that email, please **tell us what prompted your interest in Epicureanism and which particular aspects of Epicureanism most interest you, and/or post a question.**

This forum is the place for students of Epicurus to coordinate their studies and work together to promote the philosophy of Epicurus. All posting here is subject to our [Community Standards, Participation Levels, and Posting Policies](#) -- please read that page; it explains our ground rules and will save everyone time and friction.

ALSO - AS OF JULY 16, 2026, the Forum has instituted a new editorial policy as to the advocacy of anything other than Pleasure as what Epicurus taught to be the supreme good. All prospective members must read [this post](#) before proceeding with an account at Epicureanfriends.com:

[Against Katastematic Supremacy - Pleasure Is A Unified Good, Not A House Divided Against Itself - INCLUDES FORUM EDITORIAL POLICY](#)

The Current Establishment View - Which It Is the Editorial Policy Of EpicureanFriends.com to Reject

With only a few notable exceptions, practically every modern account of Epicurean ethics repeats the same claim: Epicurus divided pleasure into two distinct kinds, ranked one above the other. Pleasure, like a house, cannot stand if it is divided against itself — and that is exactly the structure this traditional reading imposes on it. On this traditional view, **kinetic** pleasure covers everything...



Cassius

July 16, 2026 at 2:06 PM

If you have not done so already, please be sure you have read [Torquatus' Presentation of Epicurean Ethics](#) (also available in a more compact side-by-side format at [EpicurusToday.com](#)). That is the clearest, most complete statement of Epicurean

ethics to survive from antiquity, and reading it early will save you -- and us -- a great deal of confusion. Most people arrive with a version of "Epicureanism" assembled from the Tetrapharmakon, the Letter to Menoeceus, or scattered quotations of questionable reliability -- and of the three, the Tetrapharmakon is the least reliable foundation of all. It is many times more compressed even than the Letter, and terse enough that it has been read in sharply different, sometimes incompatible ways by different interpreters; at best it serves as a reminder of Epicurus's four main topics for someone who already knows their content, not as a source of that content. The Letter to Menoeceus is a real summary, but it too is compressed and was written for students who already understood the foundations of Epicurean ethics. Torquatus is the best surviving example of how Epicurus's own well-educated students understood and presented that foundation themselves. It is the fastest and most reliable way to find out whether what you already believe about Epicurus matches what he and his school actually taught.

The moderators here are well aware that many fans of Epicurus hold sincerely-held views about what Epicurus taught that are incompatible with this forum's purpose. This forum exists specifically for people committed to classical Epicurean positions, not for reconciling those positions with modern "eclectic" reinterpretations that borrow Epicurus's name while rejecting his actual conclusions. Reading Torquatus first is the quickest way to see where that line falls, before investing time in posts that argue against the very foundations this forum exists to defend.

All of us here arrived at our respect for Epicurus after long journeys through other philosophies. We don't demand of others what we weren't able to do ourselves. Epicurean philosophy is different enough from most other philosophies that understanding how deep those differences run simply takes time. That's why we have participation levels that give new members room to learn, but it's also why we have standards that can mean arguments being limited, or participants removed, when the purpose of the community requires it. Epicurean philosophy is not inherently democratic, isn't committed to unlimited free speech within its own meetings, and isn't organized around anything except the pursuit of truth and a happy life through pleasure as *Epicurus* explained it.

Please tell us a little about your background reading Epicurean texts, how you found this forum, and what particularly interests you -- that context helps us help you. Our [Getting Started](#) page also has ideas for using the site.

Beyond Torquatus, two books will do the most to deepen your understanding quickly. [Norman DeWitt's *Epicurus and His Philosophy*](#) is the single best book-length treatment available. DeWitt treats Epicurus as a coherent system rather than filtering him through later Stoic, Platonic, or modern secular assumptions. If you read one book beyond the ancient sources, make it this one.

Emily Austin's *Living for Pleasure: An Epicurean Guide to Life* is a clear, engaging modern introduction that many of our members have found a useful on-ramp. Read it, but read it

alongside Torquatus and DeWitt rather than in their place, since like most modern treatments it makes no attempt to give the full picture that DeWitt provides.

From there, Epicurus's own surviving letters -- to [Herodotus](#), [Pythocles](#), and [Menoeceus](#) -- and Lucretius's [On The Nature of Things](#) are also on the essential reading list. Our [Recommended Reading](#) page has a fuller list for when you're ready to go further. None of this is required before you participate, but the more of it you've read -- starting with Torquatus -- the more you'll get out of being here.

Welcome to the forum!

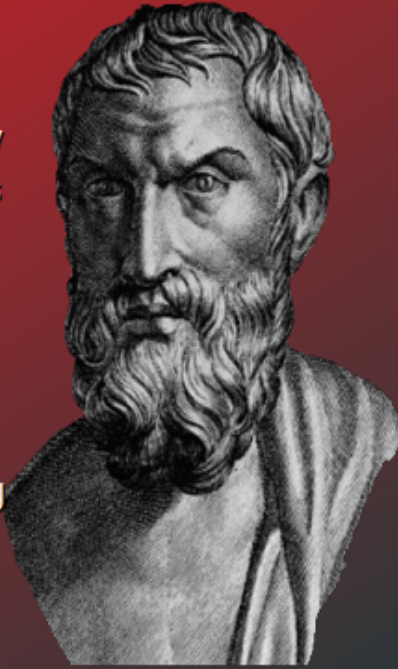
Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean

1. Not "flourishing," "human potential," "self-actualization," or "meaningfulness," but happiness grounded in the feeling of pleasure.
2. Not "absence of pain" as a full statement of the goal of life, but "the Feelings are two, pleasure and pain" and "Pleasure is the beginning and the end of a happy life."
3. Not virtue for the sake of virtue, but virtue as instrumental for the attainment of pleasure.
4. Not "the greatest good for the greatest number," but "Every desire must be confronted with this question: What will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished and what if it is not?"
5. Not "humanism," "transhumanism," "individualism," "collectivism," "egoism," "altruism," "social progress," "Marxism," "democracy," "tyranny," or any "one size fits all" political ideal of any kind, but social structure based on friendship which "is formed and maintained by means of a community of life among those who have reached the fullness of pleasure."
6. Not "hard determinism," but "some things happen from necessity, some from chance, and others through our own choice."
7. Not "supernaturalism," but "materialism."
8. Not "supernatural gods," or "life after death," but confidence in a fully material universe and "for those men for whom wisdom is possible, and who do seek it, such men may truly live as gods."
9. Not only "short term hedonism," but "it is to continuous pleasures that I invite you."
10. Not "rationalism," but "all reason is dependent upon sensations."
11. Not fearful of death nor careless of losing life, but valuing life for the opportunity of pleasure it brings.

Our Posting Policy At EpicureanFriends.com:

"No Partisan Politics," "No Supernatural Religion," and "No Absolute Virtue"

This forum is dedicated to promoting the philosophy of Epicurus, and not to any partisan political positions whether "left," "right," or "center." The task of rediscovering Epicurean philosophy requires that such discussions be held elsewhere. Posts violating this rule are subject to removal.



Epicurean philosophy firmly rejects the viewpoint that there are any supernatural forces or absolute virtues or Platonic ideals of any kind. Argument which is based on supernatural claims, or "absolute" virtues or ideals of any kind, are in violation of this rule and subject to removal.

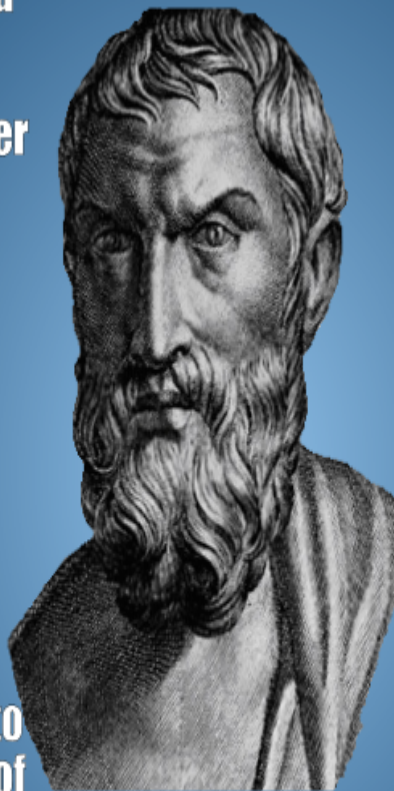
**Nothing can be created
from nothing.**

**Nature has no gods over
her.**

**Do not assign to the
gods anything that is
inconsistent with
incorruption and
blessedness.**

Death is nothing to us.

**There is no necessity to
live under the control of
necessity.**



**He who says "Nothing
can be known" knows
nothing.**

All sensations are "true."

**Virtue is not absolute or
an end in itself - all good
and evil consists in
sensation.**

**Pleasure is the guide of
life.**

**By "Pleasure" we mean
all experience that is not
painful.**

**Life is desirable, but unlimited time contains no greater
pleasure than limited time.**