

# Charles' Personal Outline

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Here is my personal outline of my Epicurean Philosophy, a bit messy though, with some slight deviations.

## 1. The Nature of Things and of The Universe

1. Nothing comes from nothing, and that nothing leads to nothing.
2. When I die, my body and its elements will return to the earth and the universe, my soul and mind with it.
3. Everything within the universe is comprised of physical materials called matter (Atoms<-Quarks), and the lack of matter or its specific properties acting as a catalyst: *void*.
4. This matter exists within reality and of the void.
5. The void allows matter to move across the universe, like a fabric supporting water droplets or bits of pollen moving end to end.
6. The laws of nature, are predisposed to exist through some mechanism of the moving and properties of matter.
7. Because of these two substances, we can do away with religious or supernatural explanations for understanding the laws of nature.
8. Since we have done away with those two, we can rule out any credence in their eligibility.
9. Since [nothing can be created from nothing](#), the universe must have always existed in some fashion or another.
10. While it may be easy to say that matter is infinite, it may just be infinite in our comprehension.
11. The universe is ever expanding, but will one day collapse on itself when all matter is exhausted.
12. However, because of the complex nature of higher beings (humans, dolphins, elephants, pigs, etc.), the movement of atoms/matter is not always perfect and its path is determined by probabilistic causes that are bound to collide (*Atomic Collision*) or conversely, "*swerve*".
13. The swerve of atoms in higher beings is precisely what gives us and complex animals the agency of free will.

## 2. How we are sure of our knowledge and other epistemological canons

1. Since we have ruled out the idea of the supernatural, superstitious, or religious means. We rely on our senses to determine the nature of the universe for us.
2. Our senses do not mislead us, it is our minds that can misinterpret the truth of our senses.
3. We are not born with innate knowledge of our surroundings or of the universe, upon birth our minds are like a blank slate to be filled through direct sensory

experiences, much like Locke's *tabula rasa*.

4. What we are fed from our sensory experiences is thus interpreted through reason, leading to knowledge to be stored away in our minds.
5. Through mathematics, we have set up a system of defining universal principles and measurements of certain objects/concepts, such as the circumference of Earth being 24,901 mi or its surface area being 196.9 million mi<sup>2</sup>.
6. There are three initial criterion for the validity of truth: sensations, preconceptions, and feelings.
7. A fourth criterion can also be applied: "presentational applications of the mind", for discussing things which we cannot observe, but can perceive directly but strictly in our minds.

### **3. Epicurean Ethics: or how I learned to stop worrying and love the Tetrapharmakos**

1. Since the concepts of religious afterlife and divinity are brushed off, our conduct and attention must be grounded in reality and where we live (Earth, ISS, etc.).
2. Part of that conduct, includes virtue and its purpose, the purpose of living pleurably, not as a reward to live in the afterlife.
3. To live pleurably alongside virtue, one must use virtue as a stepping stone when one sees fit, not the other way around.
4. Since there are no gods, the only other limiting factor to our way of life is death itself.
5. However we must not fear death, as the fear of death is enhanced by superstitions of punishment or banishment.
6. To counter this fear we must acknowledge the following: "[\*Death is nothing to us. When we exist, death is not; and when death exists, we are not. All sensation and consciousness ends with death and therefore in death there is neither pleasure nor pain. The fear of death arises from the belief that in death, there is awareness.\*](#)"
7. In addition to acknowledging that quote, we must dispel the fear that we will not accomplish what we have wanted prior to dying.
8. To dispel that fear, you must acknowledge that if you regret what you have not done or what will be done in the future, ask yourself if you regret not being a part of the past and the discoveries/activities of yore.
9. If you do, then think why you are in a constant negative-feedback loop of never being satisfied with what you can do right now within your lifespan.
10. To achieve a pleurable life, you must derive pleasure from the most basic desires in life: that is both natural and necessary.
11. In addition, you must resist and avoid the desires that are both; natural and unnecessary and unnatural and unnecessary.
12. However, there may be some leniency towards desires that are natural and unnecessary such as having a healthy sex life or going out with friends to a nicer restaurant.
13. Remember that bodily pleasures are intense, but an over indulgence in certain bodily pleasures will lead to harm over time or as a result.

14. To even obtain the corresponding mental pleasures, one must first engage in the activity that sparked the pleasure to begin with, such as having a fond memory of a conversation with a friend.
15. It is also worth noting that what is terrible in life is easy to endure.
16. Setbacks are bound to happen to everyone, and from that pain (or any other sort of pain) we learn and can do our best to avoid it in the future.
17. Intense physical pain, while difficult to bear, will likely not last long.
18. Intense physical pain that is chronic and lasts long, is rare and more often than not will lead to death, or becomes something you become used to. In my case, I have painful chronic migraines with no cure or remedy to truly avoid them, thus I have accepted it as a part of life and embrace the fact that there are worse pains to avoid.
19. In order to live a more pleasurable life, we must take a look at each of our actions to determine their outcome, and if it means pain in the present for pleasure in the long term, then it is advisable to accept that.
20. It is often easy to lose sight of the balance between living frugal and modestly, and living the excess life of a hedonist, but as long as you can balance both, you will be fine. VS 63 states: *"There is also a limit in simple living, and he who fails to understand this falls into an error as great as that of the man who gives way to extravagance."*
21. It is also important to be ambitious and challenge adversity when you see fit, for the opposite is to sit idly and be "content with what you have". Epicurus was an extremely ambitious person who took the risk to found a school to teach his controversial teachings right between Plato's Academy and the Stoa. He also wrote over 300 books on various subjects, we should strive to always work or produce something.
22. While also being productive and ambitious in a quiet matter, we should avoid the unnecessary strife that is political argumentation or a toxic friendship or relationship, for these are incompatible with living a pleasant life and having a tranquil mind.
23. If someone close to you is suffering, it is up to you to do whatever it is in your power to help them, the same can be said of a suffering world.
24. As always: philosophy's first and primary objective should be to alleviate human suffering and provide clarity and betterment for ourselves.