

# **Outreach Discussion: When and Under What Circumstances and How to Invite Others**

**Post by "Cassius" of February 9, 2020 at 1:00 PM**

Donald joined at a time that we weren't as strict in our membership criteria as we are now. It's a continuing subject of debate and fine-tuning as to how to set membership standards. In Donald's case he doesn't post frequently, but when he does he generally does so cordially, and his posts give us an opportunity to further clarify issues with someone who clearly represents (or maybe I should say, SHOULD represent) the opposing viewpoint.

There are many competing considerations, some of the most basic being that the FB forum is one of the very few places on facebook where authentic Epicureans won't be drowned out by Stoicism. Then there is the need to continuously educate new people to the issues involved in why Stoic and Epicurean philosophies are in fact so far apart, as opposed to closely related as so many people are led to believe.

The big negative factor is that fighting can be distracting and off-putting and just generally isn't as "fun" as interacting with like-minded people. Epicurus specifically advised that we talk about these issues with like-minded people, and he prepared lots of written material to educate students against conflicting ideas, but to my knowledge there is no evidence that he invited Stoics or Platonists into the Garden for regular debates or even social occasions. Inviting people who are open-minded and sincerely interested in reconsidering issues is one thing; inviting people who are committed to opposing ideas is something very different.

So proper membership and moderation is a moving target that's we're always recalibrating.

It's worth noting that there's nothing in Epicurean philosophy that would support the idea that "democracy" is always the preferable means of governance. So as long as the moderating panel itself remains firmly Epicurean, and we can't be "outvoted" by the masses of Stoics and/or eclectics, we can afford to let a few in at times to keep us on our toes.

These Stoic vs Epicurean issues will never go away, and each new "generation" of members will have to be educated on it.