

Draft Your Own Personal Outline of Epicurean Philosophy

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This is a very interesting project - I feel like I could add on more and more for a while but here are the more broad overviews of my personal Epicurean philosophy

1. The God(s) do not exist but if they did, they do not interfere with human affairs and thus we don't have to worry about them at all. I do not personally believe that humans were created by any supernatural forces or designers, we are in fact products of nature, experiments over billions of years of development and evolutions as Lucretius correctly pointed out. We are fundamentally made up of matter, and matter fills the universe in the void. The entire universe from how I see it is essentially made up of matter and energy (two sides of the same coin according to Relativity) and the laws of physics dictate the movement and arrangements of matter. It may create stars, planets, asteroids, and much more, including human beings. We are simply a configuration of matter as dictated by the laws of physics and chemistry. Whether the universe or matter has a beginning is still a mystery, but we know the universe evolves from different states, as the Big Bang Theory predicts, the universe was at one point very condensed and hot but has become wide and cold.

On a more atomic level, we see that in quantum mechanics the movements of some subatomic particles appear to move and behave indeterministically, and there are several interpretations of quantum mechanics that result in an indeterministic universe and it is currently not known how this affects the nature of free will. I choose to believe in free will personally but I will leave the physicists to their work.

2. There is no life after death. I do not believe in souls because there is no evidence or reason to believe in it. If something were to exist that is impenetrable to decomposition in the human body, it would be unable to sense or reason, since the nerve endings left behind in the body responsible for sensation are decomposing away, as well as the brain - which is responsible for reasoning, and therefor even if souls did exist and go someplace else, it would never be able to feel, nor reason, therefor there is not life after death we can experience. It is the same experience as before our birth, and I hear not the cries of pain from the before born, therefor, there is no pain before or after existence.

3. The senses are a reliable way of telling truth, and indeed many times the mind misinterprets them to have wrong conclusions. The trick is to train the mind using tools like mathematics and logic to have correct conclusions about existence and specifically how to live a pleasurable life. This is what makes science reliable, as well as mathematics.

4. The purpose of existence is to achieve pleasure. Life on Earth exists to achieve positive stimuli or get rid of negative stimuli both in a sensual way and psychological. Non-human animals even try to achieve as pleasurable an existence as they can. This is because pleasure correlates with survival instincts of our evolutionary past - humans needed relationships and connections to survive, and thus it is healthy to make friends, as well as eat food, drink water, and even sexual intercourse is pleasurable because of survival of our genes. I mean, for species that did not find sex to be pleasurable, they likely died out due to not reproducing, hence most species enjoy having sex because it's pleasurable. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with achieving pleasure based on natural and necessary needs, and it is ultimately up to the individual to determine what is pleasurable to them and to rationally plan on how to pursue that pleasure, even if it involves a little pain along the way.

5. I choose to believe that pleasure is ethically good and pain is ethically bad. However, I am not a moral objectivist in the strictest sense. I do not believe there is a basis for objective morality and believe that our morals are more feelings driven than anything else, since we tend to associate with ideas and beliefs that make us feel good to support or fight against, and form logic and reason as an afterthought to justify it. The 20th century philosophers have laid waste to moral objectivism, in part because I do believe that nature is indifferent to our moral systems, it simply wants to ensure its own survival (and since we are a part of nature, we want to survive), but this gives us as humans with the ability to reason to choose our own path to pursue what is pleasurable to us.