

Episode Two - The Achievement of Epicurus

Post by "Don" of October 3, 2020 at 5:56 PM

I found some notes of mine in my Google Drive relating to positive psychology. PLEASE note, these were not for public consumption, but I thought the raw notes would give an idea where my head was at at the time:

Quote

Epicureanism is NOT pop "positive psychology" See <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/...gion-secularism> "Seligman's inclusion of material achievement in the components of happiness has also raised eyebrows. He has theorized that people who have not achieved some degree of mastery and success in the world can't be said to be flourishing. He once described a "thirty-two-year-old Harvard University summa in mathematics who is fluent in Russian and Japanese and runs her own hedge fund" as a "poster child for positive psychology." But this can make well-being seem exclusive and out of reach, since accomplishment of this kind is not possible to all, or even most."

This all sounds very Aristotelian or Peripatetic! Epicurus wanted eudaimonia to be accessible to EVERYONE! ----- BUT I was listening to a TED Radio Hour today 12/3/2019 about Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs... and realized it seemed VERY Epicurean: KD 29: Among desires, some are natural and necessary, some are natural and unnecessary, and some are unnatural and unnecessary (arising instead from groundless opinion). The necessary desires are at the bottom. To not be hungry, etc. The need for security is the social contract Epicurus talks about. Love and friendship is next. It gets a little more fuzzy with self-esteem and self-actualization but I think the similarities remain and are worth exploring!