

Taking The Temperature Of A Six Year Old Forum

Post by “Cassius” of June 9, 2021 at 11:19 AM

I am in pretty close touch with most of our regular posters here, but I'd like to be sure to regularly ask the lurkers and non-regulars if they have any **thoughts, suggestions, criticisms, or other commentary about the state of the forum, projects we ought to undertake, how we can make it more useful, etc.**

Feedback is always good, even when it's criticism, so let us know if there's anything on your mind about how EpicureanFriends.com can be more useful to you.

I think we've come a long way since we opened in 2015, but there's a lot more we can do, so please let us know your thoughts.

Post by “Cassius” of June 9, 2021 at 11:37 AM

If you post on Facebook, [here's a post related to this topic](#), in which I reminded people not only of the forum but that it's a great source for [Elli's graphics](#) and [Nate's graphics](#) which have many uses.



Post by “AdamSandvoid” of June 14, 2021 at 2:36 AM

Hi, I am a long-time lurker and have learned a lot from this forum and its participants. Things I have found particularly useful are (in no order):

- Welcoming and open discussion, with a few guardrails. I find the focus of the forum to be very helpful, and not a deterrent generally to open conversation. Others may disagree but for me it is clearly stated and does have it's intended effect.
- Forums and threads organized by topic. When great conversations about a particular topic are buried under the wrong title it can be confusing. In a way this is just ongoing effort on behalf of the forum to identify and organize the past conversations. I see this work going on constantly -- as a new and ongoing student this is extremely helpful, for example trying to understand Pre-conceptions one can find all of the historical conversations here on the forum.
 - On the other hand I like how there are stubs of interesting ideas and areas of focus that might just sit there for a while until something clicks. These are the things an internet forum is really great at.
- Regular forum members and their contributions to the forum have really helped me. The forum is an archive of all these thoughts, and there is so much good stuff in there.

One thing that can be improved is that the forum is overwhelming, especially as a person just interested in epicureanism, or as an epicurean coming from other points of view. If you put on that person's shoes for a minute, and come to the front page, you'll see what I mean. It's not until you scroll way down the page that you see a section devoted to "New User Orientation" -- make that a stickied Thread and link it from the top of the home page in the Welcome section. This is one reason I started <https://www.epicswerve.com> -- this and other similar sites are intimidating and I hope to create a more focused and less intense introduction for people who are just interested in the philosophy.

A project to undertake is to clarify what each site is for, and then let that site do that thing, and link to throughout the network -- ie instead of each site having it's own list of the ancient documents (that have to be maintained) have one site that is the documents, and then point there from all the others (I know that was noted as a project so I'm just seconding that effort; I like the idea of making it a github repository that anyone can pull from). Maybe it isn't that simple, and I know I am proposing work for someone to do (but I am happy to help).

Overall I feel forum is working and there are increasing numbers of regular participants. The more participants, the more discussion, the more helpful threads are organized for future readers -- so outreach efforts are key but obviously outside the normal scope of the forum.

These are just some thoughts. Thanks for everything.

Post by “Cassius” of June 14, 2021 at 5:43 AM

[Quote from AdamSandvoid](#)

It's not until you scroll way down the page that you see a section devoted to "New User Orientation" -- make that a stickied Thread and link it from the top of the home page in the Welcome section.

Thank you for the time to write that detailed post. Everything you wrote was helpful and I will especially tend to this suggestion!

Post by "Cassius" of June 14, 2021 at 9:03 PM

Thanks to AdamsAndVoid and to others who commented privately, I have now taken additional time to make many of the suggested changes and smooth out some of the rough edges that resulted from moving material around from many different locations.

Please let me know if anyone sees additional changes that should be made. Nothing in an Epicurean universe is ever finally at rest, and certainly the design of this website isn't either. Maybe not for as long a time as can the [Epicurean gods](#), but so long as we can keep our atoms together we'll keep refining and trying to make this a better place.

Post by "Cassius" of June 15, 2021 at 9:48 AM

I saw @Nate dropped by and liked this thread. I need to ask him this - I really like that allegory of the oasis graphic and kept it on the front page, this time with a link that directs the reader here for explanation: [Nate's "Allegory of the Oasis" Graphic](#)

I need to go back and be sure I have those panels described correctly, but I know I am forgetting the picture that is in panel 8, and one of the figures in panel 7. Is that Aristotle and Michelangelo, or do I remember those wrongly?

I think over time we developed a lot of explanation but it's probably not reasonable to ask a new reader to go through the whole thread; I need to pull out a simple statement of the meaning of each panel and pin that in the opening post.

Post by “Eikadistes” of June 15, 2021 at 10:21 AM

I believe that was a bust of Diogenes Laertius.

Upon review, we can definitely update any text that is unclear. It's meant as a teaching tool, so it may be in need of some refinements.

Post by “Don” of June 24, 2021 at 9:45 PM

One last request, after living with your redesign for a little while: Could you switch the Epicurus portrait and Podcast logo sides? That way the figures would each be facing *into* the page rather than facing off the page. Nitpicky, I realize, but it metaphorically "invites" people into the page rather than directing outward.

Post by “Cassius” of June 25, 2021 at 6:00 AM

Done!

EDIT - And done as to the "New Users" page as well.

Post by “Don” of June 25, 2021 at 8:04 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Done!

EDIT - And done as to the "New Users" page as well.

Oh, yes. I do like that better!

Post by “Cassius” of June 25, 2021 at 8:08 AM

The reason I did it the other way in the first place is that i think it might be slightly better from a balance point of view to have the first big graphic on the left when viewing on the desktop to balance off the sidebar on the right. On the phone screen that doesn't appear.

However I am coming around to the view that people may be using phone-size screens 90+ percent of the time, so I think it makes sense to fine-tune for the phone screens rather than for the desktop, and in this case the difference is minor. Thanks for the suggestion!

Post by “Don” of June 25, 2021 at 8:17 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

However I am coming around to the view that people may be using phone-size screens 90+ percent of the time, so I think it makes sense to fine-tune for the phone screens rather than for the desktop, and in this case the difference is minor. Thanks for the suggestion!

You are welcome.

Does your platform provide any usage statistics for you along those lines? That would be an interesting thing to know. I know I personally use the mobile version the vast majority of the time.

Post by “Cassius” of June 25, 2021 at 8:48 AM

I am thinking it does not, but I will check.