

# Should Epicurean Philosophy Be Made More Accessible?

Post by “Kalosyni” of December 30, 2021 at 12:50 PM

I found this article and wanted to share. This platform is clearly for highly literate people...and the 2 percent also need to have enough free time to enjoy the resources here.

There is so much good stuff here, and interesting exchanges that I want to post comments on....plus my own thoughts and questions...and yet life calls me to other fun projects and activities.

If anyone is wondering why there are so few people actively engaging, this could be why. Any individual who is curious to study Epicureanism is in the top 2 percent reading literacy level. Many people will never encounter Epicurean philosophy simply because they can't. (This article breaks down the five levels of literacy and what kind of competency each possesses).

Should Epicurean philosophy be made more accessible?

Quote

**2% have high literacy levels.**

This year, for the first time ever, PIAAC combined the fourth and fifth literacy levels. That's because there were no longer enough people at the highest level to count.

"Across all countries, only 2 percent of adults performed at Level 5 on many of the variables in the literacy and numeracy scales," researchers report. (Because of the low number, these are included among the 12% in Level 4/5).

This (2 percent) is the only group that can identify from search results a book suggesting that the claims made both for and against genetically modified foods are unreliable.

Write for these folks, and you'll miss 98% of your readers!

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[What's the latest U.S. literacy rate?](#)

Can they read you now? Half of Americans have basic or below-basic skills.

[www.wyliecomm.com](http://www.wyliecomm.com)

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**Post by "Scott" of December 30, 2021 at 2:07 PM**

I don't know about the percentages, but I think you bring up an important point, [Kalosyni](#). I personally plan to put a good deal of effort into understanding EP, and I've only begun. I can already see how incredibly much value there is in this philosophy, but with my brief introduction so far, it is obvious there is a **LOT** to figure out and understand. And there are those who will put in the time, and who have the ability to digest and work with this complex material. But those are few.

I doubt this philosophy was so wildly successful for 7 centuries without being able to be presented in simpler form, easy to understand and remember (of course from there, individuals could continue to learn more as they were motivated, but most folks then and now would only dive in if initial content made sense and drew one in to learn more).

If only we had more of the original content! Some of this must surely have existed. Since we don't have that (and even any we might have already or will yet find would have been prepared for presentation to ancient cultures, not to people in our modern world), I agree it would seem worthwhile today to develop basic materials that make this philosophy engaging and accessible to as wide an audience as reasonably possible.

(How are our finances? Do we have enough to engage a top tier marketing/promotions firm to develop and deploy the content? 🤔 😊 )

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## Post by “Don” of December 30, 2021 at 2:42 PM

### [Quote from Scott](#)

I doubt this philosophy was so wildly successful for 7 centuries without being able to be presented in simpler form, easy to understand and remember

Absolutely!! Wired has YouTube videos where an expert explains a complex topic in 5 levels of detail to different ages:  
<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLibNZv5Zd0dyCoQ6f4pdXUFnpAlIKgm3N>

We should be able to explain Epicurean philosophy in the same way. Epicureanism spread throughout the Hellenistic world not because there were so many scholars but because it appealed to such a wide swath of society. Some had deeper understanding than others, but the "basics" could be grasped by anyone, and the summaries and epitomes like the [Principal Doctrines](#) were memory aids.

### [Quote from Scott](#)

If only we had more of the original content! Some of this must surely have existed.

Oh, I bemoan this all the time! 😞 Epicurus alone wrote over 300 works. Another early Epicurean, Apollodorus, is said to have written 400 works. And that's just 2 and not mentioning Philodemus even!!

#### [Quote from Scott](#)

(How are our finances? Do we have enough to engage a top tier marketing/promotions firm to develop and deploy the content? 😏 😄 )

LOL 😄 No wealthy benefactors here.

Good post, [Scott](#) . Thanks!

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### Post by “Cassius” of December 30, 2021 at 2:53 PM

#### [Quote from Scott](#)

(How are our finances? Do we have enough to engage a top tier marketing/promotions firm to develop and deploy the content?)

Ha! We can pay the server bills but hard to say we have many resources beyond that!

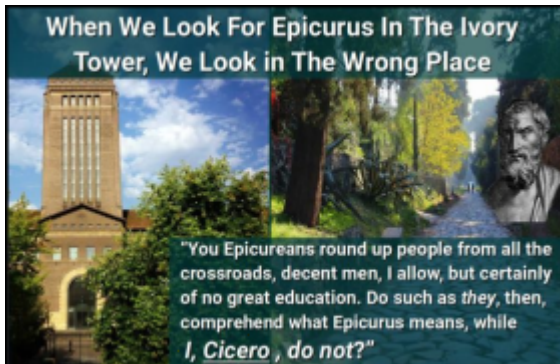
#### [Quote from Scott](#)

I doubt this philosophy was so wildly successful for 7 centuries without being able to be presented in simpler form, easy to understand and remember

Yes I agree with that too. Trying to help people with that was and is also a part of the reason for this section of the forum: [Personal Outlines of Epicurean Philosophy](#)

I think we found it pretty useful and we had a number of people participate when we first put it up, but over time and after the first rush it hasn't been as well used. It would be fun if some of the newer people who haven't yet tried it also take a stab at it.

I can't remember where at the moment, but in terms of Epicurean philosophy being relatively easy and straightforward, Cicero made that point a number of times. This graphic isn't exactly it, but I think his exact quote on it being easy is somewhere nearby:



And really, truthfully it IS easy, and it DOES all follow from the basic principles of physics and epistemology, as Lucretius observes several times. From the 12 fundamentals of physics it is directly derivable that there is nothing eternal except matter and void, and when you apply that directly to "Is there an eternal soul?" "Is there a supernatural god?" "Are there eternal standards of absolute virtue?" even a child could deduce NO! NO! NO!

I know that I am terribly unfair to the dead horse but I keep beating him anyway because it's so important. The main complexity in Epicurus is more the upside-down perspective on ethics that the Stoicizers from Cicero to Okeefe keep arguing. They've confused everybody into thinking:

"Epicurus didn't mean what he said about pleasure" and thereby into thinking that:

"We can ignore issues of consistency; Epicurus may have preached Pleasure over and over and over, but when it comes down to it, Epicurus adopted a totally inconsistent viewpoint on the place of active pleasure in life!"

And even worse, they talk and act as if the Epicurean physics was nothing but a novelty not worth spending time on today, when it truth the basic principles of atomism and eternal in time / infinite in space universe were the direct supports for the argument that supernatural gods and fate do not exist.

They rip the heart out of the ethics and make it neo-Stoicism, and rip the heart of the physics and make it irrelevant -- little wonder that people today find it confusing to read Epicurus! But the fault is ours, not Epicurus's.

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**Post by "Don" of December 30, 2021 at 2:55 PM**

Thanks for posting this food for thought, [Kalosyni](#) ! Those are valuable points to ponder. As I mentioned in reply to [Scott](#) , we should be able to explain the basics of the philosophy to a child.

But that begs the question: Even if we could explain it have basic intros, how to get them in front of people's eyes?

The philosophy has to be accessible in more ways than one, that's for sure: able to be understood & able to be obtained!

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### **Post by “Cassius” of December 30, 2021 at 3:04 PM**

#### [Quote from Don](#)

we should be able to explain the basics of the philosophy to a child.

And we should be ashamed not to have learned these basics as children, per the point made by Torquatus in Book One of On Ends.

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### **Post by “Cassius” of December 30, 2021 at 3:04 PM**

#### [Quote from Don](#)

But that begs the question: Even if we could explain it have basic intros, how to get them in front of people's eyes?

At least a part of that answer is social media, at least as long as it is freely accessible and relatively free of censorship.

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### **Post by “Scott” of December 30, 2021 at 4:55 PM**

### [Quote from Don](#)

Even if we could explain it have basic intros, how to get them in front of people's eyes?

Right! And not only get it in front of eyes, but ...it must *GRAB* you. One can't simply produce good information/explanations. One needs "hooks" to be "fishers of men"! (if I may steal a quote from a different philosopher) 😊

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### **Post by “Kalosyni” of December 30, 2021 at 5:25 PM**

I feel like I want to thoroughly understand the ethics of Epicureanism before I start "proselytizing"... 😊

But eventually I could create a very simple "zine" format presenting the Epicurean philosophy which could be left in "progressive" coffeehouses and also given to one's friends that one knows are "free-thinkers".

There was an "anarchist" coffeehouse here in Eugene, but I don't know if it is still open. Probably also someplaces in Portland. Plus also the "ecstatic dance" community (though it's been a while since I participated in that and it has just barely reopened again).

The zine would just be an 8-1/2" x 11" piece of paper that is folded, and anyone could download it and print copies.

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### **Post by “Don” of December 30, 2021 at 5:28 PM**

#### [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

The zine would just be an 8-1/2" x 11" piece of paper that is folded, and anyone could download it and print copies.

Hmmm... An 8-page zine... Wheels are turning...

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**Post by “Cassius” of December 30, 2021 at 5:32 PM**

I was pretty OK with the "progressives" and "freethinkers", but if we get too many "anarchists" and "ecstatic dancers" we may have to start worrying about our reputation with the Stoics! 😊

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**Post by “Cassius” of December 30, 2021 at 5:34 PM**

Don and I cross posted. I nominate Don to carry those e-zines to the ecstatic dancers! 😊

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**Post by “Kalosyni” of December 30, 2021 at 5:36 PM**

It just occurred to me...I wonder how many people in the U.S. would actually identify as a "free thinker"?

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**Post by “Matt” of December 30, 2021 at 6:20 PM**

We should drop pamphlets from a blimp... over multiple cities. That won't get us involved in any conspiracy theories. ☐

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**Post by “Cassius” of December 30, 2021 at 6:22 PM**

I am admittedly losing my grip on popular culture more everyday, but it is my understanding that "freethinker" is still an identifiable term as referring to having an open mind about whether there is a god (and thinking probably not) so I would bet that that is a term a significant number of people consider themselves to be.

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## Post by “Scott” of December 30, 2021 at 7:47 PM

### [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

I feel like I want to thoroughly understand the ethics of Epicureanism before I start "proselytizing"

Right there with you, [Kalosyni](#). I'm not there yet.

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## Post by “Don” of December 30, 2021 at 8:38 PM

### [Quote from Scott](#)

### [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

I feel like I want to thoroughly understand the ethics of Epicureanism before I start "proselytizing"

Right there with you, [Kalosyni](#). I'm not there yet.

We're all on this journey together. 😊

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## Post by “Cassius” of December 30, 2021 at 10:03 PM

I like to be clear that I don't represent or think that I have all the answers either, but there are some things I do like to strongly assert:

1. That Epicurus was attempting to be absolutely consistent from bottom to top of his philosophy. In other words, I think he did his best to make his ethics (which seems to be the focus of this current conversation) as consistent with his physics and his epistemology as possible.
2. That means that any interpretation of Epicurus' ethics which would appear to conflict with Epicurus' physics and epistemology is not likely to be a correct interpretation of what he actually taught.

3. That his physics established without room for doubt (in his system) that:
  1. There are no supernatural gods or other forces.
  2. There is no "fate" either supernatural based or through hard determinism in physics (because of the swerve)
  3. There is no life after death (there is no immortal soul; mortal cannot unite with immortal; etc) which means we only have one life to live.
  4. There is no absolute virtue or eternal "concepts" of any kind (because there is nothing eternal in the universe except the atoms, which means that there are no eternal combinations that could form a basis for anything absolute; and because there is no "center" to the universe from which there could be a single perspective by which to judge all others; because there is no supernatural god whose perspective could be deemed to be the only correct one, etc.)
4. That his epistemology establishes without room for doubt (in his system) that:
  1. The senses are the ultimate foundation for all reasoning that can be deemed to be correct.
  2. That there is ultimately no standard for "good" except pleasure and no standard for "bad" except pain.
  3. That knowledge we can have confidence in is possible in many things, even in some important things that we can't observe directly, such as items 1-4 above. However omniscience about everything we might like to speculate about is not possible and not therefore we can't hold our own conclusions up to a standard of omniscience.

So I would argue that any conclusions that we would come to about Epicurus' ethics have to be tested against those basic ideas about the universe and about how we ascertain knowledge.. If the assertion about the ethical conclusion appears to flow from these premises then that understanding of Epicurus' ethics is likely accurate to what he actually taught. If assertion about the ethical conclusion appears to conflict with these premises, then it's unlikely to be a correct interpretation of what Epicurus taught.

Obviously this kind of analysis isn't foolproof, but I do think Epicurus did his best to tie everything into a coherent whole, so it's a good place to start, and a good way to check the assertions of the commentators. And that's one benefit of new people starting with DeWitt - he does a good job of covering both physics and epistemology and doesn't lead the reader to think that Epicurus' ethics are the only important thing about his system.

And this is why it seems to me that I observe the commentators who have the least interest in Epicurus' physics and epistemology seem to go furthest astray from a plausible reconstruction of Epicurus' ethics. That's why we've spent a lot of effort over the last two years going over Lucretius, and why as soon as we finish discussing the Torquatus material on the podcast I'd like to see us go back and cover the Letters to Herodotus and to Pythocles before we tackle the letter to Menoecus.

## Post by “Don” of December 31, 2021 at 9:17 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

The zine would just be an 8-1/2" x 11" piece of paper that is folded, and anyone could download it and print copies.

Hmmm... An 8-page zine... Wheels are turning...

Okay, so here's my quick rough draft of a basic outline of what could be covered in an 8-page zine from a folded 8.5x11 paper. Each page would need illustrations and be eye-catching. In any case, for your consideration:

- 1 General invitation/intro/cover
- 2 Who is Epicurus?
- 3 Living in a material world (physics, atoms and void, etc)
- 4 Knowing what you know (Canon, evidence from senses)
- 5 Choosing the best life (Ethics, personal responsibility)
- 6 If it feels good, consider the consequences (all pleasure feels good, some pleasures aren't chosen)
- 7 Epicureanism vs Stoicism
- 8 Where do I find more information?

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## Post by “Cassius” of December 31, 2021 at 10:16 AM

That looks like a great outline Don!

I was thinking about a new thread to make this point but I'll make it here. All this work is a team effort and we all have different interests and capabilities. Something like this requires not just writing skill but art skill, and area where I am woefully deficient (among many others).

I hope every time someone reads a thread and someone is proposing something that if they have a talent that would help they will volunteer without waiting for an invitation. There's not a lot of "pride of ownership" here among our creators and I have never seen someone turn down help when offered. Epicurean philosophy is a huge project which requires teamwork if we're to make the kind of progress that's possible.

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## **Post by “Kalosyni” of December 31, 2021 at 11:37 AM**

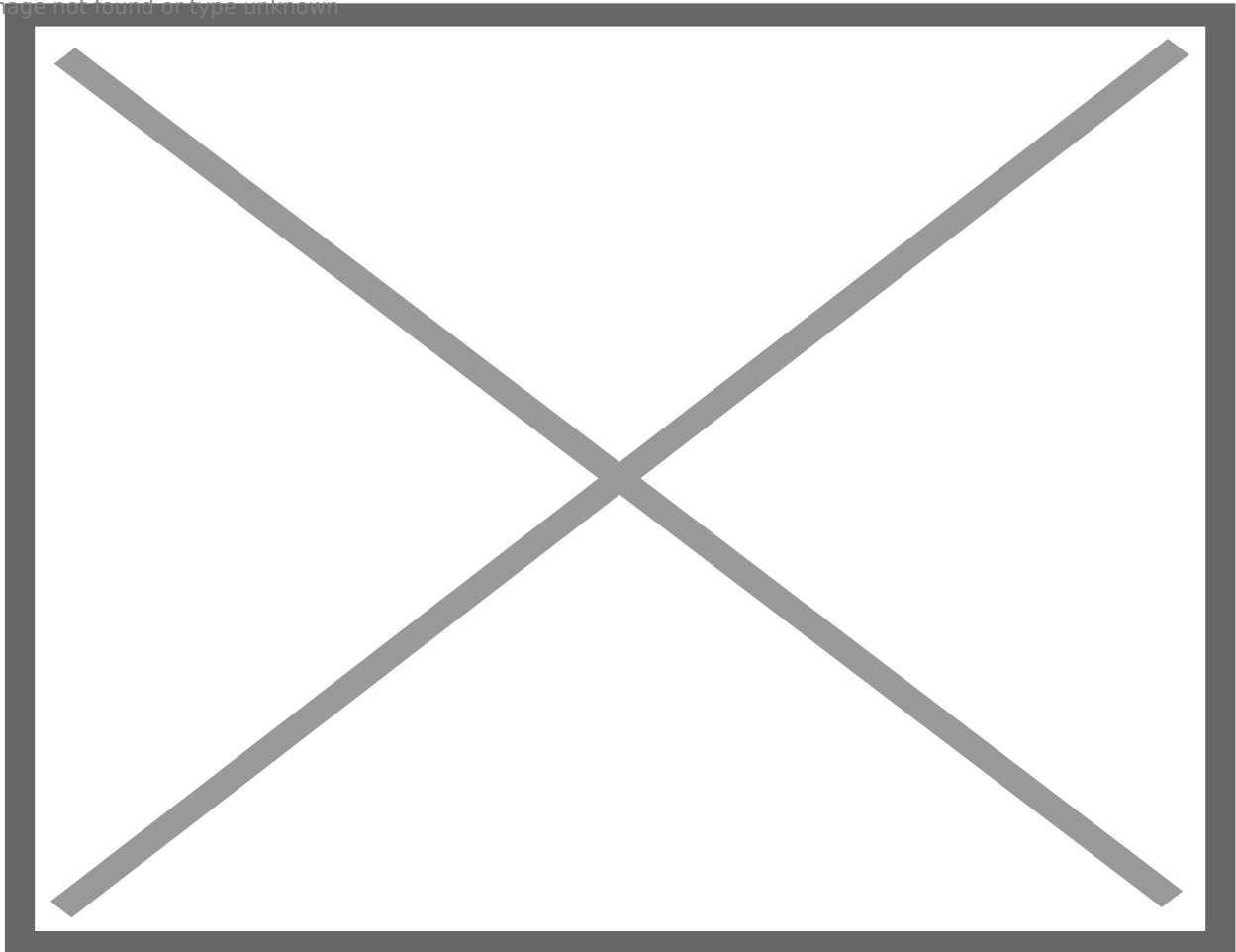
### [Quote from Cassius](#)

both physics and epistemology and doesn't lead the reader to think that Epicurus' ethics are the only important thing about his system.

The reason I haven't spent much time with Epicurean physics and epistemology is that I am a firm believer in modern science. I think it might be important to contrast Epicurus' ideas with modern scientific understanding.

Check out this:

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### [Did Humans Evolve to See Things as They Really Are?](#)

Do we perceive reality as it is?

[www.scientificamerican.com](http://www.scientificamerican.com)

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**Post by “Kalosyni” of December 31, 2021 at 11:59 AM**

#### [Quote from Cassius](#)

There is no absolute virtue or eternal "concepts" of any kind (because there is nothing eternal in the universe except the atoms, which means that there are no eternal combinations that could form a basis for anything absolute; and because there is no "center" to the universe from which there could be a single perspective by which to judge all others; because there is no supernatural god whose perspective could be

deemed to be the only correct one, etc.)

The ethics would be that all animals and humans feel pleasure and pain. When you cause pain to another human, it results in a mental and/or physical reaction...and also as when they are not consenting to the painful thing that was done to them. When you do this inside the tribe or community, then you are violating a kind of social contract of the mutual understanding "to do no harm". A tribe or community comes together for the benefits of shared interactions. So any kind of pain or harm goes against the purpose of the community. Yet as the population and civilization of Earth have increased, the boundaries of what is tribe or community are blurred. So now we must extend this "do no harm" to all people. We can use restorative justice...or if necessary when someone has caused violence and is dangerous we must take them out of the general population as a way to protect others...not as punishment, since punishment is a kind of violence. (My understanding of "free-will" is very complex).

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Admin Edit: For the continued discussion on the topic of justice, go [here](#).

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## Post by “Don” of December 31, 2021 at 12:16 PM

That's a good article. I especially liked the last line:

Quote from Shermer

The fact that science progresses toward, say, eradicating diseases and landing spacecraft on Mars must mean that our perceptions of reality are growing ever closer to the truth, even if it is with a small “t.”

I think the canonical faculties are there to give us a "true" presentation of what's "out there" in the real world. Epicurus says as much, to me, when he wrote (emphasis added):

Quote from Epicurus

For the presentations which, e.g., are received in a picture or arise in dreams, or from any other form of apprehension by the mind or by the other criteria of truth, would never have resembled what we call the real and true things, had it not been for certain actual things of the kind with which we come in contact.

Those things "with which we come in contact" are the things in the real world which our senses sense. I will say Dr. Lisa Feldman Barrett's research augments my understanding on this. We jump from a stick or rope on the ground, thinking it is a snake, because it's easier for our brains

to identify "long, thin shape on ground = snake > Run!" than to analyze every instance. Save yourself first; Laugh at false alarm later. That's a nutshell from me. Thanks for posting!

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### **Post by “Kalosyni” of December 31, 2021 at 12:39 PM**

[Don](#) you gave my post on ethics a confused smilie. Do you think that what I posted about ethics might not be Epicurean, or possibly goes beyond Epicureanism? What part were you confused about?

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### **Post by “Don” of December 31, 2021 at 12:51 PM**

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

[Don](#) you gave my post on ethics a confused smilie. Do you think that what I posted about ethics might not be Epicurean, or possibly goes beyond Epicureanism? What part were you confused about?

Oh!! My bad! I didn't see its connection to the specific article right before it. That's the only reason for the confused emoji.

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### **Post by “Kalosyni” of December 31, 2021 at 1:13 PM**

Okay, thanks for clarifying Don 😊

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### **Post by “Cassius” of December 31, 2021 at 1:19 PM**

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

The reason I haven't spent much time with Epicurean physics and epistemology is that I am a firm believer in modern science. I think it might be important to contrast Epicurus' ideas with modern scientific understanding.

Parts of Epicurean physics are certainly outdated, but not all by any means, and none of Epicurean epistemology would really fit the "outdated" parts. I think as you read further into it you will find much that you won't otherwise understand as to how the Epicurean Ethics works.

#### [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

So now we must extend this "do no harm" to all people.

And this would be example number one. I am no expert on Kant, but the notion of "extending to all people" sounds like a Kantian categorical imperative, which I would say has no parallel at all in Epicurus, which would be quite the opposite in viewpoint. In Epicurus there is no universal justice, but in fact only local and subjective justice, for example as stated in [PD33](#) and [PD34](#).

While I don't share the extreme conclusions of some about "live unknown" there is a very strong strain of "subjectivism" in Epicurean philosophy where you don't expect everyone to agree with you on everything, and so with those who don't (who can't be made your friends because of it, you don't force them and yourself to live we each, you "separate." [PD39](#)

And there is no reason that you would tolerate others doing what you believe to be harmful to yourself, even though they don't agree with it's correctness. Such people you don't "reform," you "restrain," *"Yet nevertheless some men indulge without limit their avarice, ambition and love of power, lust, gluttony and those other desires, which ill-gotten gains can never diminish but rather must inflame the more; inasmuch that they appear proper subjects for restraint rather than for reformation.*

I think as you read more into these physics and epistemology issues you'll begin to resolve some of your questions about what Epicurus was teaching. Note that I am not saying that you will agree with them, but that you'll begin to understand why they don't lead toward universal ethical values for everyone at all times and all places. Yes, I do think that it is possible to generalize that in most cases pleasure is to be chosen and pain to be avoided, but we don't even do that ALWAYS even in our own cases -- sometimes we choose pain in order to bring more pleasure to us later.

Possibly the big question in all this is "Whose pleasure?" I think you'll eventually find that the "greatest pleasure for the greatest number" might be Utilitarian philosophy, but not consistent with Epicurus.

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Admin Edit: For the continued discussion on the topic of justice, go [here](#).

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**Post by “Cassius” of December 31, 2021 at 1:50 PM**

I am slogging through editing the most recent podcast and I think some of the issues we are discussing here are either the same or the subtext of this podcast episode. There are multiple levels of meaning and application in a lot of these issues, and they fly in the face of common attitudes we've learned or been exposed to in other places. And I dare say that most of us (me included) have very little experience in the Epicurean perspectives, so we make mistakes when trying to build up from the foundation when we think he is going to arrive where we already are -- and so we tend to think that we don't NEED the foundation.

That's a big problem to figure out ways around, but it's one of the reasons why we did the reading of Lucretius and I do think we need to urge everyone to try to go through that for themselves and listen to as many as possible.

Maybe we also need to make a list of "best" episodes since we now have so many, but this issue of how the physics and epistemology relate to the ethics is something that came up over and over in the podcast so there is some good material there especially in the episodes covering the early books where we dealt with these issues for the first time.

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**Post by “Cassius” of January 1, 2022 at 12:50 PM**

Somebody help me --- what's the reference in Lucretius to the point about a new scheme of philosophy presents itself in Epicurus, and what you should do is dive into it and either determine it is true and embrace it, or determine it is false and fight it with everything you've got?

I hate it when I can't remember text references.

(Note: It is amazing how Don and I can crosspost almost exactly to the second.)

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**Post by “Cassius” of January 1, 2022 at 12:52 PM**

From Brown's translation of Book 2, line 1023:

Now apply your mind closely to the documents of true reason, for a new scheme of philosophy presses earnestly for your attention, a new scene of things displays itself before you. Yet there is nothing so obvious but may at first view seem difficult to be believed, and there is nothing so prodigious and wonderful at first that men do not by degrees cease to admire. For see the bright and pure color of the sky, possessed on every side by wandering stars, and the Moon's splendor, and the Sun's glorious light; these, if they now first shown to mortal eyes, and suddenly presented to our view, what could more wonderful appear than these? And what before could men less presume to expect? Nothing surely, so surprising would be the sight have been. But now, quite tired and cloyed with the prospect, none of us vouchsafes so much as to cast our eyes up towards the bright temples of the sky. Therefore do not be frightened, and conceive an aversion to an opinion because of its novelty; but search it rather with a more piercing judgment. If it appears true to you, embrace it; if false, set yourself against it.

Bailey version:

[1023] Now turn your mind, I pray, to a true reasoning. For a truth wondrously new is struggling to fall upon your ears, and a new face of things to reveal itself. Yet neither is anything so easy, but that at first it is more difficult to believe, and likewise nothing is so great or so marvelous but that little by little all decrease their wonder at it. First of all the bright clear color of the sky, and all it holds within it, the stars that wander here and there, and the moon and the sheen of the sun with its brilliant light; all these, if now they had come to being for the first time for mortals, if all unforeseen they were in a moment placed before their eyes, what story could be told more marvelous than these things, or what that the nations would less dare to believe beforehand? Nothing, I trow: so worthy of wonder would this sight have been. Yet think how no one now, wearied with satiety of seeing, deigns to gaze up at the shining quarters of the sky! Wherefore cease to spew out reason from your mind, struck with terror at mere newness, but rather with eager judgement weigh things, and, if you see them true, lift your hands and yield, or, if it is false, gird yourself to battle.

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**Post by "Don" of January 1, 2022 at 12:58 PM**

Book 2.1042?

Si falsum est, accingere contra. ?

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## Post by “Cassius” of January 1, 2022 at 1:01 PM

Yes that's it, and crossposted again! 😊 I pasted the full Brown and Bailey translations above.

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## Post by “Cassius” of January 1, 2022 at 7:38 PM

Somebody made the point that maybe the thread was driving from the original topic. Maybe we should step back and ask, in the process of making it more accessible, what does "it" refer to.

Since Kalosyni is fairly new here, what in a thumbnail are we talking about more accessible? (In terms of a list of five or six key points that we think might not currently be easily accessible?)

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## Post by “Kalosyni” of January 1, 2022 at 8:44 PM

My initial intention of this thread was to investigate how to present Epicurean philosophy so that more people could learn and benefit. And that it would be nice to have something simplified for people who want to learn but don't have enough time to dedicate to this forum. This could take the form of an overview, possibly drawn from existing threads, nicely and simply formatted for easy viewing:

Will now cross reference this thread which was recently referred to elsewhere:

Thread

[How Would You Answer Someone New Who Asked You: "What Is Epicurean Philosophy All About?"](#)

If you met someone who asked you to explain to them what Epicurean Philosophy is about, how would you introduce them to it, and what are some examples of how it can be applied in everyday life?



Cassius

September 1, 2019 at 8:08 AM

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## **Post by “Kalosyni” of January 1, 2022 at 9:06 PM**

Just an idea... Maybe we need to collaboratively work on creating more documents in the lexicon section... "wikipedia" type pages... where we organize by topic, using the information presented in the best posts. We could have a simple glossary and links would open to an one or two page overview of each glossary entry. So this would by-pass the complexity of multiple threads. Already there is so much here that it would fill many books.

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## **Post by “Cassius” of January 1, 2022 at 9:40 PM**

Yes it is hard to figure out how to organize things and it may be that conversations have to develop naturally.

But now that we've been reminds a couple of times about the personal outline approach, I think that would be particularly helpful for you, Kalosyni, given that it helps quickly highlight fundamentals and places where questions may arise that you may not recognize:

[Personal Outlines of Epicurean Philosophy](#)

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## **Post by “Godfrey” of January 1, 2022 at 10:59 PM**

Preparing an outline and incorporating the resulting feedback was extremely helpful for me, and provided some good guidance in how to proceed with grasping the philosophy. I confess it was intimidating at first, as I'm quite new to studying philosophy. But the exercise was well worth it.

(I should probably take another look at mine and see how my understanding has evolved since then....)

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## **Post by “Kalosyni” of January 1, 2022 at 11:11 PM**

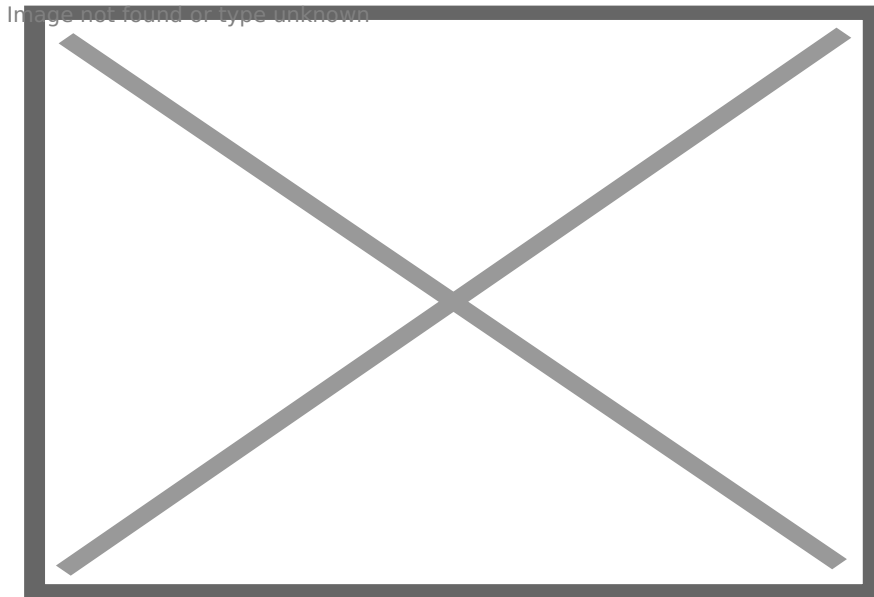
For anyone who feels that studying Epicureanism (and the resources on this website) is like an "independent study college course"...then these study tips might be a way of going about it:

Bloom's Taxonomy - remember, understand, apply, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, create:

[Higher Order Thinking: Bloom's Taxonomy - Learning Center](#)

Many students start college using the study strategies they used in high school, which is understandable—the strategies worked in the past, so why wouldn't...

learningcenter.unc.edu



[Concept Maps - Learning Center](#)

What are concept maps? Concept maps are visual representations of information. They can take the form of charts, graphic organizers, tables, flowcharts, Venn...

learningcenter.unc.edu

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### **Post by “Kalosyni” of March 27, 2023 at 10:25 PM**

I was just thinking about how we may need varying study levels, which will depend upon how much time a person has available:

- Basic Understanding - simplified summary of key concepts (the least you need to know)
- Moderate - use of an outlined study guide (a thorough overview)
- Advanced - further study after completion of the study guide (on-going study and research)

### [Quote from Scott](#)

I think you bring up an important point, Kalosyni. I personally plan to put a good deal of effort into understanding EP, and I've only begun. I can already see how incredibly much value there is in this philosophy, but with my brief introduction so far, it is obvious there is a LOT to figure out and understand. And there are those who will put in the time, and who have the ability to digest and work with this complex material. But those are few.

I doubt this philosophy was so wildly successful for 7 centuries without being able to be presented in simpler form, easy to understand and remember (of course from there, individuals could continue to learn more as they were motivated, but most folks then and now would only dive in if initial content made sense and drew one in to learn more).

If only we had more of the original content! Some of this must surely have existed. Since we don't have that (and even any we might have already or will yet find would have been prepared for presentation to ancient cultures, not to people in our modern world), I agree it would seem worthwhile today to develop basic materials that make this philosophy engaging and accessible to as wide an audience as reasonably possible.

We are making good progress on a 7-Part Study Guide (which could also be used for a "Basics of Epicureanism Seven Week Course").

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### **Post by "Kalosyni" of April 30, 2024 at 2:35 PM**

I am revisiting this thread without re-reading previous posts, just to say that I have been thinking again about how to make Epicurean philosophy more accessible. Some ideas:

1) Create a "sister-site" which gives a quick overview. We already have [NewEpicurean.com](https://www.newepicurean.com) ...however...

...it would be nice to have something a bit more streamlined like a regular website which is geared toward modern times and is focused on practical aspects of applying Epicurean philosophy.

2) Get clear on the "existential" issues that Epicurus covers, and create "conversation starters" for in-person meetings.

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## Post by “Eikadistes” of April 30, 2024 at 2:52 PM

### [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

1) Create a "sister-site" which gives a quick overview. We already have [NewEpicurean.com](#)...however...

...it would be nice to have something a bit more streamlined like a regular website which is geared toward modern times and is focused on practical aspects of applying Epicurean philosophy.

Besides <https://epicureanfriends.com> there are a number of sites with Epicurean resources:

- <https://epicurus.net>
- <https://www.epicswerve.com>
- <https://epicurus.today>
- [http://wiki.epicurism.info/Main\\_Page/](http://wiki.epicurism.info/Main_Page/)
- <https://societyofepicurus.com>
- <https://churchofepicurus.wordpress.com/welcome/>
- <https://www.epicuros.gr/pages/en.htm>