

# Joshua's "Only The Beginning" Observation

**Post by "Cassius" of January 8, 2022 at 4:49 PM**

I don't start too many totally generic threads like this one but this seems to be a good time to reinforce what [Joshua](#) has said a couple of times in recent podcasts: That after you accomplish getting a general basic understanding of Epicurean philosophy you're "only at the beginning" because you then need to apply it.

It seems appropriate to reinforce that: We spend a lot of time discussing very specific details, and we need to do that because that's the only way to understand the big picture.

But once we have the big picture we're then faced with the real question: application. It's as if our minds are computers and the Epicurean philosophy takes us through the reboot sequence, and maybe through the loading of certain basic application programs.

But once the basic operating system, and the basic application programs are loaded, we then face the even harder question: How do we use what we have learned?

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**Post by "Joshua" of January 9, 2022 at 3:20 PM**

One question we often get asked is, 'What are some Epicurean practices I can use in everyday life?'

Part of the reason this is difficult to answer is that *I don't know what the pursuit of a life of pleasure looks like to you.*

Probably, we find different things pleasureable! I could point to the latest research, or to some scrap of an ancient text; I could offer some healthful lifestyle tips, or I could tell you about things that have seemed pleasurable to me but which have brought more pain or trouble in the end; but I cannot tell you what brings *you* pleasure.

If you're at square one, as we all are in a sense, here are a few things you can try: I say try, because they might fail!

1. Keep a journal. O, how I wish I was the kind of person who kept a journal! Traveling to Europe on *aes alia*, another's coin, was exceedingly pleasureable---but that was over a decade ago.

And then the bill came due; and as I gradually paid the debt, the memories gradually faded. If you want to remember happy things, pleasureable things--write them down. Epicurus thought that pleasures remembered were pleasures still experienced, and stored away for future use. But you'll forget them, so write things down! The people you encounter are talking about you---talk to yourself about them.

2. Go for a walk. The community I live in has a Facebook page, and there are rumors circulating about a sinister hooded figure walking around alone by night. Maybe I should get a dog. But the point is, nobody seems to *ambulate* anymore! Breathe the free air, look at the trees and the flowers and the running water! They'll gossip, but I don't think they'll arrest you for it!

3. Stargaze. The *lunatic* who walks around in my neighborhood has even been noticed ducking into the woods, staring anxiously at a bird, or---ye gods forbend!---gazing up at the night sky! Is he a madman? Is he a drunk? No! He's an Epicurean! The closest star system (alpha centauri) is just over four light years away; while I was having lunch with an old friend at an Indian restaurant in western Iowa in two-thousand-seventeen, the photons I see tonight began their long pointless journey toward Florida. Go catch some of them.

4. Have lunch with an old friend. Pleasure is the good of life, and friendship the very best of that good. Tell them about that bird you were staring at the other day. If I'm lucky, it might even make the Facebook page!

5. Read a book. Half of Epicurus' Principle Doctrines were direct contradictions of Plato. Are you sure you want to take Epicurus' word for it? Maybe it's time to brush up on your Plato.

Drink some tea, pet a goat, listen to a thought-provoking podcast, play a thought-provoking video game---there's a pleasure-filled life of joy at your finger tips. I don't know what's in that life, but I hope you find it.

Everything you see and everything you are is made of atoms that were forged out of smaller particles in the heart of dying stars. It's a wondrous universe--go out (or stay in) and enjoy it! You and I are very, very lucky to have this chance. Sink every root you have deep into the experiences of this world, and the branches that flourish from that will be lovely--a fit abode even for my friend the bird.

Quote

### **The Heron**

O Heron wan in water wading!

Thou opus of untailed fashion—

Sure-footed on the shoreline's footing—

A tulle train, dawnlight's glisten,  
Gowns thy form in matchless morning!  
Heron! Ready in verdure reedy—  
Agéd angler, weedmidst waiting,  
Patient, still in silence stolen  
From the olden deep unending  
'Til the wide world's wild breaking—  
Hunter haunting on the march and  
interstice of world and world;  
Sea and sky, blade of beak  
Azure upon azure rending—  
Virtue of a vise unyielding.  
What crooked timber frames thy neck?  
Methinks that it is not so stiff.  
Whence the whittling of thy wing?  
What the aurum of thine eye?  
Where, thy heartblood's ceaseless spring?  
Are thou Plato's man-of-gold,  
Who rules a tribe of bronzed fins?  
Or yet a hermit cynical,  
Who tossed aside his needless dish?  
Is this thy sandy portico?  
Nay, for thou art too like me:  
We bear the stamp of origins.  
Fatherless thou wert so feathered,

Motherless milked on thy sweet streams,  
And here, alone, we stand together—  
No more! Aye, fly! Fly to thine pleasure  
Great noble bird, sun-midst sailing,  
Prow a-gleaming, southward seeking;  
Seek thee still a sweeter shore  
And I, a sweet philosophy.  
Yet I will linger here a time  
Tasting of the morning's fruits—  
'Ere long the yawning sea shall call:  
The tide shall fail, and then the light,  
And we shall mingle, you and I  
Void with void, and mote with mote  
Display More

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**Post by “Don” of January 9, 2022 at 4:42 PM**

[Joshua](#)

I do not have enough fingers and toes!



Well done!!

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**Post by “Kalosyni” of January 9, 2022 at 7:45 PM**

#### [Quote from Joshua](#)

4. Have lunch with an old friend. Pleasure is the good of life, and friendship the very best of that good. Tell them about that bird you were staring at the other day.

Yes, some people here on the forum might find that their "friendship needs" are easily met, where as others might find that this it isn't as easy as it "ought" to be, or used to be in the past.

Right now the world is still in the midst of the covid pandemic, which may be less of an issue in some places than others. Things have "opened up" again where I live, however there seems to be much less happening as far as public meetings, gatherings, and social meet-ups.

I think this forum can function as a helpful place until we can all get back on our "friendship-feet" again.

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### **Post by “Don” of January 9, 2022 at 8:54 PM**

#### [Quote from Joshua](#)

1. Keep a journal

Yes! I couldn't agree more! I've been an on again off again journal keeper for going on - oh my - 30(!) years. I started shortly after my daughter was born to remember things she did, but it's grown into more than that over the years. It has been an endless source of joy to look back and relive moments forgotten in the hustle and bustle of daily life.

In the front of my current journal volume, I've written:

τοῦ γεγονότος ἀμνήμων ἀγαθοῦ γέρων τήμερον γεγένηται.

(Which of course is VS19 "He who forgets the good things he had yesterday becomes an old man today.")

I thought it would be appropriate 😊

#### [Quote from Joshua](#)

2. Go for a walk.

Yes again!! We've always enjoyed walking, and that has been about all we've been able to do during this pandemic.

For those who enjoy walks, I discovered the AllTrails app and website back around March 2020. We've discovered numerous trails near our house that we never works I have known existed. One of the most used apps on my phone. Can't recommend more highly: <https://www.alltrails.com/>

[Quote from Joshua](#)

3. Stargaze

Yes yet again. There's something about staring up into the night sky to provide perspective on one's place in the universe. Goal this year: visit a nearby Dark Park to view a meteor shower! And the aside about the photons from Alpha Centauri was great! btw SO excited to have read the Webb Telescope has fully deployed and is safely in its way to L2!!!

[Quote from Joshua](#)

4. Have lunch with an old friend

Sadly, no able to do this nearly enough.

Plus the rest of your spot-on suggestions, [Joshua](#) ! Your post was perfect. Thank you for sharing these and for bringing Epicurean philosophy right down to the grassroots level! Ευχαριστώ!! Thank you!

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## Post by “smoothiekiwi” of January 10, 2022 at 4:02 PM

[Joshua](#), that simply sounds beautiful, I love it 😊

Still, I'm asking myself if Epicureanism is really fully applicable in every single situation. For example, I'm currently a high school student, as- as strangely as it sounds-, there simply isn't any time left during the week to go out and enjoy the stars. I don't want to brag on how bad the educational system is- I'm sure that later, when job life starts, it won't become easier-, but I think that one of the issues why Epicureanism isn't widely adopted today is because it's too far from the reality of many people. Our society is constantly overworked, and we've simply too little time for pleasure. That doesn't mean that we couldn't make more time free- but I think that many people simply lack the courage for it.

By the way, **courage**. I think that it's an incredibly necessary part of Epicureanism, because this philosophy means breaking with much of the known stuff. That's scary. And I think that from the remaining texts, there isn't too much emphasis on it, and how to break with the current life one has, and to adopt another life- a life of far more pleasure, but it's more distant. I like to think that Epicurus wrought down advice to it, yet it was lost to time. Maybe.

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## Post by "Don" of January 10, 2022 at 4:42 PM

### [Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

I'm currently a high school student, as- as strangely as it sounds-, there simply isn't any time left during the week to go out and enjoy the stars.

I certainly respect that fact that the life of a high school student can be hectic! You don't need to add anything else to your schedule.

But, I think, that's one of the points of Epicurus's philosophy. It's about finding pleasure where you are, right now, in the big things but also importantly the little, everyday things. It's the philosophy that could lead Horace to write:

### [Carpe diem!](#)

which is usually translated as "*Seize the day!*" as if it's a YOLO sentiment. (Is using YOLO still a thing??) It's not that. "Carpe" is more accurately translated as "pluck" or "harvest" because the time is ripe, right now, this day, this moment, to find pleasure. So, you don't have to make time to star gaze (although that can be rewarding in many ways). Notice the way the sun plays through the leaves as you walk to or from school. Feel the sun (when it's warm) on your face. Take pleasure in whatever learning you *\*can\** achieve at school whether in your formal classes or by exploring online or in the library. Begin to notice where you can feel gratitude, too. Epicurus places an emphasis on feeling gratitude, even for little things. (*Confession: I tend to say "Thank you" out loud when the alarm goes off in my car if I still have the keys in the ignition when I open the door. I am grateful for the engineer that decided to put that feature in so I don't lock my keys in my car! I realize it's a little strange for me to do this maybe, but it works for me.*)

You'll see a lot of deep philosophical discussions on this forum and exploration of ancient Greek and Latin texts, etc., and that's great. I take pleasure in all that.

However, for me, Epicurus gave us a practical philosophy, rooted in the everyday experience of human beings, and made it accessible to everyone - otherwise it would not have spread across

the ancient world in city after city. At its core, his philosophy is about personal responsibility for actions taken and taking pleasure in the everyday living of our lives.

I'll end with a quote of Epicurus's opening line in his letter to his student Menoikeus:

"Neither must one who is young delay in loving and pursuing wisdom; nor should one who is old grow weary of loving and pursuing wisdom; because it is neither out of season nor untimely for the health of the mind." It's never out of season, nor too early, nor too late. No one is neither too young nor too old to practice philosophy.

Thank you again for engaging on the forum. You've made some great posts, asked a lot of great questions, and I look forward to reading more from you!

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## **Post by “Cassius” of January 10, 2022 at 7:20 PM**

Smoothiekiwi in addition to what Don wrote above, part of the key is that the Epicurean worldview is not simply a lifestyle choice or a self-improvement technique that people pick up and put down like a diet or an exercise program.

It is an assertion about "the way things are" that takes positions on the nature of human life and the universe that Epicurus asserts to be true regardless of whether an individual chooses to believe it or not.

So someone who learns about what Epicurus taught adds to their knowledge regardless of whether they ever convince many others of its truth, or whether they have time to engage in as many pleasures as they might like. While it is nice to see numbers increase and more people share the view and add to the number of our friends, a large part of the benefit of the philosophy comes no matter how many or how few people accept it.

For example, as explained at the start of Epicurus Book Two:

### Quote

SWEET it is, when on the great sea the winds are buffeting the waters, to gaze from the land on another's great struggles; not because it is pleasure or joy that any one should be distressed, but because it is sweet to perceive from what misfortune you yourself are free. Sweet is it too, to behold great contests of war in full array over the plains, when you have no part in the danger. But nothing is more gladdening than to dwell in the calm high places, firmly embattled on the heights by the teaching of the wise, whence you can look down on others, and see them wandering hither and thither,

going astray as they seek the way of life, in strife matching their wits or rival claims of birth, struggling night and day by surpassing effort to rise up to the height of power and gain possession of the world.

This might seem sort of unkind, but as explained the emphasis is on the relief from pain that you yourself would be otherwise suffering.

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### **Post by “Godfrey” of January 10, 2022 at 10:25 PM**

@smoothiekiwi in many ways it's an advantage being exposed to Epicurus at a young age. How you choose to continue your education, or how you choose a job, or a partner, or where to live, or so many other things... these are big picture "choices and avoidances" that will enable you to bring more pleasure into your life for decades to come. As you come to understand the philosophy on a deeper level you will find that following your canonic faculties will be a great aid in making such decisions, as well as the small day to day choices and avoidances that lead to a pleasant life.

Epicurus studied natural philosophy and the art of life; many current subjects that you might study in school have evolved from these and you may find one or more of them pleasurable and enlightening, even worth pursuing further.

#### Quote

VS27. Whereas other pursuits yield their fruit only to those who have practiced them to perfection, in the love and practice of wisdom knowledge is accompanied by delight; for here enjoying comes along with learning, not afterward.

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### **Post by “smoothiekiwi” of January 11, 2022 at 9:22 AM**

#### Quote

as if it's a YOLO sentiment. (Is using YOLO still a thing??)

Please, we're civilized people here 😄 I don't even know what YOLO is, I know no one in my surroundings who would use that word, and I don't even live in an English-speaking part of the world 😊

#### Quote

So, you don't have to make time to star gaze (although that can be rewarding in many ways). Notice the way the sun plays through the leaves as you walk to or from school. Feel the sun (when it's warm) on your face. Take pleasure in whatever learning you \*can\* achieve at school whether in your formal classes or by exploring online or in the library. Begin to notice where you can feel gratitude, too. Epicurus places an emphasis on feeling gratitude, even for little things

I have to admit that somehow, I didn't really thought about this part of Epicureanism all that much, although gratitude, even for the little things, is most certainly present in this philosophy. But that has to do something with the awareness and mindfulness system of thought, doesn't it?

#### Quote

However, for me, Epicurus gave us a practical philosophy, rooted in the everyday experience of human beings, and made it accessible to everyone - otherwise it would not have spread across the ancient world in city after city. At its core, his philosophy is about personal responsibility for actions taken and taking pleasure in the everyday living of our lives.

YES!!! On one hand, that's extremely liberating- one doesn't have to surrender to virtue, nor to a God. On the other hand, that means that only you are the smith of your life's happiness.

#### Quote

"Neither must one who is young delay in loving and pursuing wisdom; nor should one who is old grow weary of loving and pursuing wisdom; because it is neither out of season nor untimely for the health of the mind." It's never out of season, nor too early, nor too late. No one is neither too young nor too old to practice philosophy.

Aristotle would like to chat with you 😊 But seriously, that's a big reason for me not to be an Aristotelian. I simply don't believe in the fact that I can unfold my human potential at 47. What if I die before that? My life wouldn't be fulfilled, I wouldn't have had a good life because I couldn't reach my potential? That sounds really stupid to me. I think its obvious that age and experience can bring a whole lot of pleasure and wisdom (and that's why I love to be on this form- y'all have at least twice the amount of wisdom I have, and some of you much, much

more), yet I believe that I've the same capacity to lead a happy and fulfilling life as you. In my opinion, that's the role of philosophy- to give us this knowledge, and the tools needed in order to have a good life, however one may define it. And it truly never is too early or late to have one.

#### Quote

Thank you again for engaging on the forum. You've made some great posts, asked a lot of great questions, and I look forward to reading more from you!

Thank you very much, glad to hear!

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### Post by “Cassius” of January 11, 2022 at 9:26 AM

#### [Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

I simply don't believe in the fact that I can unfold my human potential at 47. What if I die before that? My life wouldn't be fulfilled, I wouldn't have had a good life because I couldn't reach my potential? That sounds really stupid to me.

Your post contains lots of interesting and good points, and I want to call this one out as especially good. I like the way you think!

And YOLO means "You Only Live Once" (which implies seize the day / make the best of it) 😊

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### Post by “smoothiekiwi” of January 11, 2022 at 9:29 AM

#### Quote

So someone who learns about what Epicurus taught adds to their knowledge regardless of whether they ever convince many others of its truth, or whether they have time to engage in as many pleasures as they might like. While it is nice to see numbers increase and more people share the view and add to the number of our friends, a large part of the benefit of the philosophy comes no matter how many or how few people accept it.

[Cassius](#), that's a good point- yet I'm wondering if that correlates with the pursuit of pleasure in friendship. What that means is that I don't know of any Epicurean people in my surroundings. By dedicating myself to the Epicurean lifestyle, that would mean that I couldn't lead deep and meaningful relations with people around me, simply because we would talk "on different pages". I already notice this a bit: if someone is contemplating their bad grades, it's increasingly difficult to be understanding and compassionate, while having the thought in the back of the mind "their note isn't of any importance to their life, it won't change their happiness at all". The world is filled with so much chatter and gossip, that when one dedicates to the pursuit of pleasure and wisdom, it's difficult to find people who don't participate in this and don't believe in a God-given mission to be the best possible version of themselves (also, this slogan is already so annoying: "be the best possible version of yourself"- in my understanding, that's the definition of always striving, but never reaching and be content. Why do people think that this mode of life is so good?!)

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## Post by “smoothiekiwi” of January 11, 2022 at 9:35 AM

### Quote

Your post contains lots of interesting and good points, and I want to call this one out as especially good. I like the way you think!

Thanks! This issue has honestly occupied my mind for some time now, and- just like with Stoicism-, that's a big "red flag" there. I couldn't find a solution to this problem yet, and I think that there isn't any.

### Quote

And YOLO means "You Only Live Once" (which implies seize the day / make the best of it)

Ah, thank you for explaining that, I honestly was clueless to what it means 😊

I think that this expression carries at least two meanings. One of them is what [Don](#) meant- use the moment, live your life now, don't wait for later in order to be happy. That's a very good thought, and a very important one- we live our lives only once, and it's a very short period in time. On the other hand, it could also mean to "be the best possible version of yourself, and ideally now". And, as I pointed out above, I think that it's a recipe for unhappiness. In some way, that correlates with the Buddhist thought that desire will produce unhappiness. Although I don't fully agree with it- especially fulfillable desires can prove very pleasurable and outweighing the

pain by a lot-, there's truth in that when it comes to endless desires. Epicurus would probably call this strive for constant self-perfection non-natural and non-necessary.

But maybe I'm mistaken- please correct me then!

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## Post by “Cassius” of January 11, 2022 at 10:09 AM

### [Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

By dedicating myself to the Epicurean lifestyle, that would mean that I couldn't lead deep and meaningful relations with people around me, simply because we would talk "on different pages".

I think you should be careful not to take that too far, in the spirit of the cliché of "not letting the perfect be the enemy of the good." Not many of us (maybe none of us?) have very many "classical Epicurean" friends in our personal local lives, but we can't let that stop us from developing deep and meaningful relations with those friends we do have.

### [Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

This issue has honestly occupied my mind for some time now, and- just like with Stoicism-, that's a big "red flag" there. I couldn't find a solution to this problem yet, and I think that there isn't any.

The quote above doesn't make it clear but you're still talking about the issue of "how long do you have to live in order to live a full life?" I think it is important NOT to let this issue go, because it's closely related to the issue of how long we should desire to live, and it's clear that Epicurus said not to treat that question lightly. It does have an answer and we can figure out Epicurus' position if we think about it hard enough. If you want to create a separate thread on it, please do. In the meantime I will say that I think you are right to the extent that there is no one single number of years that is a minimum for which we can say "He didn't live XX years so he didn't have a happy or full life."

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## Post by “Don” of January 11, 2022 at 10:25 AM

[Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

I don't even know what YOLO is



LOL It's an acronym for "You Only Love Once" which while true is often used to characterize a daredevil, no-holds-barred lifestyle.

I guess I could have also used FOMO "Fear of Missing Out."

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## Post by "Cassius" of January 11, 2022 at 10:28 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

which while true is often used to characterize a daredevil, no-holds-barred lifestyle.

I wouldn't say that YOLO necessarily has a completely negative connotation, but yes it's often used like "I'm going to get on that "Biggest Rollercoaster West of the Mississippi" no matter what you think - 'You Only Live Once!'"

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## Post by "smoothiekiwi" of January 11, 2022 at 10:51 AM

Quote

I think you should be careful not to take that too far, in the spirit of the cliché of "not letting the perfect be the enemy of the good." Not many of us (maybe none of us?) have very many "classical Epicurean" friends in our personal local lives, but we can't let that stop us from developing deep and meaningful relations with those friends we do have.

Well, I think that it should be the goal- after all, to prevent cultism and "bubblism" by only surrounding himself with like-minded people 😊 And still, if a friend tells you a problem which you see as having to do with false beliefs- how do you deal with that?

And just while I wrote it, I realized that it's the exact same thing like the cultism-problem of Epicurus, where I wrote that I shouldn't implement my understanding of pleasure on Epicurus's choice to go in a garden and teach privately. Exactly the same thing applies here! If I talk with another person, and she tells me about a struggle they currently have, it's not up to me to decide if this struggle is worthwhile. I think it's sometimes necessary to ask this person if she really thinks that it's worthwhile (to get this job, this grade, this friendship etc.), because this can sometimes really help in revealing insecurities. But if the other person is convinced that this path is a good one and will bring them pleasure in the long run- then they can go for it! Why should I decide what's best for them?

I haven't thought of that before, and it just struck me a bit- it's such an easy answer, but it's incredibly difficult to implement it IRL.

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### **Post by “Cassius” of January 11, 2022 at 10:56 AM**

Right. Context is everything. What we might do if we lived in 200BC Athens or Rome is different than our circumstances in 2022. And from virtually every perspective of age, sex, location, education level, financial resources and on and on and on what a person is going to do to consider and implement Epicurean ideas is going to be different.

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### **Post by “Kalosyni” of January 11, 2022 at 12:51 PM**

[Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

Well, I think that it should be the goal- after all, to prevent cultism and "bubblism" by only surrounding himself with like-minded people

[Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

yet I'm wondering if that correlates with the pursuit of pleasure in friendship. What that means is that I don't know of any Epicurean people in my surroundings. By dedicating myself to the Epicurean lifestyle, that would mean that I couldn't lead deep and meaningful relations with people around me, simply because we would talk "on different pages".

### [Quote from Cassius](#)

Not many of us (maybe none of us?) have very many "classical Epicurean" friends in our personal local lives, but we can't let that stop us from developing deep and meaningful relations with those friends we do have.

Here are some thoughts coming up for me now:

Some people can have naturally occurring "Epicurean" attitudes without knowing about Epicureanism or the philosophy. And they see that life is to be enjoyed, and they have an attitude of taking responsibility and making choices to make life joyful and enjoyable.

Other people can have very different attitudes, and they can be "sour-pusses" or "Debbie-Downers" always complaining and focusing on what is bad in the world, and they are not able to see how they are making their problems worse by not making choices to make their lives better and more fun and enjoyable.

So you have to choose wisely who you want to be friends with. You will be able to have more deep and meaningful relationships with people who enjoy living life.

As for the study and shared discussion of the wisdom in Epicurean philosophy, at this point in time that will be online, since there aren't many of us (but who's to say what things will be like in ten years from now).

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### **Post by "Matt" of January 11, 2022 at 1:12 PM**

[Kalosyni](#) and to dovetail off the "Debbie downer" idea, I also see our social media lives tied to this concept. If we are associating with "friends" or even family that live a toxic social media lifestyle of nastiness, anger and other negative things, it can bleed into our bubble. We can still maintain relations with certain people based on familial ties or old friendships. But since friendship is meant to have mutual benefit it may not be beneficial to associate with people who bring us down or cause us irritation.

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### **Post by "Kalosyni" of January 11, 2022 at 1:29 PM**

### [Quote from Matt](#)

We can still maintain relations with certain people based on familial ties or old friendships.

Yes, I have two sisters...one is a kind and good-natured "fervent Christian". The other is very difficult to communicate with because she has a very negative and aggressive attitude. She isn't all "bad"..it is about a 50/50 chance whether she will be in an okay mood or in a negative mood. Luckily she lives in another state so I only see her once a year when I go to visit family. I have decided that I want to maintain some kind of connection with her, so will talk on the phone occassionally. But I really need to "take care of myself" and that means not letting her attitude bring me down, as well as remembering not to confide my feelings, or too many details of my life because she will twist them around and make it "unpleasant". So I set boundaries within myself to be clear about my connection with her, and to be clear about what I will and will not tolerate from her (I can remove myself from a conversation when it gets too unpleasant).

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### **Post by “Matt” of January 11, 2022 at 1:38 PM**

I have a situation like that too, but his is very much inspired by internet related ideologies. Oddly enough he'd be far more "normal" had he never become so invested in the internet lifestyle that consumes nearly all of society today. I had to remove myself from all forms of social media (except for this forum) to cut off the constant negative energy.

And I don't attribute this to me or anyone being overly sensitive either, but rather a simple psychological truth that constant exposure to negative people, news, conspiracy theories, apocalyptic narratives etc. can have a detrimental chemical impact on our psyches...especially since there is no reprieve from it 24/7.

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### **Post by “SimonC” of January 11, 2022 at 3:34 PM**

I stumbled across the podcast [Your Undivided Attention](#) about two years ago and I find it really put things in a new perspective re: social media. Highly recommended if you have a commute or similar podcast time.

I've also cut off social media except for a couple forums and feel a lot better and less anxious. I still have the behavior of reaching for my phone whenever there is a spare minute, but I've

been getting better at asking myself, *is there something else I'd rather do instead?* I read a lot more books now.

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### **Post by “Pacatus” of January 12, 2022 at 12:50 AM**

Since I have late-diagnosed (very late: 60 or so) ADHD, for me it's a bit of "one thought at a time."

Although that diagnosis was a big relief ("You mean I'm not crazy!?!"), I personally reject the "disorder" in that last D. It's just the way my brain works, a bit outside the area of central tendency on the distribution; it has benefits and drawbacks, that's all. I naturally "hypertext" more than "knuckling down" my mind (which I did for years, to some detriment of my health).

I also cut off some social media (Facebook, some online forums; never tweeted) and have simply and peacefully left some former friends when the relationship became toxic. I feel more peaceful about that reading some of your experiences on here. Thanks.