

# Lucretius Today Podcast Interview Questions (Interviews Project Starting 2023)

Post by “Cassius” of December 16, 2022 at 8:52 AM

2022 has been a very good year for the EpicureanFriends forum, with many new participants and lots of good new content generated. As a new project for 2023, it appears that we have good reason to hope that we might be able to do a series of "interviews" of significant people involved in Epicurean philosophy. I am hopeful that we might in the future to be able to gain access to writers like Emily Austin, Haris Dimitriadis, and perhaps others like Catherine Wilson. In addition, it strikes me that we could probably produce interesting interviews with people like Elli Pensa, and Christos Yapijakis, and Michele Pinto, who have been involved in Epicurean activism in Greece and Italy. (Simply have the connection of saying "I live in Greece" or "I live in Italy" is interesting enough for me personally. 😊 )

Anyway to get the project going we need to talk about a few logistics, and the first one that comes to mind is that it would be good to develop a list of standard questions to ask each interviewee to be sure that we hit the most important points we want to bring out. In the case of the writers we want to help promote their books, but we also want to keep in mind the ultimate goal of "promoting Epicurean philosophy," so we will want to think about what questions interest us the most that we would like to ask anyone who is prominently associated with Epicurus. Here's an example of a consideration: While it might be most interesting to us to spend an hour discussing the controversies around katastematic pleasure, or [Epicurean gods](#), or the nature of anticipations, we probably want to limit the time we spend on some of those in-depth questions so that the interview presents the most positive first impression possible to newer or relatively new listeners. We can always go back for a special session on some of the details later.

I will keep a master outline of questions here in this first post, and update it with suggestions, but please use the rest of this thread to suggest more, and we will keep this first post up to date as a master list. Thanks for your assistance!

(I am setting this up with just a few questions for examples and we'll greatly expand this as we go forward.)

1. Tell us about yourself? In what part of the world do you live and what do you do when you're not studying Epicurus?
2. How did you first become interested in Epicurean philosophy?
3. Before we get into some of the controversies that surround it, how would you yourself summarize what you think is most important about Epicurean philosophy?
4. What aspects of the philosophy are most significant to you personally?

5. To what extent do you think Epicurus' message is as valid today as 2300 years ago?
  6. What made you decide to take your interest in Epicurean philosophy to the new level of writing a book about it?
  7. It seems that today Stoicism is much more popular than Epicurean philosophy. What are the most important ways you see Epicureanism as different and superior to Stoicism?
  8. What misunderstandings do you think exist as to Epicurean philosophy and which are the most important to clarify? For example, is Epicureanism ultimately ascetic? Was Epicurus anti-science, or anti-progress, or anti-culture? Did Epicurus teach suppression of all ambition? Did Epicurus teach that the way to live is to totally withdraw from society and live in a cave on bread and water and cheese?
  9. Do you have any regular routines that you find helpful in applying Epicurean philosophy in your life?
  10. Aside from reading your book 😊 , what suggestions would you give to people who want to learn more about Epicurus?
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### **Post by “Don” of December 16, 2022 at 9:35 AM**

I would be careful about too rigidly sticking to a set of questions: Q, A, Q, A, repeat. The best "interviews" are a conversation, albeit a "structured" conversation, but I'd suggest keeping the "conversation" part firmly in mind.

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### **Post by “Cassius” of December 16, 2022 at 9:37 AM**

Yes I agree and intend to do that, but unless we have a set list to have as a reference things can tend to get messy.

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### **Post by “Don” of December 16, 2022 at 10:51 AM**

Oh, and not a criticism btw! Just speaking from experience 😊

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## **Post by “Cassius” of December 16, 2022 at 11:06 AM**

No worries. You are right that a conversation has to "flow." At the same time, sometimes the flow can be so fast an even unexpected that we don't end up covering some of the main points that need to be covered. I am particularly thinking of myself and how I would like to zero right in on what I consider to be controversial issues after years of reading. As satisfying as that might be to me, it will make no sense to a general listener, and for the sake of accomplishing as much as possible as fast as possible and in a limited time, I need some guard rails to make sure that we connect with the widest reasonable listenership.

I am thinking part of the way we will address that issue will be for there to be several questioners and then maybe have follow ups to each answer, and then only when the conversation seems to ebb to flow on to the next question. A lot of any unevenness can be ironed out in editing.

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## **Post by “Godfrey” of December 17, 2022 at 4:51 AM**

One format that might be helpful to adapt in some fashion is the one that Alan Alda uses in his "Clear and Vivid" podcast. He ends each interview with the same "seven quick questions" that he asks every guest. A possible way to use this idea would be to begin the interview with a few quick, standardized questions and proceed from there.... With Alda's podcast I sometimes skip to the end to hear how the guest answers the questions if I'm not particularly interested in the main topic. It's an interesting way to get a sense of the guest as a person.

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## **Post by “Cassius” of December 31, 2022 at 12:55 PM**

Two new questions being added to the list in the first post in this thread:

1. It seems that today Stoicism is much more popular than Epicureanism. What are the most important ways you see Epicureanism as different and superior to Stoicism?
2. What misunderstandings do you think exist as to Epicureanism that are most important to clarify? For example, is Epicureanism ultimately ascetic? Was Epicurus anti-science, or anti-progress, or anti-culture? Did Epicurus teach suppression of all ambition? Did Epicurus teach that the way to live is to totally withdraw from society and live in a cave on bread and water and cheese?