

"Living for Pleasure" Book group - Chapter Highlights

Post by "Kalosyni" of April 18, 2023 at 9:01 PM

Living for Pleasure by Emily Austin - April 30th meeting

Chapters 1 - 4

Chapter 1 - Maybe We're Doing it Wrong

- Imagining the pleasure of a perfect vacation
- Hedonism at first glance seems like a recipe for following destructive impulses and "giving license to our failure of self-control", but Epicurus is different
- Feelings of shame can come up around natural bodily desires – we both need and want to have the freedom to enjoy what brings us pleasure
- Pleasure is a sweeping term that includes everything that is not painful
- The importance of removing anxiety and taking action
- Not life coaching - this is to wake you up to pleasure and pain, and that pleasure is the natural guide to live a happier life

Chapter 2 - Epicureanism, the Original Cast

- Epicurus
- Lucretius
- Philodemus
- Diogenes of Oenoanda

- The Opposition: Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch

Chapter 3 - Happiness, Theirs and Ours

- The dispute between the various ancient schools of philosophy is about their divergent views about the nature of happiness and the ways to achieve it
- An objective vs. subjective understanding of happiness

Chapter 4 - Natural Hedonism

- It is easily observed that we pursue pleasure and avoid pain by nature
- The cradle argument
- All our actions aim toward our own pleasure
- Hedonistic prudence
- Psychological hedonism
- Prudential miscalculations

- Objections from the opponents of Epicureanism
-

Post by “Cassius” of May 7, 2023 at 10:40 PM

Thanks to those who have attended our first two book review sessions. We have had seven or eight people each night and we are looking forward to our next session on chapters nine through twelve. Further updates to come as we get closer to the next session.

Post by “Kalosyni” of May 8, 2023 at 7:52 AM

Here are some of the slides that I presented in last night's Zoom book review of Emily Austin's "Living for Pleasure". (I present a few highlights of chapters 5, 6, and 7. And Cassius presented on chapter 8.)

"Living for Pleasure" - Author: Emily Austin

Book Review Notes - Chapter 5 - "What Do You Want?"

Three categories of desires:

Necessary desires - (natural and necessary) --necessary for our life and for our happiness -- the desires for things which bring us happiness - that which keeps us alive and our body healthy, and also the desires which arise due to our rational capacities and our particular social nature (thinking and understanding clearly about the nature of the world, a secure sense of the future, and having reliable and secure social connections and interactions) -- Necessary desires do not require intense struggle.

Extravagant desires - (natural and unnecessary) those desires which are fine if we don't get invested in whether or not we satisfy them -- fancier types or specific versions of necessary desires -- the objects of extravagant desires are not always bad, and can contribute to genuine joy, but aren't necessary for happiness.

Corrosive desires - (unnatural and unnecessary) -- those we should cut out of our soul root and branch (VS46) -- contrary to our nature, or not conducive to human well-being

Chapter 6:

"Why Can't We Be Friends?"

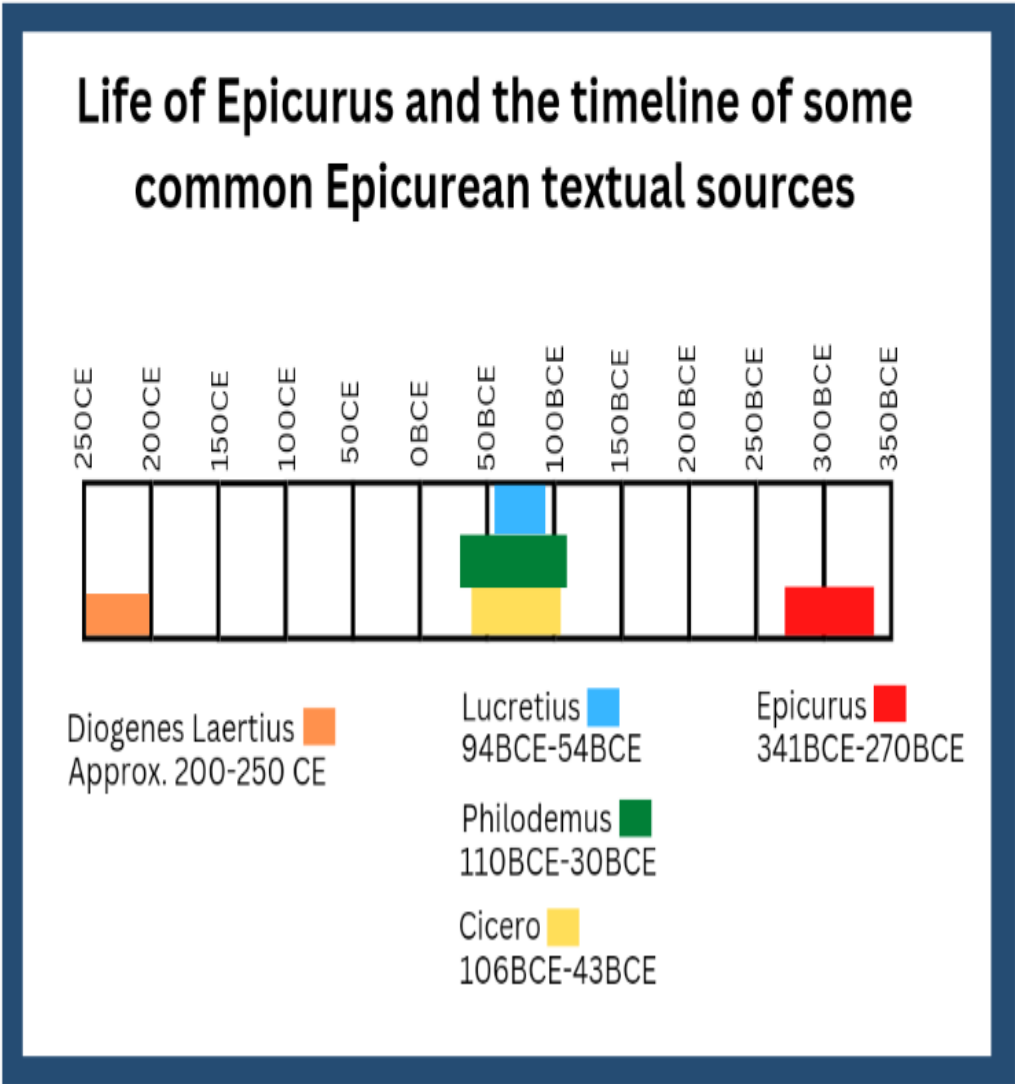
"Friendship dances around the world announcing to all of us that we must wake up to blessedness." Vatican Saying 52

Epicureanism explains why we need friends and of what sort -- We need friends for knowledge, security, shared personal reflection and joy.



Chapter 7 - "Let Me Be Frank"

Philodemus wrote the treatise "On Frank Speech".
He also wrote "On Property Management" and other Epicurean treatises. Philodemus was born 160 years after Epicurus died.



Post by "Kalosyni" of May 15, 2023 at 10:18 AM

Thank you to all who attended last night's meeting.

Revisiting the meeting...I only created one "generic" slide which listed the chapter numbers and titles, then for each chapter I read some excerpts which captured some of the highlights of each chapter.

For me the group's discussion about social media stuck in my mind (as part of Chapter 12) - and we went around the circle and briefly talked about our own experiences with Facebook or other social media.

These four chapters covered a lot so the evening's discussion jumped around quite a bit.