

# How epicureanism has been helping me deal with overindulgence

**Post by “brett” of January 24, 2018 at 11:54 PM**

hi all,

My job takes me coast to coast USA on a regular basis. I am constantly being asked to client and company dinners while out on assignment.

In the past, I've struggled with overindulging in alcohol. So much so, that I've dealt with a seeming never-ending cycle of overindulgence, guilt, promise to stop altogether, overindulgence, guilt...etc.

Over the last few months, I've pondered how to handle this with my newfound Epicurean mindset. Tonight, after a particularly rowdy client/company dinner and cocktail hour here in New Orleans (a fabulous city to overindulge), I walked back to my hotel with a peer of mine who was also done drinking for the evening.

It dawned on me that the last few dinners/nights out, I have stopped prior to getting to the point of 'no return'. Each time, I was offered another drink and took a moment to ask myself "at this point in my evening, will having another adult beverage lead to a little longer pleasant feeling or will it result in feeling like crap in the morning and diminish my capacity to be alert and rested the next day?" That little self-talk stopped me again from having another drink.

for me the test of a philosophy is whether it helps in real-life to bring peace and harmony. The realization that Epicurus is helping me to improve my daily life is a test to it's efficacy...one which it has passed with flying colors.

Thanks,

Brett

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**Post by “Cassius” of January 25, 2018 at 5:16 AM**

That's a great description of the process. We can combat overindulgence by trying to suppress the immediate pleasures by appeals to false religious/idealistic ideas, or we can combat it by acknowledging that pleasure really is our goal, and that if we really do want to maximize our

pleasure we have to avoid going too far with certain activities that are beyond our ability to handle them without punishment through excessive pain. To me the latter argument is far more persuasive than the first.

It also helps a lot to be able to talk about and compare experiences with other like-minded people, so thanks for participating in allowing us all to do that here!

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### **Post by “EricR” of January 25, 2018 at 5:39 AM**

Thanks so much for posting this personal story, Brett. While I deeply appreciate the huge pitcher knowledge that is available here and I drink from it regularly, it is the lived experience of a philosophy that interests me the most. It is the affect of internalizing a set of ideas on one's outlook and, as in your case, choices.

Kudos to you for having the presence of mind in the midst of imbibing to see into the immediate future and make the choice to place future pleasure over the present. Alcohol is notorious for obscuring the ability to do that. You also did it in a party atmosphere. Well done!

I will add that repeatedly doing this will create what I am calling "the habit of long-term pleasure". By this I mean each time one makes the choice to forego the momentary pleasure for the longer lasting, one gets better at doing this. For example, I enjoy a glass of wine before dinner. But I know from experience that having more than that will make me too lethargic and apathetic to enjoy dinner. So I don't have more than the 1 glass and have no desire for more.

By the way, I like your new profile picture of you being thoughtful. But I miss the one of the guy looking joyful, bordering on insane! 😊

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### **Post by “Cassius” of January 25, 2018 at 6:46 AM**

Quote

By the way, I like your new profile picture of you being thoughtful. But I miss the one of the guy looking joyful, bordering on insane!

Very true!! 😊

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### **Post by “brett” of January 25, 2018 at 7:08 AM**

Thank you both. It's very encouraging to start to see these principles working themselves out in daily life.

As a bonus, I woke up this morning and have the added pleasure of not being groggy, foggy headed , etc. the decision to maximize my long-term pleasure most certainly, from this side of the decision, was justified. Instead of 1-2 more enjoyable martinis I can function...:-)

Thanks for letting me share.

(I shall most definitely return to my previous pic...it's one of my favorites...I feared it made me look a little too outlandish...I see it did not...:-))

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### **Post by “EricR” of January 25, 2018 at 7:50 AM**

Ah...there he is! 👍

The other pic was fine. But there's something about this one.....I think it's the sense of not talking oneself too seriously.

I find great pleasure in that simple idea of taking a lighter view of oneself. I see so many who are desperate to be right, to be authoritative, to be seen a certain way. When we make a mistake we cringe as if that should never happen or somehow our reputation will take a hit and we won't be taken seriously. Once one wakes up to being fallible, the inner life becomes much lighter.

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### **Post by “Cassius” of January 25, 2018 at 8:18 AM**

I completely agree Eric. This one is not "crazy" but someone in control of the effect. 😊