

Happy Thanksgiving!

Post by “Don” of November 23, 2023 at 9:55 AM

Today, we celebrate Thanksgiving in the United States (although there are similar festivals around the world).

I contend that Thanksgiving is the most Epicurean of modern holidays given Epicurus's emphasis on gratitude.

So, a Happy Thanksgiving to all. Take a chance to remember the good things you have and those you can look forward to.

Don't ruin the things you have by wanting what you don't have, but realize that they too are things you once did wish for. οὐ δεῖ λυμαίνεσθαι τὰ παρόντα τῶν ἀπόντων ἐπιθυμία, ἀλλ' ἐπιλογίζεσθαι ὅτι καὶ ταῦτα τῶν εὐκταίων ἦν.

Misfortune must be cured through gratitude for what has been lost and the knowledge that it is impossible to change what has happened.

θεραπευτέον τὰς συμφορὰς τῆ τῶν ἀπολλυμένων χάριτι καὶ τῷ γινώσκειν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄπρακτον ποιῆσαι τὸ γεγονός.

Therefore, both the young and old must love and pursue wisdom. On the one hand, the old can be young by means of gratitude for the pleasures which have happened; on the other hand, the young can be as if they are old in years by means of the fearlessness of facing what is intended to be done or what is to come.

Post by “Cassius” of November 23, 2023 at 9:57 AM

It's been a good year and lot to be thankful for and not the least of which is the participation and contributions here on the forum of Don!

His list of projects just keeps on growing! He'll need the "loci method" to remember them all!

Post by “Don” of November 23, 2023 at 10:59 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

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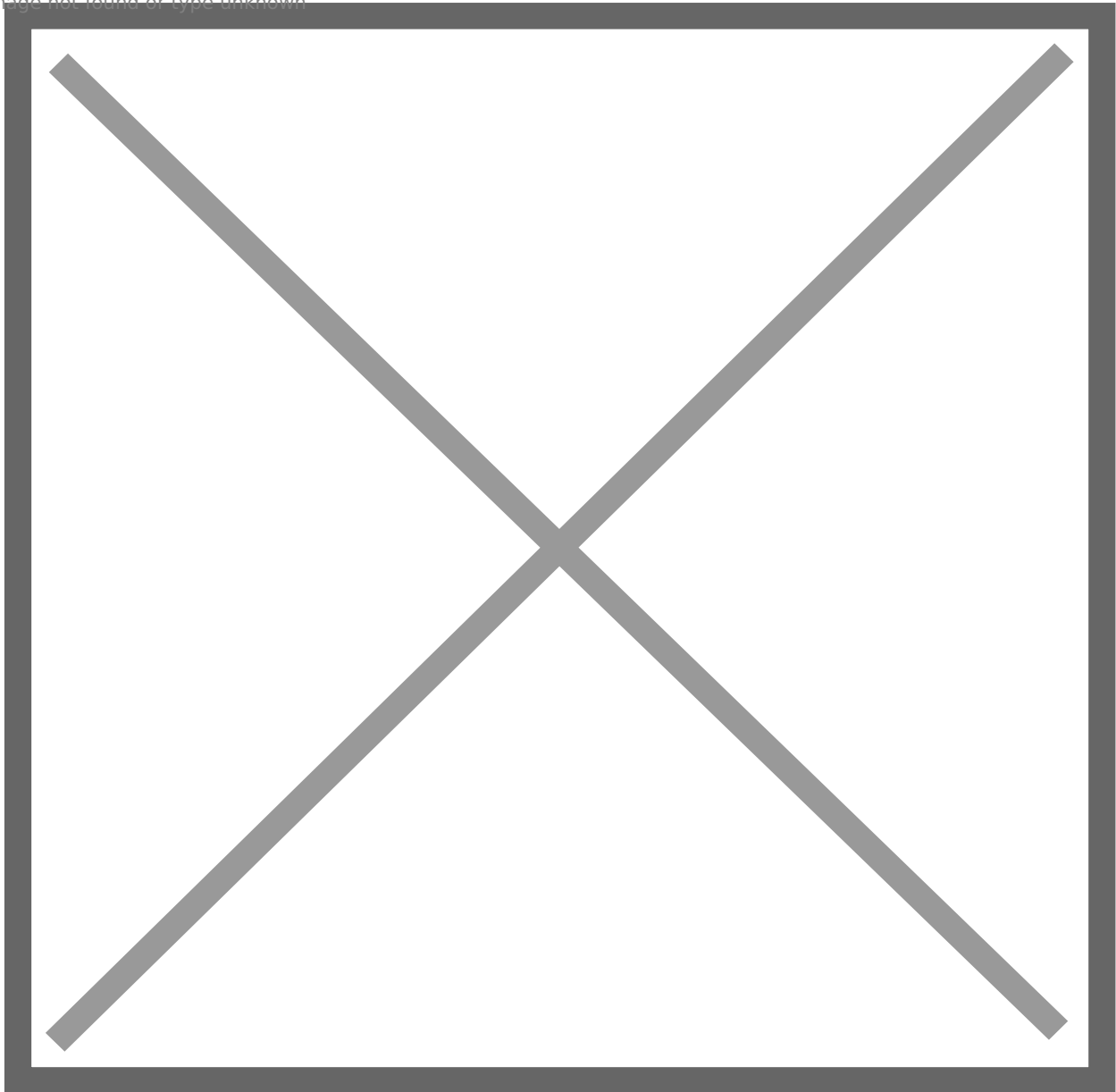
You're too kind.

I'm grateful for finding this little corner of the Internet, so thanks to [Cassius](#) for establishing this virtual Garden and all *his* projects!

Post by “Cleveland Okie” of November 23, 2023 at 11:14 AM

I want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, and I'm grateful for this forum. I did a Thanksgiving post on my blog today and pointed to the New Epicurean website:

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[Happy Thanksgiving](#)

Photo by krakenimages on Unsplash Happy Thanksgiving! I am grateful for this blog and the friends I have made by starting it years ago. I a...

www.rawillumination.net

Post by “Cassius” of November 23, 2023 at 11:38 AM

Good to hear from you Cleveland Oakie and Happy Thanksgiving to you too!

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3547-happy-thanksgiving/>

Post by “Cassius” of November 23, 2023 at 2:11 PM

Thanksgiving-appropriate philosophy as we partake in holiday meals:

VI § 18.]

DE FINIBUS II.

37

too, when we are neither in pain nor in pleasure; thus he who is feasting is in pleasure, while he who is on the rack is in pain. But do you not see that between these extremes lies a great crowd of men who feel neither delight nor sorrow?' 'Not at all,' said he; 'and I affirm that all who are without pain are in pleasure and that the fullest possible.' 'Therefore he who, not thirsty himself, mixes mead for another, and he who, being thirsty, drinks the mead, are in just the same state of pleasure?'

VI. Then he replied: 'Make an end of questioning if you please; and I said at the outset that I preferred to have it so, foreseeing just what has come about, I mean logical quibbles.' 'Then,' said I, 'would you rather that we debated in rhetorical than in logical style?' 'You speak,' he answered, 'as though continuous speech belonged to rhetoricians only and not to philosophers also.' 'This,' I replied, 'is what Zeno the Stoic

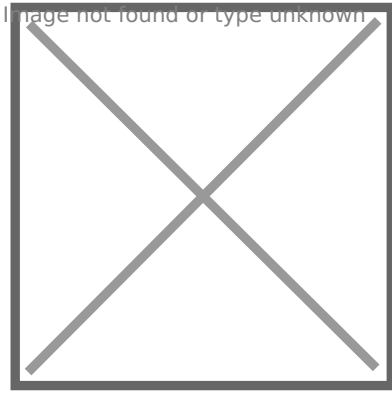
ixes mead for another, and he pleasure:"

While we are getting it filtered through a negative-sounding Cicero, sounds to me like this example was used to emphasize the viewpoint that the person who -- "thirsty himself" -- meaning not in pain, falls within the definition of pleasure just as much as the person who chases away the pain of thirst by drinking!

This variation does not stress the host and the guest being "totally without pain," but that might be implied too from the fact that no other aspect of their experience is mentioned.

So either way, from (1) the "whole person totally without pain" perspective (if we assume that) or (2) from the "discrete experience" perspective (that the experience of drinking while thirsty falls under the same label of "pleasure" as the person who is not thirsty at all) the point is being driven home that "absence of pain" can mean either stimulation or simply normal life without pain.

Post by “Don” of November 23, 2023 at 3:59 PM



[The Ethical Significance of Gratitude in Epicureanism](#)

Many texts in the Epicurean tradition mention gratitude but do not explicitly explain its function in Epicurean ethics. I review passages that mention or...
www.academia.edu

Post by “Cassius” of November 23, 2023 at 4:44 PM

I apologize to everyone that my typing lately is so awful:

Thanksgiving-appropriate philosophy as we partake in holiday means:

of course that was supposed to be "meals"

If anyone sees me type someone that seemingly makes no sense don't hesitate to let me know.

Of course that presumes you can separate out my posts that "make no sense" from those that do! 😊

Post by “Pacatus” of November 24, 2023 at 5:16 PM

[Don](#) :

This old man, trying to secure anchor in a pleasant harbor, wishes to express his gratitude and thanksgiving for the essay you linked in post #7 of this thread (as well as for the thread, and your opening comments).

[As I read it, I recalled a friend whose 12-step sponsor asked him to keep regular journal entries of things for which he was grateful: a diary to remind him of the therapeutic value of an “attitude of gratitude”. I am not a journaler – but I do keep reminders of such things on my computer.]

Thank you. 😊

Post by “Bryan” of November 25, 2023 at 3:06 AM

Thanks be to blessed Nature because she has made what is necessary easy to supply, and what is not easy, unnecessary. (Iohannes Stobaeus Anthology, XVII.23)

We cannot say that the good which has rounded out a happy life, the good for which Epicurus rendered thanks in the last words he uttered, is not equal to the greatest. (Seneca, Letters to Lucilius, 66.47)

But what epithet do they deserve – with your "roars" of ecstasy and "cries of thanksgiving" and tumultuous "bursts of applause" and "reverential demonstrations," and the whole apparatus of adoration that you all resort to in supplicating and hymning the man who summons you to sustained and frequent pleasures? (Plutarch, Against Colotes, 1117A)

[Epicurus] writes this to his friends about himself: "The way in which you have provided for me in the matter of sending the grain was godlike and magnificent, and you have given tokens of your regard form me that reach to high heaven." So if someone had taken that corn ration of his bread-stuff from our philosopher’s letter, the expressions of gratitude would have conveyed the impression that it was written in thanksgiving for the freedom or deliverance of the whole Greek nation or of the Athenian state. (Plutarch, Contra Epicuri Beatitudinem, 1097C)

Post by “Cassius” of November 25, 2023 at 4:52 AM

A great collection for Thanksgiving!

We should probably develop a complete Thanksgiving list, to which we could add some Lucretius no doubt as well.