

# Martin's personal outline

Post by “Martin” of January 31, 2024 at 10:17 AM

I have chosen

- pleasure as the goal of my life
- materialism as the adequate attitude toward the world
- the scientific method as the only reliable method to gain fundamental knowledge for understanding the world by iteration of improved models and new observations enabled by the improved models and new tools.

I aim at pleasure by choosing carefully which desires to fulfill, willingly accept temporary pain if it is a side effect of actions (e.g. hard study, hard work, delay of enjoyments) to maximize future pleasure which is worth the endured pain or to minimize future pain, hold up the no-harm principle and trust my reasoning capability and my intuition on love, friendship, compassion and justice to avoid counterproductive egoism and the limits of scientism.

These items of my philosophy of life are identical with corresponding items of Epicurus' philosophy when it is interpreted consistently by resolving apparent contradictions between different quotes of the extant texts instead of being misrepresented as primitive hedonism or ascetic hedonism depending on which subsets of quotes are neglected or misinterpreted as absolute statements.

I differ from Epicurus in at least the following aspects, which are sufficiently minor that I call myself an Epicurean:

- I do not claim that my chosen philosophy of life is true philosophy or that any scientific theory is true because no school of philosophy can reasonably claim truth for itself, and whereas the adequacy or superiority of a theory can be demonstrated, there is no way to prove that it is true, although in the banalities of daily life sufficiently covered by common sense, there might be no obvious difference between adequacy and truth. Truth is fundamentally limited to the validity of logical constructs and truthfulness of protocols of events.

- Scientific progress has made parts of his metaphysics obsolete and has in particular refuted his physics of the gods and the images the brain would receive from them.

In other interpretations of Epicurus than the one which is typically supported at [epicureanfriends.com](https://www.epicureanfriends.com), additional differences might be:

- I may do things to extremes without moderation.
- I aim for ecstatic pleasure occasionally.
- I claim that romantic love is conducive to and potentially a required ingredient for maximized pleasure.
- I found marriage to be consistent with Epicurus' philosophy but probably I do not qualify as a sage, so the statement of Epicurus against marriage for Epicurean sages in typical cases might not be applicable to me anyway.
- I do not do gluttony for extended periods.

- I can do asceticism but usually, I am not ascetic.

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### **Post by “DavidN” of February 8, 2024 at 4:04 AM**

I like and agree with most of what you put forward, but coming from a technical field I do have to comment on models. I can't count how many hours I've wasted arguing with engineers about how a reactor works in their model and how its performing in reality. As if reality is wrong because it doesn't match his model, and because of this it's become one of my main gripes with current scientific culture as well. As far as I'm concerned until you test your model against reality it isn't worth the silicon it's written on. Which is also why I share Epicurus reservations about math and his elevation of sensory evidence. E.G. My chemical engineers models may say that these two chemicals are compatible in the same dosing line but my sensory observations of the situation tell me a completely different story. I don't know how or why they're crystallizing and clogging the line, I'm not a chemist, but they are. Or I've watched engineers "improve" there modeling and change the chemical feed ratios to improve the bottom line, pushing the safety tolerance of the metallurgy but making management happy. However changing the model doesn't change or negate the reality of the metallurgy of the reactors, and when people choose to believe models over sensory evidence you end up with a burned out reactor.

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### **Post by “Pacatus” of February 8, 2024 at 4:17 PM**

#### [Quote from DavidN](#)

As if reality is wrong because it doesn't match his model, and because of this it's become one of my main gripes with current scientific culture as well.

That was – and so far as I am able to tell, still is – true in spades for the neoclassical economics I spent so many hard hours learning way back when. Even with the post-Keynesian-institutionalist and behavioral economics correctives, the old models are still the mainstream – and realism eschewed. 😞