

Welcome Robert!

Post by "Cassius" of August 27, 2024 at 7:17 PM

Welcome [Robert](#)

Please check out our [Getting Started](#) page, but in the meantime there is one last step to complete your registration:

All new registrants must post a response to this message here in this welcome thread (we do this in order to minimize spam registrations).

You must post your response within 72 hours, or your account will be subject to deletion.

Please say "Hello" by introducing yourself, tell us what prompted your interest in Epicureanism and which particular aspects of Epicureanism most interest you, and/or post a question.

This forum is the place for students of Epicurus to coordinate their studies and work together to promote the philosophy of Epicurus. Please remember that all posting here is subject to our [Community Standards / Rules of the Forum](#) our [Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean](#) and our [Posting Policy](#) statements and [associated posts](#).

Please understand that the leaders of this forum are well aware that many fans of Epicurus may have sincerely-held views of what Epicurus taught that are incompatible with the purposes and standards of this forum. This forum is dedicated exclusively to the study and support of people who are committed to classical Epicurean views. As a result, this forum is not for people who seek to mix and match some Epicurean views with positions that are inherently inconsistent with the core teachings of Epicurus.

All of us who are here have arrived at our respect for Epicurus after long journeys through other philosophies, and we do not demand of others what we were not able to do ourselves. Epicurean philosophy is very different from other viewpoints, and it takes time to understand how deep those differences really are. That's why we have membership levels here at the forum which allow for new participants to discuss and develop their own learning, but it's also why we have standards that will lead in some cases to arguments being limited, and even participants being removed, when the purposes of the community require it. Epicurean philosophy is not inherently democratic, or committed to unlimited free speech, or devoted to any other form of organization other than the pursuit by our community of happy living through the principles of Epicurean philosophy.

One way you can be most assured of your time here being productive is to tell us a little about yourself and personal your background in reading Epicurean texts. It would also be helpful if

you could tell us how you found this forum, and any particular areas of interest that you have which would help us make sure that your questions and thoughts are addressed.

In that regard we have found over the years that there are a number of key texts and references which most all serious students of Epicurus will want to read and evaluate for themselves. Those include the following.

["Epicurus and His Philosophy"](#) by Norman DeWitt

[The Biography of Epicurus by Diogenes Laertius](#). This includes the surviving letters of Epicurus, including those to [Herodotus](#), [Pythocles](#), and [Menoceus](#).

["On The Nature of Things"](#) - by Lucretius (a poetic abridgement of Epicurus' "On Nature"

["Epicurus on Pleasure"](#) - By Boris [Nikolsky](#)

The chapters on Epicurus in [Gosling and Taylor's "The Greeks On Pleasure."](#)

[Cicero's "On Ends" - Torquatus Section](#)

[Cicero's "On The Nature of the Gods" - Velleius Section](#)

The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda - [Martin Ferguson Smith translation](#)

[A Few Days In Athens" - Frances Wright](#)

Lucian Core Texts on Epicurus: (1) [Alexander the Oracle-Monger](#), (2) [Hermotimus](#)

[Philodemus "On Methods of Inference"](#) (De Lacy version, including his appendix on relationship of Epicurean canon to Aristotle and other Greeks)

"The Greeks on Pleasure" -Gosling & Taylor Sections on Epicurus, especially the [section on katastematic and kinetic pleasure](#) which explains why ultimately this distinction was not of great significance to Epicurus.

It is by no means essential or required that you have read these texts before participating in the forum, but your understanding of Epicurus will be much enhanced the more of these you have read. Feel free to join in on one or more of our conversation threads under various topics found throughout the forum, where you can to ask questions or to add in any of your insights as you study the Epicurean philosophy.

And time has also indicated to us that if you can find the time to read one book which will best explain [classical Epicurean philosophy](#), as opposed to most modern "eclectic" interpretations of Epicurus, that book is Norman DeWitt's Epicurus And His Philosophy.

(If you have any questions regarding the usage of the forum or finding info, please post any questions in this thread).

Welcome to the forum!

Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean

1. Not "flourishing," "human potential," "self-actualization," or "meaningfulness," but happiness grounded in the feeling of pleasure.
2. Not "absence of pain" as a full statement of the goal of life, but "the Feelings are two, pleasure and pain" and "Pleasure is the beginning and the end of a happy life."
3. Not virtue for the sake of virtue, but virtue as instrumental for the attainment of pleasure.
4. Not "the greatest good for the greatest number," but "Every desire must be confronted with this question: What will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished and what if it is not?"
5. Not "humanism," "transhumanism," "individualism," "collectivism," "egoism," "altruism," "social progress," "Marxism," "democracy," "tyranny," or any "one size fits all" political ideal of any kind, but social structure based on friendship which "is formed and maintained by means of a community of life among those who have reached the fullness of pleasure."
6. Not "hard determinism," but "some things happen from necessity, some from chance, and others through our own choice."
7. Not "supernaturalism," but "materialism."
8. Not "supernatural gods," or "life after death," but confidence in a fully material universe and "for those men for whom wisdom is possible, and who do seek it, such men may truly live as gods."
9. Not only "short term hedonism," but "it is to continuous pleasures that I invite you."
10. Not "rationalism," but "all reason is dependent upon sensations."
11. Not fearful of death nor careless of losing life, but valuing life for the opportunity of pleasure it brings.

Our Posting Policy At EpicureanFriends.com:

"No Partisan Politics," "No Supernatural Religion," and "No Absolute Virtue"

This forum is dedicated to promoting the philosophy of Epicurus, and not to any partisan political positions whether "left," "right," or "center." The task of rediscovering Epicurean philosophy requires that such discussions be held elsewhere. Posts violating this rule are subject to removal.



Epicurean philosophy firmly rejects the viewpoint that there are any supernatural forces or absolute virtues or Platonic ideals of any kind. Argument which is based on supernatural claims, or "absolute" virtues or ideals of any kind, are in violation of this rule and subject to removal.

**Nothing can be created
from nothing.**

**Nature has no gods over
her.**

**Do not assign to the
gods anything that is
inconsistent with
incorruption and
blessedness.**

Death is nothing to us.

**There is no necessity to
live under the control of
necessity.**



**He who says "Nothing
can be known" knows
nothing.**

All sensations are "true."

**Virtue is not absolute or
an end in itself - all good
and evil consists in
sensation.**

**Pleasure is the guide of
life.**

**By "Pleasure" we mean
all experience that is not
painful.**

**Life is desirable, but unlimited time contains no greater
pleasure than limited time.**

Post by "Robert" of August 28, 2024 at 7:51 PM

Hello, friends! I look forward to many interesting conversations here.

I'm a newcomer to Epicureanism, and have been immersing myself in a sort of self-conducted crash course over the past several weeks. I read DeWitt (based on recommendations here), several of the essays in "Epicurus and the Epicurean Tradition" (Fish/Sanders), Robert Brown's "Lucretius on Love and Sex," and most recently Voula tsouna's book on the ethics of Philodemus.

My entry into philosophy came via Buddhism. After exploring that path for several years I concluded there were too many things that i couldn't accept. And I noticed that when I put the problem areas aside, the results looked quite a bit like Epicureanism. That got me interested in learning more.

I live in Maryland, work in university communications, and have four cats. Nice to meet everyone, and thank you for making this wonderful resource available!

Post by “Cassius” of August 28, 2024 at 7:57 PM

Thanks for introducing yourself Robert! We look forward to hearing more from you!

Post by “Don” of August 28, 2024 at 8:48 PM

If you haven't read Emily Austin's book, *Living for Pleasure*, highly recommend that one for you to add in your "self-conducted crash course" 😊 Great phrase, by the way. Her book is by far my personal favorite for an introduction to the philosophy.

Post by “Martin” of August 28, 2024 at 9:30 PM

Welcome Robert!

Post by “Robert” of August 28, 2024 at 11:01 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

If you haven't read Emily Austin's book, *Living for Pleasure*, highly recommend that one for you to add in your "self-conducted crash course" 😊 Great phrase, by the way. Her book is by far my personal favorite for an introduction to the philosophy.

Thank you for the recommendation! I did have *Living for Pleasure* on my list; I'm now moving it up in the queue. Excited to start reading it.

Post by “Don” of August 29, 2024 at 7:26 AM

[Quote from Robert](#)

Thank you for the recommendation! I did have *Living for Pleasure* on my list; I'm now moving it up in the queue. Excited to start reading it.



I describe it as erudite but conversational. It's very approachable but comes with a deep understanding of Epicurus's philosophy. Hope you enjoy.

Her article "Are the Modern Stoics Really Epicureans?" is worth a read, too!

[Are the Modern Stoics Really Epicureans?](#)

The Modern Stoicism movement has embraced the classical philosophy, often as part of project of disciplining emotion with rationality. Perhaps adherents should...

www.hnn.us

Quote

As a more controversial point, I suspect that many Modern Stoics are already Epicureans, at least by the standards of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Let me explain...

Post by “Kalosyni” of August 29, 2024 at 8:17 AM

Welcome to the forum Robert!

Post by “Cassius” of August 29, 2024 at 9:37 AM

Robert we have a lot of former Buddhists here, so you might find [this subforum](#) interesting, especially if you find yourself wanting to discuss points of comparison.

But to you (and all new people) who just get starting reading the forum, please feel free to post questions or comments in any section as you are getting started, and don't worry about waiting to try to read everything before you post.

This isn't like a computer tech forum where the standard answer to basic questions is RTFM. We have some basic materials or locations to which we can point you, but more than that our participants enjoy going through basic points with "newer" people. Doing that regularly helps us sharpen our own understanding and reminds us of the basic points, rather than staying deep in weeds, as we can tend to do when we're discussing some history or translation or textual issue. The basic points always need to be our primary points of discussion.

Post by “Eikadistes” of August 29, 2024 at 12:00 PM

[Quote from Robert](#)

Hello, friends! I look forward to many interesting conversations here.

I'm a newcomer to Epicureanism, and have been immersing myself in a sort of self-conducted crash course over the past several weeks. I read DeWitt (based on recommendations here), several of the essays in "Epicurus and the Epicurean Tradition" (Fish/Sanders), Robert Brown's "Lucretius on Love and Sex," and most recently Voula tsouna's book on the ethics of Philodemus.

My entry into philosophy came via Buddhism. After exploring that path for several years I concluded there were too many things that i couldn't accept. And I noticed that when I put the problem areas aside, the results looked quite a bit like Epicureanism. That got me interested in learning more.

I live in Maryland, work in university communications, and have four cats. Nice to meet everyone, and thank you for making this wonderful resource available!

Welcome, Robert! I think you will find some interesting discussion about comparisons between Buddhism and Epicurean Philosophy here: [2022 Epicurus vs Buddhism Compare and Contrast Thread](#). (I actually just re-visited it, inspired by some new, yet unrelated investigation I've been

doing).

Post by “Robert” of September 1, 2024 at 1:22 PM

[Quote from Twentier](#)

[Quote from Robert](#)

Hello, friends! I look forward to many interesting conversations here.

I'm a newcomer to Epicureanism, and have been immersing myself in a sort of self-conducted crash course over the past several weeks. I read DeWitt (based on recommendations here), several of the essays in "Epicurus and the Epicurean Tradition" (Fish/Sanders), Robert Brown's "Lucretius on Love and Sex," and most recently Voula tsouna's book on the ethics of Philodemus.

My entry into philosophy came via Buddhism. After exploring that path for several years I concluded there were too many things that i couldn't accept. And I noticed that when I put the problem areas aside, the results looked quite a bit like Epicureanism. That got me interested in learning more.

I live in Maryland, work in university communications, and have four cats. Nice to meet everyone, and thank you for making this wonderful resource available!

Welcome, Robert! I think you will find some interesting discussion about comparisons between Buddhism and Epicurean Philosophy here: [2022 Epicurus vs Buddhism Compare and Contrast Thread](#). (I actually just re-visited it, inspired by some new, yet unrelated investigation I've been doing).

Indeed, that's a useful and quite thorough discussion! Some of the points raised resemble ones I've seen in debates between "secular" and "traditional" Buddhists--the former generally wanting to drop karma/rebirth and supernaturalism in general, and also being less nihilistic. Buddhism as taught in the suttas is extremely pessimistic--with complete oblivion being seen as the ultimate "happiness."

Buddhist traditionalists accuse the secularists of being, essentially, modern-day Chārvākas--and, as you noted in the thread, it's not a big leap from Chārvāka to Epicureanism.

Anyway, thanks for pointing me to this very interesting thread!

Post by "Robert" of September 1, 2024 at 1:26 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

[Quote from Robert](#)

Thank you for the recommendation! I did have Living for Pleasure on my list; I'm now moving it up in the queue. Excited to start reading it.



I describe it as erudite but conversational. It's very approachable but comes with a deep understanding of Epicurus's philosophy. Hope you enjoy.

Her article "Are the Modern Stoics Really Epicureans?" is worth a read, too!

<https://www.hnn.us/article/are-th...ally-epicureans>

Quote

As a more controversial point, I suspect that many Modern Stoics are already Epicureans, at least by the standards of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Let me explain...

Thank you, I will read this first! I found Stoicism to be a letdown. With superficial exposure, there seemed much to agree with--but I suspect the aspects I found appealing were "Epicureanism in disguise." 😊

Post by "Robert" of September 1, 2024 at 1:40 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Robert we have a lot of former Buddhists here, so you might find [this subforum](#) interesting, especially if you find yourself wanting to discuss points of comparison.

But to you (and all new people) who just get starting reading the forum, please feel free to post questions or comments in any section as you are getting started, and don't worry about waiting to try to read everything before you post.

This isn't like a computer tech forum where the standard answer to basic questions is RTFM. We have some basic materials or locations to which we can point you, but more

than that our participants enjoy going through basic points with "newer" people. Doing that regularly helps us sharpen our own understanding and reminds us of the basic points, rather than staying deep in weeds, as we can tend to do when we're discussing some history or translation or textual issue. The basic points always need to be our primary points of discussion.

Thank you, Cassius!

This online community is an amazing resource. I've been struck by how little material on Epicurus is available to the general public--and how much has to be dug up from (sometimes obscure) academic journals--so I see great value in what you're doing here.

I did try to prepare a bit by reading DeWitt, but I will definitely take your advice and not shy from asking questions.