

Welcome ReiWolfWoman!

Post by "Cassius" of April 8, 2026 at 2:58 PM

Welcome [ReiWolfWoman](#)

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 24 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 and associated Terms of Use](#). Please be sure to read that document to understand our ground rules.

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 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 most other philosophies, 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 of truth and happy living through pleasure as explained in the principles of Epicurean philosophy.

One way you can be assured of your time here will be productive is to tell us a little about yourself and 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 already have.

You can also check out our [Getting Started](#) page for ideas on how to use this website.

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 "Cassius" of April 8, 2026 at 2:59 PM

ReiWolfWoman tells us:

My background in Epicurus is that I was first exposed to him in an undergrad philosophy class, where we read some of his remaining work and that of Lucretius. Then in an online community where we discuss philosophy and improving quality of life, (as I have some previous exploration in stoicism as well as modern philosophy from childhood onwards). Then I read more of the book attributed to Epicurus and now I'm in the middle of Catherine Wilson's How to Be an Epicurean.....

Post by “Cassius” of April 8, 2026 at 2:59 PM

Glad to have you !

Post by “wbernys” of April 8, 2026 at 4:43 PM

Welcome [ReiWolfWoman](#) !

Post by “Eikadistes” of April 8, 2026 at 4:46 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

ReiWolfWoman tells us:

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I'm curious about others' experience with undergraduate Philosophy programs.

The program at Florida Gulf Coast University was built around Aristotle. One professor called him "the smartest person who ever lived". The senior thesis class at the college was inspired by Alasdair MacIntyre, a virtue ethicist and modern Aristotelian. Besides this, they offered supplemental surveys of existentialist and post-structuralist thinkers, and a section on Socratic rhetoric.

My last day before dropping out was funny. I'll never forget it: that last class featured a discussion about Georges Bataille (existentialist) [masturbating in front of his mother's corpse](#). I don't remember how much that class cost per credit hour, but however much it was, it was too much.

The Garden was not mentioned **once** at *any* point in my formal education. I didn't receive a direction, or find anything that couldn't have been found in a public library or a bookstore. ... meanwhile, extended cousins in Rome shared with me that *Epicuro* was part of their childhood

curriculum. I'm curious about others' experiences with Epicurean Philosophy in the education system.

Post by “wbernys” of April 8, 2026 at 4:57 PM

[Quote from Eikadistes](#)

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Trust me [Eikadistes](#) that may be for the better.

I had a class on Ancient Greece and we talked about the philosophies of the time briefly. The professor was rather great aside from this but man he was really bad with Epicureanism. As you can imagine he was practically gushing over Stoicism (and to a lesser extent Plato) and defended them against accusations of being unemotional for an entire hour and 15 minutes class.

But when he got to Epicureanism he only spent like 20 minutes on it said and i quote (no exaggeration). "Epicureanism teaches that being on fire should be seen as no big deal because it's all just atoms in the end and that all pain is nothing because it's all just atoms and all things dissolve in the end. There's no point so just eat, drink, and be merry What a lovely philosophy". He also said Epicurus was an Atheist. Didn't mention anything about the desires, friendship, or dealing with the fears of death.

Post by “ReiWolfWoman” of April 9, 2026 at 6:02 PM

Hi All,

My interest in Epicurus was prompted by his physics, really. I was impressed by the (disregard) for the gods and (belief) in multiple causes for life. It seemed quite intuitive for me. As I read on, I found his approach to life mature and reasonable. It combined the (virtues) I found valuable with the pleasure I knew was part of the good life - all within reason. I'm most interested in dissecting the variations of determinism, chance and will. However, my interests in his philosophy are not limited - both physics and values, both self and society.

I found this forum looking up “Epicurean forum.”

Post by “ReiWolfWoman” of April 9, 2026 at 6:17 PM

[Quote from Eikadistes](#)

[Quote from Cassius](#)

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Display More

[Quote from wbernys](#)

[Quote from Eikadistes](#)

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Post by “ReiWolfWoman” of April 9, 2026 at 6:22 PM

I’m still figuring out this quote function...

My undergrad course barely touched on Epicureanism and I actually learned more about it in a graduate rhetoric class where it was more respected. My undergrad professor was clearly a mix of Aristotelian and Kantian, so that’s what I wrote my final paper on. But it’s difficult to organize any intro course on philosophy because there’s too much to cover. My rhetoric professor in grad school attributed Epicurus with moderation, which I can understand but I don’t see it as his actual point - more like being (reasonable*) and “sensible” in its classical definition of awareness and affectedness of the senses.

*When I put words in parens it’s mainly because I can’t think of a better word but I know there is one.

Post by “Joshua” of April 9, 2026 at 11:09 PM

Quote

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“sensible” in its classical definition of awareness and affectedness of the senses.

I probably wouldn't express it the following way normally, but since you have posed an interesting question and it can be helpful to think out loud sometimes, I might answer it this way:

I suggest that Epicurus advocated not moderation, but what modern philosophers following Max Weber call *instrumental rationality*; choices (and avoidances) are considered rational when they are expected to lead to a desired end, which for Epicurus is the end of increasing pleasure and reducing pain.

In any case, welcome!

Post by “Martin” of April 10, 2026 at 1:50 AM

Welcome ReiWolfWoman!

Post by “ReiWolfWoman” of April 10, 2026 at 10:17 PM

[Quote from Joshua](#)

Quote

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Thank you! That's an interesting way of looking at it. Outside of pure logic, I think all rationality is based on a desired end. Even when it claims to be objective, it usually has a motive. That's one reason I appreciate Epicurus, for professing such end(s).

Post by "ReiWolfWoman" of April 20, 2026 at 5:12 PM

I'm reading a book called *Jane Austen's Philosophy of Virtues*. Emsley writes, "Socrates calls this kind of adherence to principle illusory, and suggests that it is actually a kind of self-indulgence that forces one to be temperate for the sake of later pleasure...afraid of losing other pleasures...is practical, and has to do with action. The philosopher's virtue has to do with the heart and mind, with transcending and mastering fear and desire" (24). (This also reminds me of the stoic approach to pain.) What do you all think Epicurus would say to this accusation? Is there an argument to be made that virtues of heart and mind are simply an extension of the pleasure analysis with fear and desire, masquerading as a higher good? Or perhaps an argument to be made that Epicurus's own philosophy does value a higher good in its definition of pleasure, primacy of friendship and his own time spent in self-awareness and philosophical analysis? Am I asking an obvious question?

Post by "Cassius" of April 20, 2026 at 7:00 PM

I think that's a very good question and the answer isn't obvious at all.

To me, some of what you're commentin on is a variation of the "psychological hedonism" argument which goes - everyone does what they think brings them pleasure, even pursuing virtue as a stoic, so in essence we're all hedonists and we should just all go have a beer because everyone acts for what they think is their own pleasure.

I personally don't like to argue that way and don't think it's a very attractive or persuasive position to take, but we have differing opinions about it here on the forum. If I recall correctly it appears in the "Living for Pleasure" book too.

To the extent that's what Socrates is talking about, he's seeing through that argument and saying that you shouldn't pursue virtue for the sake of pleasure, because virtue is itself its own reward and any consideration of pleasure tarnishes virtue.

As to this specifically

[Quote from ReiWolfWoman](#)

The philosopher's virtue has to do with the heart and mind, with transcending and mastering fear and desire"

I think that's an accurate statement of the true stoic virtue-based position. They do in fact wish to suppress emotion and desire, and of course I think Epicurus would say to that view that it is against nature and not a good idea to do at all. But the stoics are being consistent - they don't want anything to do with pleasure, even as a reward for being virtuous.

Those are preliminary comments and you may be thinking in a different direction, but part of your comment does remind me of those issues.

[Quote from ReiWolfWoman](#)

Or perhaps an argument to be made that Epicurus's own philosophy does value a higher good in its definition of pleasure, primacy of friendship and his own time spent in self-awareness and philosophical analysis?

Here i think your question and the answer is pretty clear. Epicurus values nothing higher than "pleasure," but the key to the analysis is that he has a very wide definition of what pleasure means, to include anything whatsoever that we find desirable. So the words that people like to use such as nobility and meaningfulness all come within the term "pleasure." If we feel that something is desirable in body or mind then we do so because it brings us the feeling of pleasure.