

# **Discussion of Blog Article: "Living For Pleasure, Or Dying For Relief From Pain?"**

**Post by "Cassius" of June 5, 2026 at 1:38 PM**

This thread is for discussion of the blog article "Living For Pleasure, Or Dying For Relief From Pain?"



Blog Article

## [Living For Pleasure, Or Dying For Relief From Pain?](#)

[...]

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### Is The "Emphasis" In Epicurean Philosophy On Relief From Pain?

In a separate article I have made the case that it is a major rhetorical and factual mistake to describe Epicurean philosophy as primarily about relief from pain. Jack Gedney, a writer on Substack, [responded with an article](#) referencing me and affirming his contention that pain relief is indeed the primary emphasis of Epicurus. The title of the second article changed the focus slightly from "primary" to "emphasizes," but Gedney...



Cassius

June 5, 2026 at 1:35 PM

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#### Post by "Todd" of June 5, 2026 at 2:50 PM

Some minor feedback:

Quote

A person whose primary orientation is the avoidance of pain does not choose pain. Full stop.

This is a straw man argument. Such a person would certainly choose a lesser pain as a means of avoiding a greater one.

Quote

Epicurus pursued nature because he recognized that every day lived in unnecessary fear — of death, of the gods, of what the neighbors will think — is a day of a finite life squandered and taken away from the pursuit of pleasure.

## "pursued nature"

I think that should be "studied nature"

## "fear...of what the neighbors will think"

While Epicurus would not have advised *fearing* what our neighbors might think, he definitely did not recommend ignoring their opinions.

His advice was to live so as to avoid attracting either envy or contempt.

(My source for that is DeWitt. PD 39 is certainly one of his sources, but translators seem to disagree about the meaning of that one. I have not looked into what other sources he cites.)

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## Post by "Cassius" of June 5, 2026 at 3:42 PM

### [Quote from Todd](#)

This is a straw man argument. Such a person would certainly choose a lesser pain as a means of avoiding a greater one.

Thanks for your comments. I don't think that is a straw man argument at all. It is exactly this part of what Epicurus says - that we DO sometimes choose pain to maximize pleasure - that is in issue.

I wouldn't normally think it necessary to point this out (that we sometimes choose pain) but it is being ignored by the "painfree" chorus, and even if mentioned at all only in an exceptional way, never clearly stated to be something we can and should do on a routine basis to maximize pleasure.

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## Post by "Don" of June 5, 2026 at 9:13 PM

### [Quote from Todd](#)

"fear...of what the neighbors will think"

While Epicurus would not have advised fearing what our neighbors might think, he definitely did not recommend ignoring their opinions.

His advice was to live so as to avoid attracting either envy or contempt.

And also according to Diogenes Laertius' Lives:

The wise one will also pay just enough attention to their reputation as to avoid being looked down upon. (X.120, my own translation)

Hicks: He will pay just so much regard to his reputation as not to be looked down upon.

Yonge: He will show a regard for a fair reputation to such an extent as to avoid being despised;

Original text: εὐδοξίας ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον προνοήσεσθαι,

εὐδοξίας good repute

τοσοῦτον so far as

Provide for good repute for as far as...

ἐφ' ὅσον μὴ καταφρονήσεσθαι:

καταφρονέω look down upon, think slightly of

So, the translations are accurate.