

Community Standards

[**Update 07/27/19:** This document was originally prepared on April 29, 2015, with subsequent revisions as indicated. These standards are implemented by our [Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean](#) and our [Posting Policy statements](#) and [associated posts](#). A longer version with discussion of this Community Standards / Rules of the Forum section is [here](#).]

The purpose of EpicureanFriends.com is to promote the study and application of the philosophy of Epicurus, and to allow those who share this goal to communicate with one another in a dedicated community. Posters should conduct themselves as part of a community of friends and always treat each other with graciousness and consideration "*as though Epicurus were watching*." Participants should be ready to receive criticism and disagreement with *frankness, firmness, and good humor*, and should consult the principles followed by ancient Epicureans, as referenced in Norman DeWitt's article "[Organization and Procedure in Epicurean Groups](#)."

Participants in this site are in no way "members" of any organization or pledged to hold a particular set of beliefs. Participants are in no way submitting to any authority or doctrinal rules. However, this community was founded by and for people who are devoted to applying Epicurean philosophy accurately, and experience has shown that there are identifiable characteristics that typify the sincere Epicurean, as exemplified by the following:

1. An EpicureanFriend does not have a Stoic-like ascetic personality which views pleasure with suspicion and seeks to eliminate all but the most necessary of desires. The Epicurean follows Vatican Saying 63 in holding: "Frugality too has a limit, and the man who disregards it is like him who errs through excess."
2. An EpicureanFriend is not a "Tranquillist" who construes "absence of pain" as something separate or distinct from the goal of pleasurable living. The Epicurean understands that "pleasure" describes a faculty which encompasses all pleasurable physical and mental activities and which is in itself the guide to the best way of life. The Epicurean holds: "[W]e call pleasure the beginning and end of the blessed life. For we recognize pleasure as the first good innate in us, and from pleasure we begin every act of choice and avoidance, and to pleasure we return again, using the feeling as the standard by which we judge every good." The Epicurean understands that there is no need for argument to prove that "pleasure" is desirable. The Epicurean remembers that Epicurus said "I know not how to conceive the good, apart from the pleasures of taste, of sex, of sound, and the pleasures of beautiful form." The Epicurean therefore recognizes with Cicero that Epicurus taught that "Nothing is preferable to a life of tranquility crammed full of pleasures." (Cicero - Defense of Publius Sestius)
3. An EpicureanFriend does not seek "virtue" or "nobility" or a "greater good" as superior to the goal of living pleurably. The Epicurean understands "virtue" as a tool which successfully produces pleasurable living, not an end in itself. The Epicurean agrees with Diogenes of Oinoanda: "But since, as I say, the issue is not 'what is the means of happiness?' but 'what is happiness and what is the ultimate goal of our nature?,' I say both now and always, shouting out loudly to all Greeks and non-Greeks, that pleasure is the end of the best mode of life, while the virtues, which are inopportunately messed about by these people (being transferred from the place of the means to that of the end), are in no way an end, but the means to the end."
4. An EpicureanFriend does not embrace Platonic / Aristotelian / Socratic devotion to "logic" and "reason" as goals in themselves which are superior to pleasurable living. The Epicurean views logic and reason as tools for producing pleasurable living.
5. An EpicureanFriend does not embrace Platonic / Aristotelian / Socratic "idealism" which holds that truth exists only in some other and higher dimension above the reality in which we live. The Epicurean holds that this life is all that we have, and that the state of being dead is a state of nothingness to us.
6. An EpicureanFriend does not embrace Stoic / Platonic / Aristotelian / Socratic religious abstractions such as supernatural gods, prime movers or divine fire.

7. An EpicureanFriend does not embrace eclecticism or the radical skepticism that holds that reality is not knowable and that nothing is certain.

Please also observe the following:

- 1) Posters shall respect the right of each member to "**live unknown**" to the extent that he or she sees fit. Postings here are available to others to reread for an indefinite time in the future, so please post responsibly.
- 2) Posters shall adhere to the purpose of this forum, which is to participate in a community of friends to promote the philosophy of *Epicurus*. Many forums for the discussion of other philosophers exist elsewhere, and discussion of other philosophies should be done here only to assist in the better understanding of Epicurus. Posts which are primarily discussion of non-Epicurean ideas should be made elsewhere.
- 3) In order to encourage the free flow of information, participants are welcome to register with a pseudonym / "pen name." Use of real names is not necessary, and posting of personal information of any kind should be minimized. Participants are free to disclose personal information about themselves as they see fit, but personal information about participants shall not be disclosed without their consent.
- 4) Discussion of specific modern political issues should be severely limited. That is not because Epicurean philosophy has no application to these issues, but because we are in the early stages of building a viable Epicurean community, and contentious discussion of specific political issues which divide us before that can be accomplished is not consistent with the goal of this site. Please keep the big picture in perspective, and if you must discuss application of Epicurus to modern politics please do it privately or elsewhere.
- 5) Do not create posts composed of nothing other than links. Any links to locations outside the forum must contain comment on whether they are endorsed or criticized which explain how they relate to the forum. (Added 09/15/19)
- 6) All posts are subject to moderation. Leadership of the forum retains at all times the right to accept, reject, and remove any post and any participant at any time for any reason.