

Hellenist Thought

A Primer on Stoicism, Skepticism, and Epicureanism

Hellenism

Mostly Greek, but blended with Egyptian, Persian, and Indian thought as Alexander the Great spreads Greek culture.

Less about “What is reality?”

More about “How do I cope with reality?”



Stoicism

“Suck it up and do your job.”

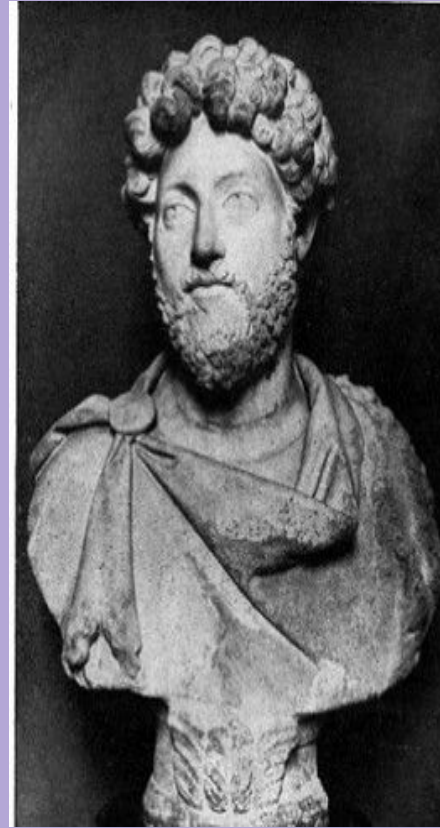
Belief that:

People are scum

When you can control a situation, you should.

When you can't, quit whining and accept fate.

Do the best you can to do your job, no matter what that means.



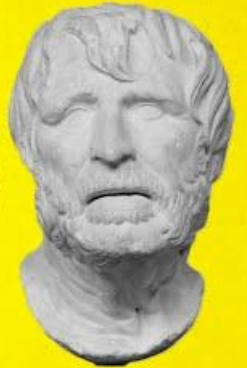
*"Be content with
what you are,
and wish not
change; nor
dread your last
day, nor long
for it."*

Marcus Aurelius

Stoicism

STOICISM

THE STOICS



Stoic Ontology

Only the physical world really exists.

God is more like a universal force, like the Tao.

Everything happens according to plan.

All living things are connected to each other, and to the plan. (Pneuma)

We are spirit bound to this flesh
We go round one foot nailed down
But bound to reach out and beyond
this flesh
Become Pneuma
We are will and wonder
Bound to recall, remember
We are born of one breath, one
word
We are all one spark, sun becoming

Stoic Ethics

Seek Eudaimonia

Control emotions/passions

Continually reframe one's expectations in accordance with rational thought.

The infographic features a central dark blue circle with the word 'FELLOWSHIP' in white. To its left, a dashed line connects to a text block. To its right, a dashed line connects to a lightbulb icon and another text block. Below the circle, a large teal arrow points down to a text block. At the bottom, the website URL is displayed.

FELLOWSHIP

Since bees and ants work together in nature, so should we. Stoics treat others with respect, and work for the betterment of humanity.

Stoic ethics, social philosophy, and metaphysics, all derive from the same maxim, "live in accord with Nature."

STOIC REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

A Stoic sage works every day to achieve excellent character and calm mental state. Before going to bed each night, take few minutes to reflect on your day. Consider how you acted, what you accomplished, and what you could improve on tomorrow.

www.commonseethics.com

Epicurian Hedonism (Epicurianism)

Eudaimonia= Pursue pleasure by avoiding mental pain.

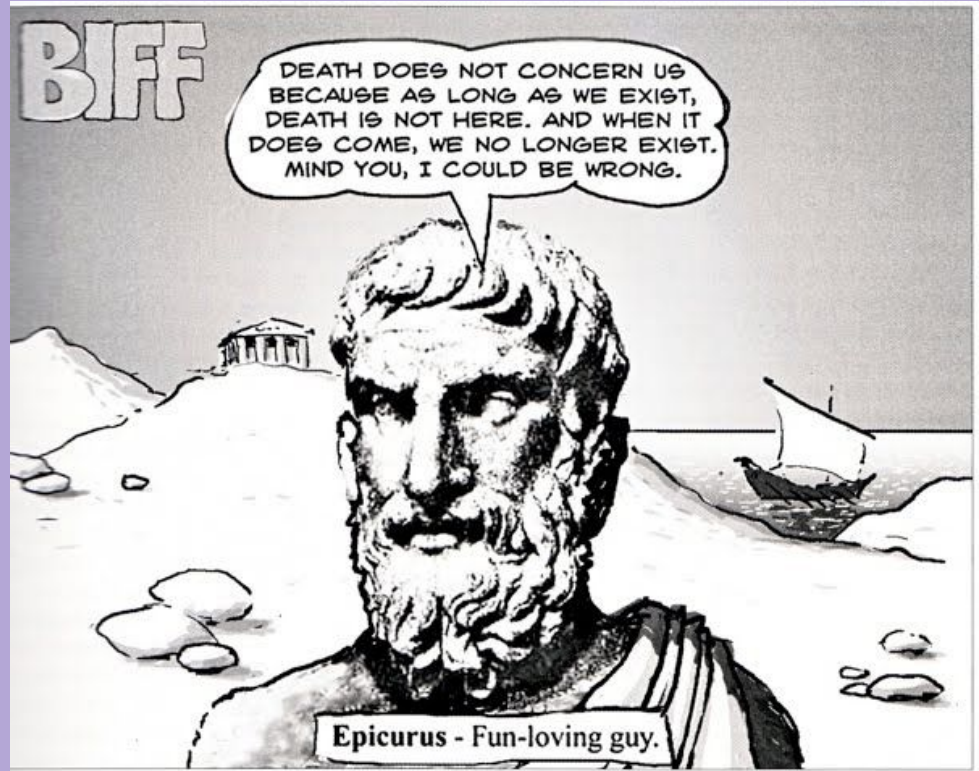
Ataraxia (inner peace)

If stoics were about social responsibility,
Epicurians were about individual freedom.

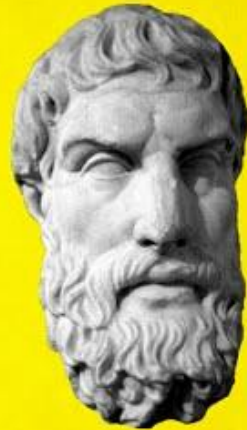
No gods, just atoms (BNTA)

No concern about death or afterlife.

No marriage or politics (but lots of friends)



EPICURUS



HEDONISM

Skepticism

Also into Eudaimonia and Ataraxia

Believed truth unknowable. (Like Socrates, but not really)

Infinite regress and circular logic

How do you know you don't know?

- Imagination, Dreams, Deja vu

Opposed to all dogma

Protect yourself from false expectations

Skepticism

- Academic Skepticism:
 - We can't have knowledge. At best, we can make probabilistic judgments about things.
- Pyrrhonian Skepticism:
 - We don't know whether we can know anything. We simply show on a case by case basis that no argument is certain. It's thus best to suspend judgment (*epoche*) on these matters.

Pyrrhonic Skepticism Applied

