

The inquiry of how to continue living has its necessity for every culture, religion, and community in world history. How must life's challenges be handled? Which one is the better option to act and control ourselves against other people? And how must we confront the ultimate challenge: our own death?

Stoicism, a way of thinking flourished in the ancient world, has too many things to talk about how we might exist today. Stoic philosophers were intrigued in the practicabilities of having a harmless, righteous life, from how to lay the base of your relationships to cope with daily waves of anger.

In this summary, you are going to see how to prolong your own life on the grounds of Stoic principles, how to choose what is important over the others and which capability you have to make a difference, and in which way to freak out less about the things that are not important and you can't control. You are going to have some effective advice from ancient philosophers and get insight into in what way role models might influence you to a life of higher quality.

Chapter 1 - Stoicism provides an applicable and reasonable guide to handling life's issues and challenges.

From the beginning of history, religious figures, scientists, and philosophers have attempted to respond to the question: how could we live a better life? How must we cope with life's difficulties, behave our companions and neighbors, respond to misfortune, and get ready for our demise?

One philosophy that may give some answers is Stoicism, allegedly since its first thinkers encountered underneath the Stoa Poikile, signifying "painted porch," in ancient Athens.

Stoicism began in Athens at approximately 300 BCE. It flourished, then, in 155 BCE extended to Rome the moment leading thinkers of Stoicism were sent to there as ambassadors. It thrived in Rome so much that Marcus Aurelius, a Roman ruler in between 101-200 CE, was himself a Stoic philosopher.

Stoicism, yet, is often misinterpreted. At what time we title someone as stoical, we implicate that they are quite passive, accepting what affects them without questioning or feeling.

Yet in real life, Stoicism is not passive like that, plus, it is not related to suppressing your emotion. It is related to things that can be done to live a good life. It deals with three areas. First, desire, or the thing we must and must not focus on; second, action, or in which way we must act; lastly the third one, assent – in which way we might respond to circumstances.

This may look like a little theoretical. Yet in the opinion of the ancient Stoics, their philosophy was clearly practicable.

Marcus Aurelius, the emperor-philosopher, put his most famous work down, *Meditations*, just like private guidance for his self-improvement.

One of the most important Stoic philosophers, also an intellectual that would usually be our guide in those sections, was Epictetus. An emancipated Roman who was a former slave with a disabled leg, Epictetus came to be an instructor of philosophy around the first century. His line of thought is written down in the work called *Enchiridion*, signifying “Handbook,” which lets us have a hint about his practical opinions. Like we would see, Epictetus’ discourses were emphasized not only on the theory of the thing creating a virtuous life, yet on practical deliberations for every day.

Let’s get in and have an insight into one of the milestones of Stoicism.

Chapter 2 - You can’t control everything. Emphasize the things you can have an impact on and don’t be concerned about the others.

From the anxious passenger freaking about turbulence to people dieting who are not able to lose these headstrong a couple of pounds, most of us spend energy on the things we are not able to alter. Hopefully, Stoicism has a recommendation for us.

A main idea of Stoicism is the dichotomy of control, which means, as Epictetus delivered, we should change most of the things we are able to manage and acknowledge the things you can’t control.

This statement is extensively recognized, yet less extensively practiced. Which thing has the control of the anxious passenger? What could he do to stop a forthcoming calamity? A little. He could prefer if his travel is a necessity or not, if it is, he might think about which airline he should choose. What he is not able to do is change or control something when in the air. Until now, he should acknowledge the conditions he is provided with, for this instance, depending on the pilots, air traffic controllers, the weather, and alternative factors out of his power. To think further is nothing but a waste.

Thus, that main doctrine of Stoicism mustn’t be regarded as inspiring being passive. Instead, it gives strong instruction to emphasize the things you could control.

Look at the writer’s hardships with his weight. Annoyed much by his plumpness, he ultimately selected to do something about his preferences – doing exercise in moderation, dieting well, and in lesser amounts. He got a better body, yet not the thin, muscly physique that desired by many. The elements beyond his control, for example, his DNA, made this aim unreachable. Yet having the behavior of a Stoic, he has acquired contentment from being aware of the fact that he has perfectly handled the things he can control also agreed on the result of his struggles with equanimity.

Following the writer's way might help you to worry less.

Think about a person who has been waiting for a probable promotion. She believes she might achieve that she has done great for a couple of years and did every single thing she could do to make sure her success. Yet she proceeds to worry about the office politics which might block her way or fellow-workers that might compete. A greater way of thinking will be to act as if you are a Stoic philosopher. Pleased with what she had done about the things which were under her control, she might wait and acknowledge the news with tranquility whether positive or negative.

Chapter 3 - Stoics showed us we better go with virtuousness other than going with wealth, health, or comfort in our lives.

Most of the ancient philosophers, Stoics as well, suggested that we must follow moral virtue rather than materialistic elements such as wealth and comfort.

The philosopher Socrates, greatly affected the Stoics and most of the Western thinkers, supplied a model, yet an utmost one.

The moment a political rival accused Socrates of acting in an ungodliness way, therefore, ultimately resulted in Socrates punished to death, Socrates might have run away with the help of his faithful friends. Yet he declined to do so, told his sad friends he needed to stick to his morality to acknowledge the law and also the justice system, in spite of its clear abuse. We don't have a chance to change the laws on the conditions when they are against us, he said. He acknowledged his death to secure his integrity, although he was going to pay by losing his friends and family.

Nearly all Stoic philosophy is more practical than that inflexible approach. Yet Stoics, such as Socrates, consider friends, family, wealth, health, also every other thing that is satisfying and joyful in our lives as preferred indifferent.

Stoics do not think wealth, for instance, should be something to abstain from. Actually, given the chance, being wealthy is fancied more than being poor. Yet Stoics realized that concepts such as richness, in spite of being desired, were indifferent to the aim of virtuous, moral life.

Then, how could we place virtuousness over preferred indifference? We can start by realizing every single thing has a moral feature to it.

For example, one day, when you are getting some dollars from an ATM, the writer froze. He recalled instantly his bank has been involved in immoral and suspicious investment and working practices. He felt that his preferred indifference of having means to get money fast became a contradiction against his moral virtue or his preference to advocate a good way of behaving. He got into the bank, said to a perplexed accountant that he wanted to shut his

account down on moral grounds, then, he went into a bank, while not flawless in its actions was more moral than his first choice.

Some of us could, or might need to practice the Socrates' exceptional example of placing moral virtue over other things. Yet all of us are able to think whether more of our choices in our lives might be accompanied by a commitment to moral virtue.

Anyway, let's have a look at what virtue actually means.

Chapter 4 - Stoic conceptions of virtue, structured on wisdom, courageousness, temperance, and justice, have been important all the time.

We saw sticking to virtue was crucial for the Stoics. Yet is that exactly what they mean when they speak of about living a virtuous life?

So, Stoicism gives four aspects of virtue – temperance, courage, justice, and, last but most vital, wisdom.

Temperance lets us manage our instinctive desires, such as abstaining from teasing an engaged person. Courage lets us have the mental capability to behave well under tough conditions, for example speaking up to a bully. Justice has the meaning of – for the Stoics – behaving others justly and with respect.

Yet according to Socrates, wisdom has been the “chief good.” Are you asking why? It's basically due to the fact that this is the only skill of our humanity which is good under every condition. For example, it is preferable to be rich than poor. Yet to learn how to cope with one of those situations, you are in need of wisdom.

These conceptions of virtue have been quite prevailing through the philosophical and religious history of all times. The prominent Christian theologian Thomas Aquinas's structure of “heavenly virtues” sticks to the four Stoic ones but also adds faith, hope, and charity to them. Other cultures, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Taoism incorporate the four, as well by also adding something, humanity signifying love and kindness, and transcendence that covers the notions of connection and significance like hope or incorporeality. The Stoic take looks like it has got the right thing.

When we look all over the place, we might see the persons who can be a typical example of these virtues nowadays.

Let's have a look at Malala Yousafzai. When she was 11, in Pakistan, she started to write an anonymous blog describing the Taliban's take on the education of girls'. As time passes, she

gained a little fame. In 2012, a guy who is the example of the reverse of these features – got in the school bus she was in, he asked her name and then shot her.

Malala didn't die. Also amazingly, she kept supporting the girls' education, leading to bringing the passing of the first legislation giving a right to education in Pakistan. Yousafzai showed virtue and created a difference in our world. Malala is really living a virtuous life, characterized by self-restraint, bravery, justice, and wisdom.

Epictetus would have to give Malala as an example to all. Also, we'll see that Epictetus and others thought that in the power of role models is powerful.

Chapter 5 - Seeing and copying role models is a practical option to live a good life.

Worried because they were actually the practicalities of how to lead a life, Stoics were enthusiasts of getting the use of role models to show optimal behavior.

The Roman Stoic philosopher Seneca had written an essay on the nature of the person with wisdom or the ideal Stoic role model, plus, regarded one such man, Marcus Cato, as the main example.

Cato was a senator in Rome and surprisingly dedicated to moral virtue. When he first was a commander in the military, he marched, ate, slept together with his soldiers which is the reason soldiers loved him. He was also trustworthy. Being the administrator, tax collector of the Cyprus Island, he declined the chances to make himself rich. Rather, he rightfully and honestly takes the taxes to be given to Rome.

The moment Julius Caesar declared a war against the Roman Republic and aimed to keep his authoritarian power, Cato clashed with him to protect the Republic, its institutions, and principles. Ultimately, got a defeat, he suicided rather than be held by them which might have given Caesar a propaganda victory.

As the history specialist Plutarch depicts it, Cato wounded himself yet didn't instantly die. He kept bleeding, his entrails were hanging out of his body. His doctor attempted to help him, yet Cato – seeing his doctor's goals – detached his own guts and passed away. In death as throughout everyday life, Cato was an example of virtue: giving up himself to abstain from giving his morally bad rival any political superiority.

Cato's example might look a tad bit over the top, yet for Stoics, this was a part of the thing. Motivated by the exhaustive experiences like this, it can be surely said we might have the potential to climb to the hardships in our lives.

Standing against the concept of suiciding to protect your honor, how tough could it actually be, for example, to speak up to a bullying executive, abstain enrolling in morally corrupted banks and make a tiny step towards a good life?

Reflecting on the instances of role models might aid all of us to live our lives with a bit more virtue.

Chapter 6 - Stoicism could strengthen your viewpoint in terms of death.

A small amount of us is as ready to face death as Cato. Actually, most of us have a grumbling fear of passing away. It is unsurprisingly problematic to think the reality, one day, your consciousness is not going to exist anymore.

Epictetus did not have these feelings. He claimed, "I must die, must I? ... If soon, I dine now, as it is time for dinner, and afterward when the time comes I will die."

We might get educated from the serene and considered the way that Stoics had their thoughts about death.

Epictetus wanted us to think about wheat. Why wheat grows, he inquired. Is it not basically so that it ripens and then be picked? He was supporting that, like wheat and every other living thing, humans grow, ripen or mature, then lastly die. Praying for yourself not to die is, Epictetus claimed, praying for yourself not to ripen. We think this as regular that wheat is getting picked or dies then give it solely another concept. The only different thing between a human and wheat is the fact that humans have the capability to reflect on their mortality. Yet that doesn't have any impact on the reality; only as we are conscious, and the wheat is not, why must we spend time and energy to be anxious about our demise?

Stoics thought that you must regularly remember the temporality of things, human beings included. In that way, you are going to acknowledge death and life better.

Epictetus claimed, the moment it comes to things and persons whom you are bonded with, you must remember their nature. As you kiss your wife or your son, he claimed, remind yourself of kissing an impermanent person so that you will not be angry when they die.

This might come across as outrageous at first glance. Yet the thing Epictetus is showing is not about being careless toward people. Indeed, he is saying two things. First, we embrace the reality of the impermanence of our beloved. Second, for that reason, we must usually remember that they are invaluable.

We must, for Stoics, regard mortality as something serious. Yet rather than finding anxiety in anticipation of demise, we must look for care and gratefulness in life.

Chapter 7 - Stop and reflect; think as if somebody else, you will better cope with misfortune and provocation.

In the modern world, it is not hard to be pushed to be angry or frustrated by a number of daily irritations, from an insulting coworker to the selfish passenger eating something that smells bad on a train that is so crowded.

Stoicism makes us learn how to react thoughtfully to those provocations.

An offensive word or maybe an elbow on your back in a crowded subway train is inherently harmless. To say harmful for a situation needs your mind to respond to that and make you believe that you are getting harmed. Yet if we try to avoid an instant reaction to such things, after that we might decrease our urge to be angry, frustrated, or, etc.

Epictetus said we should “take a moment before reacting” to such situations. Was he alive today we might imagine him recommending us when provoked to breathe deeply for a moment and take a walk around the block? Only then could we consider the provocation dispassionately.

The other important lesson is to “other-ize”. As something negative occurring to you, think about how we could regard this occurrence suppose that it occurred to someone else.

For instance, if you break a glass, maybe the one that you are fond of a bit, you may respond with a little sadness or annoyance at your clumsiness. Yet if you happen to see your friend doing the same thing, you may say, “Bad luck, never mind” after that don’t think anything more than that. Here’s the lesson in how we respond to other people’s little misfortunes; we must acknowledge our misfortunes with better equanimity.

Therefore, another time a person is impolite to you, and annoyance starts to increase in you, wait a minute. Reflect on your occurrence, then put that in the conditions of another person’s misfortunes, you might find out that you are able to stay calmer in the middle of the misfortunes of life.

Chapter 8 - Emphasize on investing in frankly good friendships and in a good conversation to lead a good life.

How many true friends are there in your life? In the age of globalism and social media relations, the meaning of the word “friend” might seem vague.

Ancient Greeks were blessed enough to possess a greater vocabulary than we have today, and the philosopher Aristotle mentioned three types of friends, indeed, Stoics only regard one of them as important.

First, friends of utility, meaning relationships focused on mutual advantage. Think about yourself together with your best-loved hairdresser. You aren't a friend like that, yet you get on well, chat about your lives, and, therefore, both of you take advantage of the relationship.

Second, the friendship of pleasure. Think that you are drinking with friends, the girls with whom you play football. We label them as friends, yet the relationship needn't be deep, it only needs to give you some pleasure in the here-and-now.

Third, the friendship of the good. Nowadays, we may title the friends in this category as our true or best friends, the people you meet although you don't have any mutual interest in business or sports, etc.

Stoics claim that the friendships of the good are the only type of friendship that worths to be regarded as friendship. Stoics would not disregard the significance of the others yet title them as preferred indifferent: fully rational things to have, yet not more important than the virtuous features of leading a life.

Stoics additionally had guidance to be with your companions. You should, Epictetus contended, talk less about fighters, sports and nourishments, and increasingly about the significant things about everyday life. Indeed, we don't speak much about gladiators nowadays, however, we do invest a ton of energy discussing sports stars, on-screen characters, and other famous people. For Epictetus, such subjects were cliché and meaningless. It might be simpler to talk about Beyoncé's most recent collection than for example, the quest for a decent life. Be that as it may, Stoics weren't quite worried about what was simple, they preferred what was fulfilling and righteous.

So check it out. Every often, over supper or beverages, start a discussion about a very challenging issue, maybe about something you've learned and may intrigue your companions. After some time you may discover your evening gatherings and fellowships additionally fulfilling.

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Stoicism might help us towards a greater life. It doesn't need to be easy, also nothing prioritizing moral virtue is easy, anyway. Yet in acknowledging the things you can and cannot have control over, concentrating on acting according to virtuousness, also by reflecting cautiously on your feelings and experiences, you are able to make better choices and lead a more virtuous life.

Reflect on today before you go to sleep.

Go sit in a quiet room at home before you go to bed and reflect on that day. Think about important events – a difficult confrontation with a coworker, or an instance of being helpful toward your colleague. What did you learn from those? May you have tackled anything better, with more thoughtfulness? Honest reflection, every single day, is going to help you to lead a good life.

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