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January 19th

**WHEREVER YOU GO, THERE YOUR CHOICE IS**

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“A podium and a prison is each a place, one high and the other low, but in either place your freedom of choice can be maintained if you so wish.”

—EPICTETUS, *DISCOURSES*, 2.6.25

The Stoics all held vastly different stations in life. Some were rich, some were born at the bottom of Rome’s rigid hierarchy. Some had it easy, and others had it unimaginably hard. This is true for us as well—we all come to philosophy from different backgrounds, and even within our own lives we experience bouts of good fortune and bad fortune.

But in all circumstances—adversity or advantage—we really have just one thing we need to do: focus on what is in our control as opposed to what is not. Right now we might be laid low with struggles, whereas just a few years ago we might have lived high on the hog, and in just a few days we might be doing so well that success is actually a burden. One thing will stay constant: our freedom of choice—both in the big picture and small picture.

Ultimately, this is clarity. Whoever we are, wherever we are—what matters is our choices. What are they? How will we evaluate them? How will we make the most of them? Those are the questions life asks us, regardless of our station. How will you answer?