
January 26th

THE POWER OF A MANTRA

“Erase the false impressions from your mind by constantly saying to yourself, I have it in my soul to keep out any evil, desire or any kind of disturbance—instead, seeing the true nature of things, I will give them only their due. Always remember this power that nature gave you.”

—MARCUS AURELIUS, *MEDITATIONS*, 8.29

Anyone who has taken a yoga class or been exposed to Hindu or Buddhist thought has probably heard of the concept of a mantra. In Sanskrit, it means “sacred utterance”—essentially a word, a phrase, a thought, even a sound—intended to provide clarity or spiritual guidance. A mantra can be especially helpful in the meditative process because it allows us to block out everything else while we focus.

It’s fitting, then, that Marcus Aurelius would suggest this Stoic mantra—a reminder or watch phrase to use when we feel false impressions, distractions, or the crush of everyday life upon us. It says, essentially, “I have the power within me to keep that out. I can see the truth.”

Change the wording as you like. That part is up to you. But have a mantra and use it to find the clarity you crave.