

Life Is Not Short | DKB Show

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最令人惊讶的是，你不会让任何人偷走你的财产，但你总是让别人偷走你的时间，这是无限更有价值的。

If you want to learn how to live a good life, there are few sources better than Seneca. He's one of the most popular Stoic philosophers, alongside Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus.

如果你想学习如何过好日子，没有什么比塞尼卡更好的资源了。他是最受欢迎的斯多葛派哲学家之一，与马可·奥勒留和爱比克泰德并驾齐驱。

His life was filled with crazy highs and lows. He was born into a noble family, wrote some influential plays, got exiled to an island for eight years, became the chief advisor to the Roman emperor, then got sentenced to death by forced suicide.

他的生活充满了疯狂的高潮和低谷。他出生在一个贵族家庭，写了一些有影响力的戏剧，被流放到一个岛上长达八年，成为罗马皇帝的首席顾问，然后被判处死刑，强迫自杀。

In between all of that, he did a ton of philosophy.

在这期间，他学了很多哲学。

In this interview, I talk to Seneca about the shortness of life, and how we can best spend our limited time.

在这次采访中，我和塞尼卡谈到了生命的短暂，以及如何最好地利用我们有限的时间。

(This is a fictional but realistic interview with Seneca based on his essay "On The Shortness Of Life". His responses are either direct quotes, or based on his writings. Citations are included so you can see the original context for each response.)

(这是根据他的文章《论生命的短暂》对塞尼卡进行的一次虚构但现实的采访。他的回答要么是直接引用，要么是基于他的作品。引用包括在内，这样您就可以看到每个响应的原始上下文。)

DKB: What do you think is the biggest mistake people make with their lives? What do we consistently get wrong?

DKB: 你认为人们在生活中犯的最大的错误是什么？我们经常犯的错误是什么？

Seneca: Everyone complains about how short life is, but that perspective is broken. Life is not short. The real issue is that we waste so much of it.

塞内卡：每个人都在抱怨生命是多么短暂，但是这种观点已经被打破了。生命并不短暂。真正的问题是我们浪费了这么多。

Life is long enough for you to achieve your wildest dreams. You're just so busy wasting it that you get to the end without living much of it. ¹

生命的长度足以让你实现你最狂野的梦想。你只是太忙于浪费时间，以至于到最后都没怎么活过。¹

The most surprising thing is that you wouldn't let anyone steal your property, but you consistently let people steal your time, which is infinitely more valuable. ²

最令人惊讶的是，你不会让任何人偷走你的财产，但你却一直让别人偷走你的时间，这样做的价值是无限的。²

No one is willing to hand out their money randomly, but that's exactly what you do with your time. You're very frugal with your physical possessions, but when it comes to your time, you're wasteful of the only thing in the world that you should actually be frugal with. ³

没有人愿意随意发放他们的钱，但这正是你如何利用你的时间。你对自己的物质财富非常节俭，但是当涉及到你的时间时，你却浪费了世界上唯一——件你应该节俭的东西。³

Even if you had a thousand years to live, it would feel short to you, because all the distractions and random things that pop up would swallow any time that you have. ⁴

即使你有一千年的寿命，对你来说也是短暂的，因为所有的分心事物和随机事物都会吞噬掉你所拥有的任何时间。⁴

DKB: It's true that we all waste a lot of our time. Why do you think this happens? We all know that our time is limited, but many of us continue to make this basic mistake.

DKB: 的确，我们都浪费了很多时间。你觉得为什么会这样？我们都知道我们的时间是有限的，但是我们中的许多人继续犯这个基本的错误。

Seneca: In your mind, you genuinely think you're going to live forever. You think you have an infinite supply of time, and you keep spending it on the first thing that pops up without giving it much thought.

塞内卡：在你的头脑中，你真的认为你会永远活下去。你认为你的时间是无限的，但是你总是把时间花在第一件突然出现的事情上，而没有多想。

You act like a mortal in all that you fear, and an immortal in all that you desire. ⁵

在所有你害怕的事情上，你表现得像一个凡人；在所有你渴望的事情上，你表现得像一个不朽的人。⁵

You can't touch or feel time, so it's hard for you to really grasp it. If your doctor told you that you had a deadly illness, you'd spend every cent you have to try to stay alive. That's how much your time is actually worth to you.

But on a day to day basis, you treat it like it's completely worthless, just because you can't see it. ⁶

你不能触摸或感觉到时间，所以你很难真正抓住它。如果你的医生告诉你你得了一种致命的疾病，你会花光你所有的钱来试图活下去。这就是你的时间对你的价值。但是在日常生活中，你把它当作毫无价值的东西，只是因为你看不到它。⁶

It's even worse when people come up with deferred life plans. They'll say something like "When I'm forty, I'm going to retire and write a book" or "I'll do this thing I hate right now so I can make money, then in ten years I'll do what I really love".

当人们想出推迟的生活计划时，情况就更糟了。他们会说“当我四十岁的时候，我会退休，然后写一本书”或者“我会做我现在讨厌的事情，这样我就可以赚钱了，然后十年后我会做我真正喜欢的事情”。

Seriously? You think that the universe is going to let your life proceed the way you want it to? What guarantee do you have of making it to that age?

真的吗？你觉得宇宙会让你的生活按照你想要的方式进行吗？你有什么保证能活到那个年纪？

Putting things off for the future is the biggest waste of a life. You deny yourself the present by promising the future. You're relying on the future, which is outside of your control, and abandoning the present, which is the only thing you can control.

把事情拖到未来是对生命最大的浪费。你通过承诺未来来否定你自己的现在。你依赖于未来，而未来超出了你的控制范围，你放弃了现在，而现在是你唯一可以控制的事情。

The whole future lies in uncertainty – live immediately. ⁷

整个未来充满不确定性 —— 立即生活。⁷

DKB: To be fair, depending on your circumstances, you might legitimately need a deferred life plan. You might need to delay following your dreams because you have to deal with challenging financial circumstances.

DKB: 公平地说，根据你的情况，你可能合理地需要一个延期的生活计划。你可能需要推迟实现你的梦想，因为你必须处理具有挑战性的财务状况。

Seneca: That's a fair point, but you still have to recognize that your time is finite, and you're spending it on a path where you only care about the end point and not the journey.

塞内卡：这是一个公平的观点，但是你仍然必须认识到你的时间是有限的，你正在把它花费在一条你只关心终点而不是旅程的道路上。

The real failure mode to avoid is intentionally pursuing a path that doesn't bring you any joy. Let's take the great emperor Augustus as an example. He was the most powerful man in the world. He had all the social status, all the money, and he could do anything he wanted.

真正要避免的失败模式是有意追求一条不会给你带来任何快乐的道路。让我们以伟大的奥古斯都皇帝为例。他是世界上最有权势的人。他有所有的社会地位，所有的钱，他可以做任何他想做的事情。

Even with all that, he was looking forward to the day that he could step down and retire from it all. The man with all the power in the world was happiest when he thought about the day he could let go of all the power.⁸

尽管如此，他还是期待有朝一日能够辞职，从这一切中退休。拥有世界上所有权力的人，当他想到有一天他可以放弃所有权力的时候，他是最快乐的。⁸

How foolish is it to spend your life chasing fame, riches, and power, while being unhappy the entire time, even after you achieve it? What is the point of it all? To impress other people? Is that really worth it in the end?

一辈子追逐名利、财富和权力，却一直不开心，即使在你成功之后，这是多么愚蠢的一件事啊？这一切有什么意义呢？为了给别人留下好印象？到最后真的值得吗？

At the same time, people who get caught up in power and status games are at least somewhat excusable. They're facing a lot of social pressure to do it, and being deceived into thinking these goals are worthy.

与此同时，那些沉迷于权力和地位游戏的人至少在某种程度上是可以原谅的。他们面临着很大的社会压力去做这些事情，并且被欺骗去认为这些目标是值得的。

On the other hand, people who waste their time pursuing empty pleasures and escapism are dishonorable and depressing. There's nothing good to say about them.⁹

另一方面，那些浪费时间追求空虚快乐和逃避现实的人是不光彩和令人沮丧的。他们没什么好说的。⁹

DKB: So what would constitute a good life for you? You're saying we shouldn't pursue status and power, but we also shouldn't pursue empty pleasures.

DKB: 那么对你来说什么才算是好的生活呢？你是说我们不应该追求地位和权力，但我们也不应该追求空虚的快乐。

Should we just lay down on the beach and do nothing?

我们应该躺在沙滩上什么都不做吗？

Seneca: I'm not saying you should lay down on the beach all day. I'm saying you should find something that's enjoyable to you, and valuable for the world. ¹⁰

塞内卡：我不是说你应该整天躺在沙滩上。我的意思是，你应该找到一些自己喜欢的，对世界有价值的东西。¹⁰

You should live your life intentionally, instead of having your time stolen from you little by little. You should organize each day as if it were your last, so that you neither need to long for nor fear the next day. You should avoid spending time on people and things that don't really matter to you.

你应该有意识地过你的生活，而不是让你的时间一点一点地被偷走。你应该把每一天都当作最后一天来安排，这样你就不必期待也不必害怕第二天的到来。你应该避免把时间花在对你来说无关紧要的人和事上。

You should be very thrifty with your time, because you know there's nothing for which it is worth exchanging. ¹¹

你应该节省你的时间，因为你知道没有什么值得交换的。¹¹

What I was trying to say before was just because someone's always busy, and lives to an old age, doesn't mean they've lived long. They've just existed long.

我之前想说的是，一个人总是很忙，活到很老，并不意味着他活得很久。他们只是存在了很久。

Imagine if you left for a voyage, got caught in a raging storm as you left the harbor, and got tossed around in circles until you came back. You haven't had a long voyage, just a long tossing about. ¹²

想象一下，如果你出发去航海，在离开港口的时候遇到了狂风暴雨，在原地打转，直到你回来。你并没有长途旅行，只是辗转反侧罢了。¹²

You should stop spending your time on things that don't matter, and focus on the few things that do.

你应该停止把时间花在无关紧要的事情上，把精力集中在少数重要的事情上。

On top of that, there's one thing you can do to extend your life. By studying the philosophies of those who came before you, you absorb their experiences. Every philosophy book you read, you're adding the author's lifespan to yours. There's no better way to spend your time than studying philosophy. ¹³

最重要的是，你可以做一件事来延长你的生命。通过学习那些在你之前的人的哲学，你吸收了他们的经验。你读过的每一本哲学书，都在为你增加作者的寿命。没有比学习哲学更好的消磨时间的方法了。13

You can argue with Socrates, express doubt with Carneades, cultivate retirement with Epicurus, overcome human nature with the Stoics, and exceed its limits with the Cynics. You can give yourself wholeheartedly to the past, which is limitless and eternal. 14

你可以与苏格拉底争论，与卡尼德斯表达怀疑，与伊壁鸠鲁一起培养退休生活，与斯多葛学派一起克服人性，与犬儒学派一起超越人性的极限。你可以全身心地投入到过去，那是无限和永恒的。14

People from the past also make great friends. Pythagoras, Aristotle, and all the others, will never be too busy to see you. They will always leave you better than they found you. None of them will force you to die, but all of them will teach you how to die. None of them will waste your years, but each will add their years to yours. You can consult with them daily, and they'll always tell you the truth. 15

过去的人也会交到很好的朋友。毕达哥拉斯，亚里士多德，还有其他人，永远不会因为太忙而看不到你。他们留给你的总是比他们找到你的时候要好。他们都不会强迫你去死，但他们都会教你如何去死。他们都不会浪费你的时间，但是每个人都会增加你的时间。你可以每天咨询他们，他们总会告诉你真相。15

This is the only way to extend your life. Buildings and monuments in your honor are all soon destroyed. The passage of time demolishes everything except the great works of philosophy. No age will wipe them out or diminish them. They will only become more respected with time. 16

这是延长你生命的唯一方法。纪念你的建筑物和纪念碑很快就被摧毁了。时间的流逝摧毁了一切，除了伟大的哲学著作。任何年龄都无法抹杀或消灭他们。随着时间的推移，他们只会越来越受人尊敬。16

DKB: Do you have any last words of wisdom?

DKB: 你有什么遗言要说吗？

Seneca: The part of life we really live is small.

塞内卡：我们真正生活的一部分是很小的。

All the rest is not life, but merely time.

其余的都不是生命，而仅仅是时间。

I extract insights from historical figures and old books.

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