

Quotes and Thoughts

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Preface

This book is a collection of quotes that have been instrumental in my own journey to develop a deeper understanding of the world and improve my mental models. They have provided inspiration, guidance, and new perspectives that have helped me make more informed decisions and better navigate the complexities of life. I have organized the quotes into themes to make it easier to find the ones that resonate with you. As I continue to learn and grow, I will be adding more quotes to this collection, so be sure to check back for updates.

You can start at [Chapter 1](#).

1 Anger by Thích Nhất Hanh

Thích Nhất Hanh is a Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk, teacher, author, and peace activist. He is known for his contributions to the development of Engaged Buddhism and his emphasis on mindfulness and compassion in daily life. Thích Nhất Hanh was born in Vietnam in 1926 and ordained as a monk at the age of 16. He has played a leading role in the Buddhist revival movement in Vietnam and has worked to bring an end to the Vietnam War. Thích Nhất Hanh is the founder of the Plum Village Community of Engaged Buddhism, a network of monasteries, practice centers, and communities in Europe and the United States. *Source: chatgpt.* The following quotes are from Hanh (2001).

1.1 Listening

1. *“You listen just because you want the other person to suffer less.”*
2. *“You have to be very concentrated while you listen. You have to focus on the practice of listening with all your attention, your whole being: your eyes, ears, body, and your mind. If you just pretend to listen, and do not listen with one hundred percent of yourself, the other person will know it and will not find relief from his suffering. If you know how to practice mindful breathing and can stay focused on the desire to help him find relief, then you will be able to sustain your compassion while listening.”*

1.2 The Mind Body

1. *“Namarupa is the psyche-soma, the mind-body as one entity.”*
2. *“If we eat well and chew our food carefully, we get more nutrition than if we eat a lot but don’t digest it well.”*

1.3 The Source of Anger

1. *“In our consciousness there are blocks of pain, anger, and frustration called internal formations. They are also called knots because they tie us up and obstruct our freedom. When someone insults us, or does something unkind to us, an internal formation is created in our consciousness. If you don’t know how to undo the internal knot and transform it, the knot will stay there for a long time. And the next time someone says something or does something to you of the same nature, that internal formation will grow stronger. As knots or blocks of pain in us, our internal formations have the power to push us, to dictate our behavior.”*
2. *“Let us use a house to represent our consciousness. We can identify two parts: the basement is the store consciousness and the living area is mind consciousness. Internal formations, like anger, rest in the store consciousness—in the basement—in the form of a seed, until you hear, see, read, or think of something that touches your seed of anger. Then it comes up and manifests on the level of your mind consciousness, your living room. It manifests as a zone of energy that makes the atmosphere in your living room heavy and unpleasant. When the energy of anger comes up, we suffer.”*
3. *“Our blocks of pain, sorrow, anger, and despair always want to come up into our mind consciousness, into our living room, because they have grown big and need our attention. They want to emerge, but we don’t want them to come up because they are painful to look at. So we try to block their way. We want them to stay asleep down in the basement. Because we do not want to face them, our habit is to fill our living room with other guests. But whenever we have ten or fifteen minutes of free time, and we don’t know what to do, these internal knots will come up and make a mess in the living room. To avoid this, we pick up a book, we turn on the television, we go for a drive, we do anything to keep our living room occupied. When the living room is occupied, these unpleasant internal formations will not come up.”*

1.4 Handling Anger

1. *“If your house is on fire, the most urgent thing to do is to go back and try to put out the fire, not to run after the person you believe to be the arsonist.”*
2. *“You accept your anger because you know you can take care of it; you can transform it into positive energy.”*
3. *“So in taking good care of yourself, you take good care of your beloved one. Self-love is the foundation for your capacity to love the other person. If you don’t take good care of yourself, if you are not happy, if you are not peaceful, you cannot make the other person happy. You cannot help the other person; you cannot love. Your capacity for loving*

another person depends entirely on your capacity for loving yourself, for taking care of yourself.”

4. *“Your intelligence, your knowledge, does not help you change your habit energy. Only the practice of recognizing, embracing, and transforming can help. That is why the Buddha advised us to practice mindful breathing to recognize and take care of our habit energy as soon as it manifests. If you are capable of embracing your habit energy with the energy of mindfulness, then you are safe, you are not going to make the same mistake again.”*
5. *“When our child is drowning in a strong emotion, we can hold his or her hand and say, “My dear one, breathe. Breathe in and out with Mommy, with Daddy.” We can also invite our child to do walking meditation with us, gently taking her hand and helping her calm down, with each step. When you give your child some of your mindfulness energy, she will be able to calm down very quickly and embrace her emotions.”*

1.5 Communicating Anger

1. *“Darling, I suffer, and I want you to know it. Darling, I am doing my best. I’m trying not to blame anyone else, including you. Since we are so close to each other, since we have made a commitment to each other, I feel that I need your support and your help to get out of this state of suffering, of anger.”*
2. *“As we offer this guidance, we are aware there may be things that we have not understood. There may be positive things in you that we have not seen. And there may be some wrong perception on the part of the community.”*

1.6 Transforming Anger

1. *“Anger is in us in the form of a seed. The seeds of love and compassion are also there. In our consciousness, there are many negative seeds and also many positive seeds. The practice is to avoid watering the negative seeds, and to identify and water the positive seeds every day. This is the practice of love.”*
2. *“When we’re angry with someone, we want to hurt them. Giving them a present changes that into wanting to make them happy. So, when you are angry with someone, send him a present. After you have sent it, you will stop being angry with him. It’s very simple, and it always works.”*
3. *“There are moments when we feel very grateful for the other person in our life. We deeply appreciate his or her presence. We are full of compassion, gratitude, and love. We have experienced moments like this in our life. We feel so grateful that the other person is still*

alive, that she is still with us, and has stood by our side during very difficult times. I would suggest that if such a moment happens again, take advantage of it. To truly profit from this time, withdraw to a place where you can be alone with yourself. Don't just go to the other person and say, "I'm grateful you are there." That is not enough. You can do this later. Right at that moment, it is better to withdraw into your room or to a quiet place, and immerse yourself in that feeling of gratitude. Then write down your feelings, your gratitude, your happiness. In half a page or one page, do your best to express yourself in writing, or record yourself on tape."

4. *"If you can remind yourself that the positive elements are still present within you and the other person, you will know that it is possible to break through, so that the best things in both of you can come up and manifest again."*

1.7 Perception

1. *"We act on the basis of wrong perceptions all the time. We should not be sure of any perception we have."*
2. *"You yourself may have created the hell inside you."*

1.8 Mindfulness

1. *"Whenever you are not standing, sitting, or lying down, you are going. But where are you going? You have already arrived. With every step, you can arrive in the present moment, you can step into the Pure Land or into the Kingdom of God. When you are walking from one side of the room to the other, or from one building to another, be aware of the contact of your feet with the earth and be aware of the contact of the air as it enters your body. It may help you to discover how many steps you can make comfortably during an in-breath and how many during an out-breath. As you breathe in, you can say "in," and as you breathe out, you can say "out."*
2. *"To learn how to live each moment of our daily life in deep mindfulness and concentration is the practice."*
3. *"You have to be aware that your emotion is just an emotion. It comes, stays for some time, and then goes away."*
4. *"Let us bring our attention down to our belly and breathe in and out. This storm will go away, so don't be afraid."*

5. *“When you remove the embargo and the blocks of pain come up, you will have to suffer a bit. There is no way to avoid it. And that is why the Buddha said that you have to learn how to embrace this pain. It is for this reason that the practice of mindfulness is so important. You generate a strong source of energy so that you can recognize, embrace, and take care of these negative energies.”*
6. *“If you see elements of garbage in you, like fear, despair, and hatred, don’t panic. As a good organic gardener, a good practitioner, you can face this:”I recognize that there is garbage in me. I am going to transform this garbage into nourishing compost that can make love reappear.”*

1.9 Taking Responsibility

1. *“Don’t blame everything on the other person. Recognize first that the main cause of your suffering is the seed of anger in you, and that the other person is only a secondary cause.”*
2. *“Human beings are not our enemy. Our enemy is not the other person. Our enemy is the violence, ignorance, and injustice in us and in the other person. When we are armed with compassion and understanding, we fight not against other people, but against the tendency to invade, to dominate, and to exploit.”*
3. *“When you judge and take sides, you act as though you are outside of the conflict. You act as though you are not the black driver who was beaten, or the four policemen. But looking deeply, you see that you are the victim of the beating, and you are also the four policemen who did the beating.”*
4. *“Stopping violence is what we have to do. And we cannot stop violence unless we have the insight that what we do to the other person, we are doing to ourselves.”*
5. *“The way to share your insight is to help create the conditions so that others can realize the same insight—through their own experience, not just believing what you say. This takes skillfulness and patience.”*

1.10 Connection

1. *“There is no separate self.” You and your son, you and your daughter are just a continuation of many generations of ancestors. You are part of a long stream of life. Whatever your children do continues to affect you deeply—just like when they were in your womb. Whatever you do still affects your children deeply because they can never be cut off from you. Your happiness and suffering are your child’s happiness and suffering and vice versa. That is why you have to invest one hundred percent of yourself in the task of restoring communication.”*

2. *“Most of our suffering is born from our lack of understanding and insight that there is no separate self. The other person is you, you are the other person. If you get in touch with that truth, anger will vanish.”*
3. *“Who do you think you are? You are the other person. If you get angry with your son, you are getting angry with yourself. You are wrong to think that your son is not you. Your son is you. Genetically, physiologically, scientifically, your son is your continuation. That is the real truth.”*
4. *“So to help your son, make peace with yourself. Look deeply into yourself. If you want to help your mother, restore peace in yourself. Discover the insight that will allow you to help your mother. Helping yourself is the first condition for helping the other. Let go of the illusion called self. This is the essence of the practice that will free you and the other person from anger and suffering.”*

1.11 On Principles and Choices

1. *“From time to time we have to make a decision, and sometimes the decision is very difficult. We are forced to make a painful choice. But if we know what is most important to us, what we most deeply want for our life, the decision-making will become easier, and we won’t have to suffer a lot.”*

1.12 Five Remembrances

1. *“I am of the nature to grow old. I cannot escape old age. - I am of the nature to have ill health. I cannot escape ill health. - I am of the nature to die. I cannot escape dying. - All that is dear to me and everyone I love are of the nature to change. There is no way to escape being separated from them. I cannot keep anything. I come here empty-handed, and I go empty-handed. - My actions are my only true belongings. I cannot escape the consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground on which I stand. Every day we have to practice like this, taking a few moments to contemplate each exercise as we follow our breathing. We practice the Five Remembrances so that the seed of fear can circulate. We must invite it up to be recognized, to be embraced. And then when it goes back down again, it becomes smaller.”*

2 Wild Problems by Russ Roberts

Russell Roberts is an economist and writer who is currently a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, a conservative think tank at Stanford University. He is also a professor of economics at George Mason University and a well-known commentator on economic issues. Roberts is known for his popular economics podcast “EconTalk,” in which he interviews leading economists and discusses a wide range of economic topics. *Source: chatgpt.*

The following quotes are from Roberts (2021)

2.1 On Thoughts and Decisions

1. *“Normal human beings have trouble making decisions, and when we do, we often will come up with reasons that are merely an after-the-fact narrative—something we tell ourselves and others to justify what we’ve done or plan to do.”*
2. *“You might respond by saying that it’s wrong to ‘settle,’ to be content with someone who is merely OK rather than someone great. Actually, I’m saying something worse. I’m not encouraging you to settle; I’m telling you that you have to settle. The best spouse/partner/career/city doesn’t exist and it’s not just because they’re hard to find. It’s not a meaningful concept.”*
3. *“For now, realize that Darwin can only pretend to make a rational decision. First, he can’t imagine what the actual costs and benefits are—especially the benefits—until he has experienced them. Second, he has to deal with the vampire problem. Whose weights matter, single Darwin’s or married Darwin’s? Marriage with children can look pretty stultifying. Yet many parents seem to be glad they’ve had children. Maybe they’re just fooling themselves. But even if those parents are telling the truth about their own experience, Darwin can’t know if his experience will be the same.”*

2.2 On Principles

1. *“Nothing cancels out betraying who you are or who you aspire to be. So you can’t add ‘losing respect for myself’ as one of the costs of keeping the diamond.”*

2. *“So the narrow utilitarian part of the decision wasn’t irrelevant. But the flourishing part of the decision was the decisive one. I took the job because I felt like it was something I was meant to do, a calling. To turn down the opportunity would have felt like a betrayal of the deepest parts of me.”*
3. *“We can imagine cases where the utilitarian costs and benefits are so large that there comes a point where sense of self is trumped. If Teodora had a child who needed an operation that she couldn’t afford, I could imagine her keeping the diamond even though she would feel guilty. We would not judge her harshly. If anything, that’s the exception that proves the rule—Teodora’s identity as a mother would be another principle at her core competing with honesty. She would put either of those principles ahead of narrow utilitarianism.”*

2.3 On Growing

1. *“A Type 1 experience is nice the whole time—nothing too stressful, mostly positive. You enjoy it while you’re in the middle of it and you enjoy it after. A day at the beach. A walk in the park. A Type 2 experience is hard. There are moments of pain that have to be endured—difficult days with a lot of altitude gained over a fairly short distance, streams to be crossed without your shoes where the water runs so cold your feet go numb while you’re crossing, heavy gear to be carried on the trek that hurts your back or feet.”*
2. *“We are in the process of becoming.”*

2.4 On Ignorance

1. *“Start by facing your ignorance. Wild problems are not the kinds of problems with answers. And that’s OK. It’s better than OK. It’s glorious, something like going to Rome for the first and only time. Sure, some of us would love for someone to give us an itinerary to go with our trip to Rome—a tour bus where all the stops are preplanned because they’re the popular ones. But most of us would prefer to discover for ourselves what we love about Rome and what we might come to love. Wouldn’t you rather be surprised than have it all mapped out for you? And it doesn’t matter, because you can’t map it out anyway.”*
2. *“This is the idea of Chesterton’s Fence, named for an insight of G. K. Chesterton’s. When you come across something that doesn’t make sense to you—a fence in the middle of nowhere with no apparent purpose—you might be tempted to tear it down. Before you do, you should try to find out why it’s there—it may have a cause or purpose that isn’t obvious.”*

2.5 On Putting Yourself Second

1. *“Getting over yourself is a good place to start—being aware that you’re not the center of the universe. That requires some level of self-awareness—being aware of how your actions and words affect others and how you’re perceived. Self-awareness can come from therapy, meditation, religion, or reading philosophy or literature.”*
2. *“Alternatively, you might choose to sublimate your own status or the ability to express yourself in hopes of making your partner shine, or to enhance the experience of all of the dancers out on the floor. You might focus on being part of something larger than yourself, weaving near and around the other dancers in unexpected and delightful ways. When you act tactfully on the dance floor and behave properly, keeping others—your partner and the other couples—in mind, you have a choice in how to think of the experience before, during, and after. You can pride yourself on your selfless behavior or you can see yourself in a more holistic way, as part of something larger than yourself, a fuller, more connected experience.”*

3 Free Will by Sam Harris

Sam Harris is an American neuroscientist, philosopher, and author. He is known for his work in the fields of philosophy, neuroscience, and meditation, and for his critiques of religion and his advocacy of scientific skepticism, rationalism, and humanism. Harris is the author of several books, including “The End of Faith,” “Letter to a Christian Nation,” and “Waking Up: A Guide to Spirituality Without Religion,” in which he discusses the role of spirituality in modern society and the potential for a non-religious approach to spirituality. Harris has also been a vocal critic of certain forms of religion and has written and spoken extensively on the dangers of religious fundamentalism and the importance of scientific skepticism. *Source: chatgpt.*

The following quotes are from Harris (2012).

3.1 Facts on Decisions

1. *“The intention to do one thing and not another does not originate in consciousness—rather, it appears in consciousness, as does any thought or impulse that might oppose it.”*
2. *“Some moments before you are aware of what you will do next—a time in which you subjectively appear to have complete freedom to behave however you please—your brain has already determined what you will do. You then become conscious of this “decision” and believe that you are in the process of making it.”*

3.2 The Impossibility of Free Will

1. *“Consider what it would take to actually have free will. You would need to be aware of all the factors that determine your thoughts and actions, and you would need to have complete control over those factors. But there is a paradox here that vitiates the very notion of freedom—for what would influence the influences? More influences? None of these adventitious mental states are the real you. You are not controlling the storm, and you are not lost in it. You are the storm.”*

2. *“Most people are ruled by many mutually incompatible goals and aspirations: You want to finish your work, but you are also inclined to stop working so that you can play with your kids. You aspire to quit smoking, but you also crave another cigarette. You are struggling to save money, but you are also tempted to buy a new computer. Where is the freedom when one of these opposing desires inexplicably triumphs over its rival?”*
3. *“My mental life is simply given to me by the cosmos. Why didn’t I decide to drink a glass of juice? The thought never occurred to me. Am I free to do that which does not occur to me to do? Of course not.”*

3.3 On Blame

1. *“What does it mean to say that rapists and murderers commit their crimes of their own free will? If this statement means anything, it must be that they could have behaved differently—not on the basis of random influences over which they have no control, but because they, as conscious agents, were free to think and act in other ways. To say that they were free not to rape and murder is to say that they could have resisted the impulse to do so (or could have avoided feeling such an impulse altogether)—with the universe, including their brains, in precisely the same state it was in at the moment they committed their crimes. Assuming that violent criminals have such freedom, we reflexively blame them for their actions. But without it, the place for our blame suddenly vanishes, and even the most terrifying sociopaths begin to seem like victims themselves.”*

4 The Kybalion by The Three Initiates

The Kybalion is a book on the teachings of the Hermetic philosophy, which is a set of spiritual principles that are said to be based on the writings of the ancient Egyptian sage Hermes Trismegistus. The Kybalion was published in 1908 and attributed to three initiates, who are referred to as “the masters” in the book. The identity of the three initiates is unknown and there is some debate about whether they were real individuals or simply pseudonyms used by the book’s author or authors. The Kybalion is a key text in the study of Hermeticism and has been influential in the development of various spiritual and metaphysical movements. It covers a range of topics, including the principles of mentalism, correspondence, vibration, polarity, rhythm, and causation. *Source: chatgpt.*

The following quotes are from Initiates (1908).

4.1 The Seven Principles

1. *“The all is Mind; The Universe is Mental.”*
2. *“As above, so below; as below, so above.”*
3. *“Nothing rests; everything moves; everything vibrates.”*
4. *“Everything is Dual; everything has poles; everything has its pair of opposites; like and unlike are the same; opposites are identical in nature, but different in degree; extremes meet; all truths are but half-truths; all paradoxes may be reconciled.”*
5. *“Everything flows, out and in; everything has its tides; all things rise and fall; the pendulum-swing manifests in everything; the measure of the swing to the right is the measure of the swing to the left; rhythm compensates.”*
6. *“Every Cause has its Effect; every Effect has its Cause; everything happens according to Law; Chance is but a name for Law not recognized; there are many planes of causation, but nothing escapes the Law.”*
7. *“Gender is in everything; everything has its Masculine and Feminine Principles; Gender manifests on all planes.”*

4.2 The All and Higher Energy

1. *“And still more presumptuous are those who attempt to ascribe to THE ALL the personality, qualities, properties, characteristics and attributes of themselves, ascribing to THE ALL the human emotions, feelings, and characteristics, even down to the pettiest qualities of mankind, such as jealousy, susceptibility to flattery and praise, desire for offerings and worship, and all the other survivals from the days of the childhood of the race. Such ideas are not worthy of grown men and women, and are rapidly being discarded.”*
2. *“Spirit is simply a name that men give to the highest conception of Infinite Living Mind—it means ‘the Real Essence’—it means Living Mind, as much superior to Life and Mind as we know them, as the latter are superior to mechanical Energy and Matter.”*

4.3 On Mental States

1. *“A knowledge of the existence of this great Hermetic Principle will enable the student to better understand his own mental states, and those of other people. He will see that these states are all matters of degree, and seeing thus, he will be able to raise or lower the vibration at will—to change his mental poles, and thus be Master of his mental states, instead of being their servant and slave. And by his knowledge he will be able to aid his fellows intelligently and by the appropriate methods change the polarity when the same is desirable.”*
2. *“The Hermetic Masters long since discovered that while the Principle of Rhythm was invariable, and ever in evidence in mental phenomena, still there were two planes of its manifestation so far as mental phenomena are concerned. They discovered that there were two general planes of Consciousness, the Lower and the Higher, the understanding of which fact enabled them to rise to the higher plane and thus escape the swing of the Rhythmic pendulum which manifested on the lower plane. In other words, the swing of the pendulum occurred on the Unconscious Plane, and the Consciousness was not affected. This they call the Law of Neutralization. Its operations consist in the raising of the Ego above the vibrations of the Unconscious Plane of mental activity, so that the negative-swing of the pendulum is not manifested in consciousness, and therefore they are not affected. It is akin to rising above a thing and letting it pass beneath you. The Hermetic Master, or advanced student, polarizes himself at the desired pole, and by a process akin to “refusing” to participate in the backward swing or, if you prefer, a “denial” of its influence over him, he stands firm in his polarized.”*
3. *“But the Hermetists carry it still further. They teach that a man’s mental states are subject to the same Law. The man who enjoys keenly, is subject to keen suffering; while he who feels but little pain is capable of feeling but little joy. The pig suffers but little mentally, and enjoys but little—he is compensated. And on the other hand, there are*

other animals who enjoy keenly, but whose nervous organism and temperament cause them to suffer exquisite degrees of pain and so it is with Man. There are temperaments which permit of but low degrees of enjoyment, and equally low degrees of suffering; while there are others which permit the most intense enjoyment, but also the most intense suffering."

4.4 On Free Will

1. *"We do not wish to enter into a consideration of Free Will, or Determinism, in this work, for various reasons. Among the many reasons, is the principal one that neither side of the controversy is entirely right—in fact, both sides are partially right, according to the Hermetic Teachings. The Principle of Polarity shows that both are but Half-Truths the opposing poles of Truth. The Teachings are that a man may be both Free and yet bound by Necessity, depending upon the meaning of the terms, and the height of Truth from which the matter is examined. The ancient writers express the matter thus: "The further the creation is from the Centre, the more it is bound; the nearer the Centre it reaches, the nearer Free is it."*
2. *"The majority of people are more or less the slaves of heredity, environment, etc., and manifest very little Freedom. They are swayed by the opinions, customs and thoughts of the outside world, and also by their emotions, feelings, moods, etc. They manifest no Mastery, worthy of the name. They indignantly repudiate this assertion, saying, "Why, I certainly am free to act and do as I please—I do just what I want to do," but they fail to explain whence arise the "want to" and "as I please." What makes them "want to" do one thing in preference to another; what makes them "please" to do this, and not do that? Is there no "because" to their "pleasing" and "Wanting"? The Master can change these "pleases" and "wants" into others at the opposite end of the mental pole. He is able to "Will to will," instead of to will because some feeling, mood, emotion, or environmental suggestion arouses a tendency or desire within him so to do."*

5 Discourses by Epictetus

Epictetus was a Greek philosopher who lived in the first and second centuries AD. He was born a slave, but eventually gained his freedom and became a respected teacher. Epictetus is known for his philosophy of Stoicism, which emphasizes the importance of living in accordance with reason and virtue. He believed that individuals have control over their own thoughts and actions, and that they should strive to cultivate inner peace and happiness. Epictetus's teachings have had a significant influence on Western philosophy and have been widely studied and admired for centuries. *Source: chatgpt.*

The following quotes are from Hard and Gill (2014).

5.1 On Complaining

1. *“Yes, but my nose is running. Then what do you have hands for, you slave? Isn't it to be able to wipe your nose? How much better it would be for you to wipe your nose than to find fault”*
2. *“But unpleasant and distressing things come about in this life. And don't such things come about at Olympia? Aren't you scorched by the heat? Aren't you crowded and jostled? Don't you find it difficult to wash? Don't you get soaked when it rains? Aren't you exposed to no end of uproar and shouting and other irritations? But by balancing all of these things off against the remarkable nature of spectacle, I imagine that you're able to accept and endure them. Come now, haven't you been endowed with faculties that enable you to bear whatever may come about? Haven't you been endowed with greatness of soul? And with courage? And with endurance? If only I have greatness of soul, what reason is left for me to be worried about anything that may come to pass? What can disconcert or trouble me, or seem in any way distressing? Shall I fail to apply my capacities to the end for which I have received them, but instead groan and lament about things that come about?”*

5.2 On Judgements

1. *“From this day forth, then, whenever we fail to act rightly we'll ascribe the blame to nothing other than the judgment that led us to act as we did, and will endeavor to destroy*

it and cut it out, even more than with tumors and abscesses of our body. In like fashion we will also ascribe what we do right to the same cause. No longer will we blame slave, or neighbor, or wife, or children as being responsible for any of our ills, since we're now convinced that unless we judge things to be of a certain nature, we don't carry out the actions that follow from that judgment. Now when it comes to forming a judgment, or not forming one, we're the masters of that, and not things outside ourselves."

2. *"So accordingly from this day onward we'll investigate and examine the nature and condition of nothing else at all be it land or slaves or horses or dogs but only of our judgments. You can see then that it's necessary for you to become a student, that creature who is the butt of everyone's laughter, if you really want to subject your opinions to proper examination. And that as you are fully aware, is not the work of a single hour or day."*
3. *"Don't you know how small a part you are by comparison to the whole with regard to your body I mean but when it comes to your reason you're not inferior to the gods nor do you fall short of them because the greatness of reason is measured not by height or length but by the quality of its judgments."*

5.3 Use Your Mind

1. *"Now if you were ignorant of the purpose for which you possess the power of sight you'd be unfortunate and in a bad way if you close your eyes when colors were presenting themselves; so when you have nobility and greatness of mind to enable you to deal with every circumstance, and yet are ignorant of that, aren't you even more unfortunate and even worse off? Things that the faculty in your possession is well fitted to deal with present themselves to you, and yet you renounce the use of it at the very moment when you should be keeping it open for use and fully attentive. Shouldn't you be giving thanks, rather, to the gods for having enable you to rise above everything that they have placed within your power, and having rendered you accountable only for what is subject to your control? With regard to your parents, they have discharged you from all accountability; and likewise with regard to your brothers and sisters, and to your body, and to your property, and life and death. Well then, what have they made you accountable for? Only for what lies within your power, the right use of your impressions. Why do you charge yourself, then, with things for which you're not accountable? You're merely creating trouble for yourself."*

5.4 On Understanding

1. *"This man who has fallen into error and is mistaken about the most important matters, and thus has gone blind, not with regard to the eyesight that distinguishes white from*

black, but with regard to judgment that distinguishes good from bad. Should someone like this be put to death? If you put the question in that way you'll recognize the inhumanity of the thought that you're expressing and see that it is equivalent to saying, should this blind man then or that deaf one be put to death? For the greatest harm that a person can suffer is the loss of the most valuable goods, and the most valuable thing that anyone can possess is correct choice. Then if someone is deprived of that, what reason is left for you to be angry with him?"

2. *"Whoever keeps this fact clearly in mind, then, that for human beings the present impression is the measure of every action. An impression that may besides be well or badly formed. If well, that person is beyond reproach. If badly, he himself pays the penalty, since it is impossible that one person should go astray and another one pay the penalty for it. Whoever keeps this in mind then will never be angry with anyone and will never abuse, never criticize, never hate, and never offend anyone."*

5.5 A Good Bargain

1. *"That is why I lost my lamp, because the thief was better than me keeping awake. But he has paid a high price for the lamp, since he returned for a lamp he has become a thief, in return for a lamp, a man of bad faith, in return for a lamp, a wild beast. That struck him as a good bargain!"*

5.6 On Learning

1. *"For the same reason it is also ridiculous to say 'give me some advice.' What advice should I give you? No this is what you should say: 'Ensure that my mind will be able to adapt itself to whatever comes about.' For the former request amounts to the same as an illiterate person asking, 'tell me what to write when some name is set for me to write.' Suppose I tell him to write 'Dion', and teacher comes along and sets him not to that name, but 'Theon', what will come of it? What is he to write? But if you studied how to write, you'll be ready for everything that may be dictated to you; and if not, what advice should I give you now? If the circumstances should dictate something different, what will you say, what will you do? Keep this general principle in mind, then, and you will never be in need of advice. But if you're constantly hankering after external things, you're sure to be tested this way and that in accordance with your master's will. And who is your master? Whoever has authority over anything that you're anxious to gain or avoid."*

5.7 On Human Beings

1. *“What are you? A human being. Now if you consider yourself in isolation, it is natural for you to live to an advanced age, to be rich, and to enjoy good health; but if you consider yourself as a human being and as a part of some whole, it may be in the interest of the whole that you should now fall ill, now embark on a voyage and be exposed to danger, now suffer poverty, and perhaps even die before your time. Why do you resent this, then? Don't you know that in isolation of foot is no longer a foot, and that you likewise will no longer be a human being? What, then, is a human being? A part of a city, first of all that which is that which is made up of gods and human beings, then that which is closest to us and which we call a city, which is a microcosm of the universal city.”*

5.8 On Retaliation

1. *“‘What then if someone injures me won't I injure him in return?’ Consider first what injury is, and recall what you've heard from the philosophers. If it is the case, then that the good lies in choice, and the bad likewise, see whether what you've just said amounts to this: ‘since the person in question has injured himself by inflicting some wrong on me, shouldn't I injure myself by inflicting some wrong on him?’ Why don't we picture the matter in some such way as that, instead of counting it as an injury when we suffer some loss with regard to our body or possessions, while counting it as no injury at all where our choice is affected? It is that when one is deceived or commits an injustice, one suffers no pain in one's head, or eyes, or one's hip, nor does one lose any land; and we're concerned about nothing other than things of that kind. As to whether our choice is kept honest and trustworthy, or will On the contrary be shameful and unreliable unreliable, that doesn't cause us the slightest concern, except when it comes to making fine speeches in the classroom. And so the progress that we make extends only to speechifying, and apart from that we advance no not a step further.”*

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