

## Book Summary

Marcus Aurelius Emperor of Rome 121180 Meditations translated by Maxwell Staniforth p cmGreat ideas Originally published in Penguin Classics 1964 Published in Penguin Books UK 2004 First published in the United States of America by Penguin Books 2005

Book One: Courtesy and serenity of temper I first learnt to know from my grandfather Verus. Book Two: Manliness without ostentation I learnt from what I have heard and remember of my father. Book Three: My mother set me an example of piety and generosity avoidance of all uncharitableness not in actions only but in thought as well.

Apollonius taught me to avoid rhetoric poetry and verbal conceits affectations of dress at home. He also schooled me to meet spasms of acute pain the loss of my son and the tedium of a chronic ailment with the same unaltered composure. My debts to Sextus include kindness how to rule a household with paternal authority.

Alexander the Platonist cautioned me against frequent use of the words I am too busy in speech or correspondence except in cases of real necessity. Catulus the Stoic counselled me never to make light of a friends rebuke even when unreasonable. From my brother Severus I learnt to love my relations to love the truth and to love justice. Through him I came to know of Thrasea Cato Helvidius Dion and Brutus.

Maximus was my model for selfcontrol fixity of purpose and cheerfulness under illhealth or other misfortunes. His character was an admirable combination of dignity and charm and all the duties of his station were performed quietly and without fuss. Nobody was ever made by him to feel inferior yet none could have presumed to challenge his preeminence.

He was always equal to an occasion cheerful yet longsighted enough to have all his dispositions unobtrusively perfected down to the last detail. He never stooped to bid for popularity or woo the masses but pursued his own calm and steady way. He accepted without either complacency or compunction such material comforts as fortune had put at his disposal.

He disliked restlessness and change and had a rooted preference for the same places and the same pursuits. His secret and confidential files were not numerous and the few infrequent items in them referred exclusively to matters of state. He showed good sense and restraint over the exhibition of spectacles and construction of public buildings.

To the gods I owe good grandparents good parents a good sister and teachers comrades kinsmen and friends good almost without exception and that I never fell out with any of them in spite of a temperament that could very well have precipitated something of the sort. Under my father the Emperor I was cured of all pomposity and made to realize that life at court can be lived without royal escorts.

Lucius Ceionius Commodus afterwards known as Lucius Verus. He was adopted by Antoninus Pius along with Marcus with whom he was associated as coemperor. Originally a man of courage and ability Verus degenerated into weakness and selfindulgence.

"I have long perceived the nature of good and its nobility" "What is irritation or aversion but a form of obstruction" "A little flesh a little breath and a Reason to rule all that is myself"

You yourself are a part of that universe and for any one of natures parts that which is assigned to it by the World Nature or helps to keep it in being is good. Onthese thoughts rest content and ever

hold them as principles. Forget your thirst for books so that when your end comes you may not murmur but meet it with a good grace.

Man has but one life already thine is nearing its close yet still hast thou no eye to thine own honour but art staking thy happiness on the souls of other men 7 Are you distracted by outward cares Then allow yourself a space of quiet wherein you can add to your knowledge of the Good and learn to curb your restlessness.

If gods exist you have nothing to fear in taking leave of mankind for they will not let you come to harm. If there are no gods or if they have no concern with mortal affairs what is life to me in a world devoid of gods or devoid of Providence?

We should apprehend too the nature of death and that if only it be steadily contemplated and the fancies we associate with it be mentally dissected it will soon come to be thought of as no more than a process of nature. Also we can learn how man has contact with God and with which part of himself this is maintained.

No one can lose what is already past nor yet what is still to come. Our loss is limited to that one fleeting instant. To quarrel with circumstances is always a rebellion against Nature.

In the life of a man his time is but a moment his being an incessant flux his senses a dim rushlight his body a prey of worms his soul an unquiet eddy his fortune dark and his fame doubtful. Where then can man find the power to guide and guard his steps In one thing and one alone Philosophy.

The onset of senility may involve no loss of respiratory or alimentary powers or of sensations impulses. The ability to make full use of his faculties to assess correctly the demands of duty is

already on the wane. We must press on then in haste not simply because every hour brings us nearer to death.

Hippocrates cured the ills of many but himself took ill and died. The Chaldeans foretold the deaths of many but fate caught up with them. Alexander Pompey and Julius Caesar laid waste whole cities time and again. Heraclitus speculated endlessly on the consumption of the universe by fire but in the end it was water that saturated his body and he died in a dungplaster.

Such a man determined here and now to aspire to the heights is indeed a priest and minister of the gods for he is making full use of that indwelling power which can keep a man unsullied by pleasures. He is a competitor in the greatest of all contests the struggle against passions mastery.

Therein is the secret of cheerfulness of depending on no help from without and needing to crave from no man the boon of tranquillity We have to stand upright ourselves not be set up 6 If mortal life can offer you anything better than justice and truth self control and courage that is peace of mind.

Never value the advantages derived from anything involving breach of faith loss of selfrespect hatred suspicion or execration of others insincerity or the desire for something which has to be veiled and curtailed. In a mind that is disciplined and purified there is no taint of corruption no unclean spot nor festering sore.

Man lives only in the present in this fleeting instant all the rest of his life is either past and gone or not yet revealed. This mortal life is a little thing lived in a little corner of the earth. Little too is the longest fame to come dependent as it is on a succession of fastperishing littlemen.

In accordance with Natures law of brotherhood I am to deal amiably and fairly with him. If there be

no question of good or evil involved I must aim my shafts at the proper merits of the case. Nothing human can be done aright without reference to the divine and conversely.

Body soul and mind the body for sensation the soul for the springs of action the mind for principles. The capacity for sensation belongs also to the stalled ox. There is no wild beast homosexual Nero or Phalaris but obeys the twitchings of impulse.

At any moment you choose you can retire within yourself. Nowhere can man find a quieter or more untroubled retreat than in his own soul. Avail yourself often then of this retirement and so continually renew yourself.

Life as a man as a human being as a citizen and as a mortal. For the entire earth is but a point and the place of our own habitation but a minute corner in it.

"Whatever happens happens rightly Watch closely and you will find this true" "There is not mere sequence alone but an order that is just and right" "Let goodness accompany your every action goodness that is in the proper sense of the word"

"If reason does its part what more would you ask," he writes. But such conviction must proceed from the assurance that justice or the common good or some other such interest will be served. This must be the sole consideration not the likelihood of pleasure or popularity.

Anything in any way beautiful derives its beauty from itself and asks nothing beyond itself Praise is no part of it for nothing is made worse or better by praise. This applies even to the more mundane forms of beauty natural objects for example or works of art.

Most of what we say and do is not necessary and its omission would save both time and trouble. Even idle impressions ought to be suppressed for then unnecessary action will not ensue. Test for yourself your capacity for the good mans life.

Can there be some measure of order subsisting in yourself and at the same time disorder in the greater Whole? Oneness of feeling exists between all the parts of nature in spite of their divergence and dispersion. Such a man is an exile selfbanished from the polity of reason.

Vespasian: Of all that life not a trace survives today. In such cases it is essential to remind ourselves that the pursuit of any object depends on the worth of the object pursued.

Submit yourself to Clotho with a good grace and let her spin your thread out of what material she will.

Everything that happens is as normal and expected as the spring rose or the summer fruit. What follows is ever closely linked to what precedes it is not a procession of isolated events merely obeying the laws of sequence.

Remind yourself constantly of all the physicians now dead who used to knit their brows over their ailing patients. Observe in short how transient and trivial is all mortallife yesterday a drop of semen tomorrow a handful of spice or ashes. Spend therefore these fleeting moments on earth as Nature would have you spend them and then go to your rest with a good grace.

Life itself is but what you deem it Hamlet Act II scene 2 says Theres nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so Marcushere expresses this thought more succinctly in two Greek words meaning literally life is opinion.

Craftsmen who love their trade will spend themselves to the utmost in labouring at it even going unwashed and unfed. You hold your nature in less regard than the engraver does his engraving the dancer his dancing the miser his heap of silver or the vainglorious man his moment of glory. If there is something good to be done or said never renounce your right to it.

There are still a host of other qualities whereof you cannot say I have no bent for them Cultivate these then for they are wholly within your power sincerity and dignity industriousness and sobriety Avoid grumbling be frugal considerate and frank be temperate in manner and in speech carry yourself with authority. See how many qualities there are which could be yours at this moment.

Prayers should either not be offered at all or else be as simple and ingenuous as this. Just as we say Aesculapius has prescribed horseback exercise or cold baths or going barefoot so in the same way does the WorldNature prescribe disease mutilation loss or some other disability.

Every individual dispensation is one of the causes of the prosperity success and even survival of That which administers the universe. To break off any particle no matter how small from the continuousconcatenation is to injure the whole.

"I can think of nothing that is worth prizing highly or pursuing seriously" "Nothing can ever happen to us that is not in accordance with nature" "No man alive who can force such disobedience upon me"

The popular conception of goods can be tested in this way. If the things a man identifies in his own mind with goods are such things as prudence temperance justice and fortitude then given that preconception he will have no ears for the old jest about so many goods for it will lack any point. If he shares the vulgar notion of what constitutes goods he will readily appreciate the jokers quip and

have no difficulty in seeing its aptness.

The more a man deprives himself or submits to be deprived of such things and their like the more he grows in goodness. Your mind will be like its habitual thoughts for the soul becomes dyed with the colour of its thoughts. The purpose behind each things creation determines its development.

While the animate is higher than the inanimate the rational is higher still 17 To pursue the unattainable is insanity yet the thoughtless can never refrain from doing so 18 Nothing can happen to any man that nature has not fitted him to endure.

What is not harmful to the city cannot harm the citizen. In every fancied case of harm apply the rule If the city is not harmed I am not harmed either. But if the city should indeed be harmed never rage at the culprit rather find out at what point his vision failed him.

If unsavoury armpits and bad breath make you angry what good will it do you? To live with the gods is to show them at all times a soul contented with their awards. It is possible to live on earth as you mean to live hereafter.

The poet asks us to reflect on our relationships up to the present time. Can we fairly echo the poets line: Never a harsh word never an injustice to a single person?

"What is it then that still keeps you here?" he asks. "Take heart and wait for the end be it extinction or translation" "I have always been a favourite of Fortune"

Sceptic or Pyrrhonian school of philosophers founded by Pyrrho of Elis. They maintained that our perceptions can only show us things as they appear and not as they are. A suspension of



judgement is therefore the only correct attitude to anything.

Even dying is part of the business of life and there too no more is required of us than to see the moments work well done. Our masterreason is something which is both selfawakened and self directed.

Habitual recurrence to the harmony will increase your mastery of it. Reflections of this kind go to the bottom of things penetrating into them and exposing their real nature. When a things credentials look most plausible lay it bare observe its triviality. Pretentiousness is the arch deceiver and never more delusive than when you imagine your work is most meritorious.

One thing hastens into being another hastens out of it. While a thing is in the act of coming into existence some part of it has already ceased to be. Transpiration is not a thing to be prized we share it with the plants.

All training and all craftsmanship for every craft aims at adapting a product to the end for which it was produced. Excluding then the delusions of fame what is there left to be prized?

When an opponent in the gymnasium gashes us with his nails or bruises our head in a collision we do not protest or take offence. We do not suspect him ever afterwards of malicious intent. We regard him with a wary eye not in enmity or suspicion yet good temperedly keeping our distance.

In death Alexander of Macedons end differed no whit from his stableboys. Either both were received into the same generative principle of the universe or both alike were dispersed into atoms.

Keep yourself simple good pure serious and unassuming the friend of justice and godliness kindly

affectionate and resolute in your devotion to duty Strive your hardest to be always such a man as Philosophy would have you to be Reverence the gods succour your fellowmortals Life is short and this earthly existence has but a single fruit to yield holiness within and selfless action without.

"To the body all things are indifferent for it is incapable of making distinctions" "Pain of hand or foot is nothing unnatural so long as hand and foot are doing their own work" "If it accords with nature it cannot be an evil" "All is petty inconstant and perishable"

"To see the things of the present moment is to see all that is now all that has been since time began" "If only you live and act according to its will you have all things to your liking"

Even in their sleep men are at work and contributing their share to the cosmic process. No small part is performed by that very malcontent who does all he can to hinder and undo the course of events.

As a human being I have the universe and consequently what is beneficial to these communities is the sole good for me 45 All that befalls the individual is for the good of the whole That by itself is warrant enough for us but if you look closely you will also notice that as a general rule what is good for one man is good for his fellowmen as well.

Muse often on these men all long since laid low in death. How pray are they the worse for it now more especially those whose very names have been forgotten. In this life one thing only is of precious worth to live out ones days in truthfulness and fair dealing.

Things in themselves have no power to extort a verdict from you. To a man with jaundice honey seems bitter to one bitten by a mad dog water is a thing of horror to little children a ball is a treasure

of great price Why then do I give way to anger?

There is no such thing as novelty all is as trite as it is transitory 2 Principles can only lose their vitality when the first impressions from which they derive have sunk into extinction. 3 An empty pageant a stage play flocks of sheep herds of cattle a tussle of spearmen a bone flung among a pack of curs.

For everything I do whether by myself or with another must have as its sole aim the service and harmony of all. Think it no shame to be helped Your business is to do your appointed duty like a soldier in the breach.

If you think of yourself as a part meros only you have as yet no love from the heart for mankind and no joy in the performance of acts of kindness for their own sake. Whatever the world may say or do my part is to keep myself good just as a gold piece or an emerald or a purple robe insists perpetually.

Happiness by derivation means a good god within that is a good masterreason Then what vain Fancy are you doing here Be off in heavens name as you came I want none of you. We shrink from change yet is there anything that can come into being without it?

An angry look on the face is wholly against nature. Beauty begins to perish and in the end is quenched beyond rekindling. Do not indulge in dreams of having what you have not.

Do away with all fancies Cease to be passions puppet Limit time to the present Learn to recognize every experience for what it is. Meditate upon your last hour.

If a man has greatness of mind and the breadth of vision can he regard human life as a thing of any great consequence No he cannot. So he wont think death anything to be afraid of No From Plato. It is the fate of princes to be ill spoken of for welldoing from Antisthenes.

I beg you my friend to think it possible that nobility and goodness may be something different from keeping oneself and ones friends from danger. A true man instead of clinging to life at all costs ought not to dismiss from his mind the question how long he may have to live. Let him leave that to the will of God in the belief that the womenfolk are right.

More crafty in the ring no doubt but not more publicspirited. More disciplined to circumstance more indulgent to a neighbours oversights. If a deed can be accomplished to accord with that reason which men share with gods there is nothing to fear.

56 Take it that you have died today and your lifes story is ended and henceforward regard what further time may be given you as an uncovenanted surplus and live it out in harmony with nature. Love nothing but that which comes to you woven in the pattern of your destiny For what could more aptly fit your needs.

Art of living is more like wrestling than dancing in as much as it demands a firm and watchful stance against any unexpected onset. Always get to know the characters of those whose approval you wish to earn and the nature of their guiding principles.

It is perfectly possible to be godlike even though unrecognized as such. The needs of a happy life are very few. Mastery of dialectics or physics may have eluded you but that is no reason to despair.

No man tires of receiving benefits but benefit comes from doing acts that accord with nature.

Universal Nature's impulse was to create an orderly world.

You should banish any thoughts of how you may appear to others and rest content if you can make the remainder of your life what nature would have it to be. Learn to understand her will and let nothing else distract you.

Every nature finds its satisfaction in the smooth pursuance of its own road. The second is to look things in the face and know them for what they are remembering that it is your duty to be a goodman.

Repentance is remorse for the loss of some helpful opportunity. Pleasure is neither good nor helpful. Let no one not even yourself ever hear you abusing court life again.

To change your mind and defer to correction is not to sacrifice your independence for such an act is your own in pursuance of your own impulse. If the choice is yours why do the thing. If another's where are you to lay the blame for it? On gods? On atoms? Either would be insanity.

The whole earth is itself no more than the puniest dot. Give it the whole of your attention whether it be a material object, an action, a principle, or the meaning of what is being said. You would rather hope for goodness tomorrow than practise it today. In what I do I am to do it with reference to the service of mankind.

A man's true delight is to do the things he was made for. Pain must be an evil either to the body or to the soul. Use language that is seemly but not rhetorical. Be sane and wholesome in your speech.

Your every separate action should contribute towards an integrated life. If each of them so far as it

can does its part to this end be satisfied for that is something which nobody can prevent. There will be interferences from without you say Even so they will not affect the justice prudence and reasonableness of your intentions.

Never confuse yourself by visions of an entire lifetime at once. As you encounter each one ask yourself What is there unendurable so insupportable in this.

To the nature of the vital force animating our bodies any frustration of the senses is an evil. Within its own domain there is nobody who can frustrate the mind. The globe once orbed and true remains a sphere.

No event can happen to a man but what is properly incidental to mans condition. What properly belongs to the nature of oxen vines and stones. If all things experience only what is customary and natural to them why complain.

Never go beyond the sense of your original impressions. Nature will only laugh at you just as a carpenter or a shoemaker would laugh if you found fault with their shavings and scraps.

How be lord yourself of such a perennial fountain By safeguarding the right to be your own master every hour of the day in all charity simplicity and modesty.

Sunbeams derive their very name from a word signifying to be extended. Failure to transmit it is mere selfdeprivation of light. He who fears death either fears to lose all sensation or fears new sensations.

Untruthfulness too is a sin and against the same goddess For Nature is the nature of Existence itself

and existence connotes the kinship of all created beings Truth is but another name for this Nature the original creator of all true things.

Every successive generation of created things equally passes through the same experiences. Despise not death smile rather at its coming it is among the things that Nature wills.

A man does not sin by commission only but often by omission. Erase fancy curb impulse quench desire let sovereign reason have the mastery. A single lifeprinciple is divided amongst all irrational creatures and a single mindprinciple distributed among the rational. All things that share the same element tend to seek their own kind.

The instinct for reunion shows itself in its first stage among the creatures without reason. The desire for union is found at a level of intensity which is not present in stones or sticks.

Everything is banal in experience fleeting in duration sordid in content in all respects. Work yourself hard but not as if you were being made a victim. Desire one thing alone that your actions or inactions alike should be worthy of a reasoning citizen.

In the interruption of an activity or the discontinuance and as it were death of an impulse or an opinion there is no evil. Your own mind the Mind of the universe your neighbours mind be prompt to explore them all.

When those about you are venting their censure or malice upon you or raising any other sort of injurious clamour approach and penetrate into their souls and see what manner of men they are. How ignoble are the little men who play at politics.

Philosophy is a modest profession all simplicity and plain dealing. Never try to seduce me into solemn pretentiousness. When beset from without by circumstance be unperturbed. When prompted from within to action be just and fair in fine.

Many of the anxieties that harass you are superfluous being but creatures of your own fancy. You can rid yourself of them and expand into an ampler region letting your thought sweep over the entire universe contemplating the illimitable tracts of eternity.

"Enough of this miserable way of life these everlasting grumbles these monkey antics" "Set yourself to become a simpler and better man in the sight of the gods" "If he sinned the harm is his own Yet perhaps after all he did not"

Epicurus says that when he was sick he never used to talk about his bodily ailments. He says that he went on dealing with the principles of natural philosophy.

That man is simply one of the impudent whose existence is necessary to the world. When you are indignant with anyone for his perfidy or ingratitude turn your thoughts first and foremost upon yourself.

Once you have done a man a service what more would you have? O soul of mine will you never be good and sincere all one all open visible to the beholder more clearly than even your encompassing body of flesh.

Whatever befalls Nature has either prepared you to face it or she has not. If something untoward happens which is within your powers of endurance do not resent it but bear it as she has enabled you to do. If a man makes a slip admonish him gently and show him his mistake If you fail to



convince him blame yourself or else blame nobody.

All parts of the Whole must in time decay or to speak accurately must suffer a change of form. Did Nature then deliberately mean to inflict injury on things which are parts of herself making them not simply liable to evil but inescapably doomed to it or can it be that such things happen without her knowledge? Neither supposition merits any credence.

Dissolution must be a change of the grosser particles into earthform and the spiritual into air form so that they can all be reabsorbed into the universal Reason. Even if we admit that birth does in fact implicate us in great measure with these intrinsically mutable particles I do not think it affects what I have said.

If you feel yourself drifting and unable to hold your course pluck up heart and make for some quiet haven where you can hold your own. So step on board this little raft of attributes and if you can contrive it stay there as though transported to the Isles of the Blest.

A spider is proud of catching a fly so is one man of trapping a hare or another of netting a sprat or a third of capturing boars or bears or Sarmatians. If you go into the question of principles are these anything but robbers one and all.

To Nature whence all things come and whither all return the cry of the humble and wellinstructed heart is Give as thou wilt take back as thy wilt.

The peace of green fields can always be yours in this that or any other spot. Nothing is any different here from what it would be either up in the hills or down by the sea or wherever else you will.

Reflect often how all the life of today is a repetition of the past and observe that it also presages what is to come. Review the many complete dramas and their settings all so similar which you have known in your own experience or from bygone history.

"All tribulations are exercises for the training of your reason once it has learnt to see the truths of life in a proper philosophic light" "No one has the right to say truthfully of you that you are without integrity or goodness" "If you cannot live so you need only resolve to live no longer"

Nothing can injure the true citizen if it does not injure the city itself. Nothing can injure a city unless it injures law. What we call mischances do no injury to law and therefore cannot harm either city or citizen.

A mind crying O that my children may be spared or O that the world might ring with praises of my every act is an eye craving for greenery or a tooth craving for softness. No man is so fortunate but that some who stand beside his deathbed will be hailing the coming loss with delight.

A rational soul can contemplate herself analyse herself make of herself what she will herself enjoy the fruit she bears. The Greek word for law *nomos* was supposed to be derived from a verb meaning to allot *nemein*.

The qualities of the rational soul include love of neighbours truthfulness modesty and a reverence for herself before all else. The principle of rationality is one and the same as the principle of justice.

After tragedy came the Old Comedy with a tongue unsparing as a schoolmasters but administering a wholesale rebuke to pride by its very outspokenness. Later look at the aims of the Middle Comedy and eventually of the New Comedy which was so soon to decline into the mere artificiality of the

Mime.

"Though men may hinder you from following the paths of reason they can never succeed in deflecting you from sound action" "We can never achieve true justice while we set our hearts on things of lesser value and are content to remain credulous headstrong and inconstant"

It may be that the things you fret and fume to pursue or avoid do not come to you but rather you go to them. Let your judgements of them then remain in suppression they for their part will make no move and so you will not be seen pursuing or avoiding them.

A man who is truly good and sincere and wellmeaning will show it by his looks and no one can fail to see it. The good life can be achieved to perfection by any soul capable of showing indifference to the things that are themselves indifferent.

When offended Counsel the First Remember the close bond between myself and the rest of mankind. If what they are doing is right you have no claim to be annoyed if it is not. You yourself offend in various ways and are no different from them. You may indeed avoid certain faults yet the inclination is there nevertheless.

There is generally much to learn before any judgement can be pronounced with certainty on anothers doings. Our anger and annoyance are more detrimental to us than the things themselves which anger or annoy us. Kindness is irresistible so long as it be genuine and without false smiles or duplicity. The most consummate impudence can do nothing if you remain persistently kind to the offender.

Anger is as much a mark of weakness as is grief in both of them men receive a wound and submit to

a defeat. To expect bad men never to do bad things is insensate it is hoping for the impossible. To tolerate their offences against others and expect none against yourself is both irrational and arbitrary.

The only part of you which is not obedient and chafes at its appointed sphere should be the thinking part. Nothing violent is demanded of it nothing but what accords with its own nature yet it will not submit but breaks away in the contrary direction.

Socrates name for the beliefs of the man in the street was bogies to scare children. The Spartans used to seat their guests out of the sun at all public spectacles and themselves sat where they could.

If these words are authentic and not a later insertion they are the only reference which Marcus makes to the Christians. C R Haines points out that the clause is outside the construction and in fact ungrammatical It is in the very form of a marginal note and has every appearance of being a gloss foisted into the text.

The works of all but Aristophanes are lost and in the words of the historian Grote if we had not these before us it would have been impossible to imagine the unmeasured and unsparing licence of attack assumed by the Old Comedy. Towards the end of Aristophane career the licence of the Old comedy was restricted by law. Writers also began to dispense with the costly services of a chorus thus making way for the Middle Comedy.

Marcus warns the philosopher not to exchange the quiet of his own soul for the perturbations of the world. Socrates consistently refused to be provoked by Xantippes asperities.

God views the inner minds of men stripped of every material sheath and husk and dross Acting

through his thought alone he makes contact solely with that in them which is an outflow from himself  
School yourself to do likewise.

Even eminently virtuous men should know no rebirth after their death but be doomed to utter extinction. If there had been need for some different plan it would have been so ordained had it accorded with Nature.

Look at the inmost causes of things stripped of their husks note the intentions that underlie actions study the essences of pain pleasure death glory observe how mans disquiet is all of his own making and how troubles come never from anothers hand but like all else are creatures of our own opinion. Abstain then from all thoughts of blame.

To wish that a rogue would never do wrong is like wishing that figtrees would never have any sour juice in theirfruit infants never cry horses never neigh or any other of lifes inevitabilities never come to pass. If you find it so vexatious then reform it. If it is not the right thing to do never do it.

When an operation no matter of what sort is brought to a close at the right moment the stoppage does it no harm and the agent himself is no worse for discontinuing his action.

Imagine yourself suddenly carried up into the clouds and looking down on the whole panorama of human activities. How the scene would excite your contempt now that you could discern the multitude of aerial and heavenly beings who throng around them. No matter how often upborne in this way you would still behold the same sights in all their monotony and transience.

Aristotle says pride that swells beneath a garb of humility is of all things the most intolerable. He says experience proves their power every day.

Think by its very nature tends spontaneously towards anything of its own kind and mingles with it so that the instinct for unity is not frustrated. To prize this you must remember is incompatible with any feelings of resentment that death will rob you of the others.