

Stoic Principles

MEMENTO MORI

Q: This could be my last day. How would I like to live it?

"Let us prepare our minds as if we'd come to the very end of life. Let us postpone nothing. Let us balance life's books each day. . . .The one who puts the finishing touches on their life each day is never short of time." (*Seneca, Moral Letters, 101.7b– 8a*)

A:

AMOR FATI

Q: How can I be more open to whatever happens today?

Don't seek for everything to happen as you wish it would, but rather wish that everything happens as it actually will— then your life will flow well." (*Epictetus, Enchiridion, 8*)

A:

KNOWING WHAT IS MINE

Q: What is under my control and what is not?

It is important to distinguish between what is up to us and what is not.

A:

W: tomoleary.ie

E: hello@tomoleary.ie

T: +353 (0)86 326 0193

PREMEDITATIO MALORUM

Q: What might happen today that would turn my world upside down?

"This is why we say that nothing happens to the wise person contrary to their expectations." (*Seneca, On Tranquillity of Mind, 13.3b*)

A:

EGO IS THE ENEMY

Q: Where is the Ego in my decision-making?

"Zeno would also say that nothing is more hostile to a firm grasp on knowledge than self-deception." (*Diogenes Laertius, Lives Of The Eminent Philosophers, 7.23*)

A:

EMBRACE DISCOMFORT

Q: How can I embrace "discomfort" such that it isn't a barrier to living more fully into the possibility life offers me?

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SUMMUM BONUM

Q: What represents a good life?

"Indeed, if you find anything in human life better than justice, truth, self-control, courage— in short, anything better than the sufficiency of your own mind, which keeps you acting according to the demands of true reason and accepting what fate gives you outside of your own power of choice— I tell you, if you can see anything better than this, turn to it heart and soul and take full advantage of this greater good you've found." (*Marcus Aurelius, Meditations, 3.6.1*)

A:

SYMPATHEIA

Q: How might I meditate on the interconnectedness of everything?

"Meditate often on the interconnectedness and mutual interdependence of all things in the universe. All things are mutually woven together and therefore have an affinity for each other—for one thing follows after another according to their tension of movement, their sympathetic stirrings, and the unity of all substance." (*Marcus Aurelius, Meditations, 6.38*)

A:

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E: hello@tomoleary.ie

T: +353 (0)86 326 0193

THE OBSTACLE IS THE WAY

Q: What obstacles might I turn into opportunities?

"While it's true that someone can impede our actions, they can't impede our intentions and our attitudes, which have the power of being conditional and adaptable. For the mind adapts and converts any obstacle to its action into a means of achieving it." (Marcus Aurelius, Meditations, 5.20)

A:

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T: +353 (0)86 326 0193