



THE STOIC

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BACK ISSUES

The Stoic Gym does not carry back issues of THE STOIC. They may, however, be obtained from Magzter.com:
<https://bit.ly/3aVVmeY>

Leaving your comfort zone

CHUCK CHAKRAPANI

Less common themes of Stoicism

We cover in this issue some of the less commonly discussed themes of Stoicism. Our contributors in this issue argue that we are used to comforts, pity others who are less fortunate, find it hard to cope with situations like the pandemic, find it difficult to cope with transience and imperfection, and we are tired.

Yet these are all topics that are dealt with by the ancient Stoics. Some of these concepts such as *premeditatio malorum* are well known, but other concepts, not so much.

Discomfort and virtue

Tobias Ruess argues that practicing discomfort is not optional but essential for the cultivation of virtue. Being tired is natural, adds Piotr Stankiewicz, but, if we are to assert our agency, we need to push back our natural inclinations, so we can exercise the choices over which we have control.

How we view things

We often pity those who are less fortunate under the assumption that not feeling pity is being hard-hearted. Not so, says Brittany Polat. Pitying others is not always helpful. In fact, it can be harmful. What we need to do is to be helpful to others and not pity them.

Erotic Love

Leo Konstantakos and Kai Whiting tackle a somewhat unusual theme: the Stoic perspective on erotic love. Early Stoics such as Zeno and Chrysippus argued for polyamory (open, non-monogamous relationships) to ensure that paternal affection and protection was available as much to adults as to children. To be clear, the ancient Stoics did not regard

erotic love as sexual or like the sexualized personal relationship we conceive of it today. Erotic love, for them is something that cements the interpersonal relationships of the entire community.

Science and Stoicism

A recent study by Harvard researchers concluded that it's not the situation itself that causes our emotional turmoil, it's how we think about it. Well, it's no surprise, says Meredith Kunz. Stoics have known and practiced this for over two thousand years.

Progress over perfectionism

Our concept of perfection doesn't exist in reality. As Marcus Aurelius points out, things are impermanent, they are constantly changing and decaying. All we can hope for is to move in the right direction, the direction pointed by virtue. There is perfection in imperfections, as the Japanese concept of wabi-sabi implies. When we compare Stoic virtues with wabi-sabi, Sharon Lebell says, they are similar in spirit.

Stoicon 2021 and Stoicon-x

As it is early Fall, we are into the 'Stoicon season'. You can find the details on the next two pages.

Because of the pandemic, Stoicon 2021 and many Stoicon-x events are online this year. This creates a wonderful opportunity – we can participate in many Stoicon events around the world without leaving home. It is a great opportunity to participate.

Some of these events are free, some you pay what you can, and others charge a fee. Choose your events!