



## Studies in Stoicism

*Swami Kshamyanda, December 9, 2020*

*“Think of the life you have lived until now as over and, as a dead man, see what’s left as a bonus and live it according to Nature. Love the hand fate deals you and play it as your own, for what could be more fitting?”*

*And when faced with a choice, remember: our business is with things that really matter.*

*Dig deep; the water-goodness-is down there. And as long as you keep digging, it will keep bubbling up.”*

*- Marcus Aurelius, Meditations, 7.56-59*

Back in 1996 I spent a week in hospital due to a very surprising and unexpected medical emergency and surgery. I discovered that life goes really, really fast in those moments. When I was discharged I saw life, and the world, anew. I saw peace and gratitude, beauty and potential in everyone and everything around me. Every morsel of solid food held nourishment for my



new life - food for the body, mind, and spirit. Food for recovery, for health, and for prana.

Flash forward almost 25 years - where is that person? Some days I struggle to find her.

We think we have time to indulge in social media, in news, in the words and opinions of others. And perhaps we do, but what if we don't?

*“No person hands out their money to passers by, but to how many do each of us hand out our lives! We're tight-fisted with property and money, yet think too little of wasting time, the one thing about which we should all be the toughest misers.”*

*- Seneca, On the Brevity of Life, 3.1-2*

Marcus Aurelius reminds us to see the life ahead. His words encourage us to embrace our karma, for it shines a light on our dharma. Embrace life, see the potential, see the beauty.

Life can change dramatically at any moment of any day. We each are only a phone call, an email, a text message, or a pain in our physical body away from a change in the direction of our lives.

Be devoted to Life now.

Be aware of what we value, of our moral code, our virtue, now.

Follow the teachings now.

Forgive now.

Whatever it is that you intend to devote the rest of your incarnation to, practice it now.

*Aham Brahmasmi*