

Meditations by Marcus Aurelius

December 23, 2013 | 28 upvotes | by [\[deleted\]](#)

I think everyone should read this book at least once.

http://www.amazon.com/Meditations-Marcus-Aurelius/dp/1492982717/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1387818891&sr=8-1&keywords=meditations

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Comments

[deleted] • 12 points • 25 December, 2013 11:22 PM*

Great book. It's actually a compilation of his private notes he took throughout his life. It's amazing to read the reflections of such a great man. He was the Roman Emperor, mind you. Great piece of Stoic wisdom. Available on gutenberg.org. Here are some quotes from the book:

To live each day as though one's last, never flustered, never apathetic, never attitudinizing—here is the perfection of character.

Take it that you have died today, and your life's story is ended; and henceforward regard what future time may be given you as an uncovenanted surplus, and live it out in harmony with your nature.

The art of life is more like the wrestler's art than the dancer's.

Every man is worth just so much as the things are worth about which he busies himself.

You must be like a promontory of the sea, against which the waves beat continually, yet it both itself stands, and about it are those swelling waves stilled and quieted.

[deleted] • 9 points • 24 December, 2013 09:01 AM

Marcus Aurelius was one of Rome's greatest emperors. At this time, a roman emperor was essentially god. This book is basically a number guidelines he gives himself to constrain himself in light of the fact that nothing and no one can control him.

I think anyone could benefit from reading this book. People who feel beaten down or people who are almost untouchable will find this book thought provoking.

PROS 1) you don't need to read it straight through. It's cut into tiny bits. You could read a sentence or an entire chapter. It's very accessible. 2) it's designed to make you think so you could read it at different stages of your life and it will still be relevant. 3) no matter what translation you get, it's not very long.

Con If you're not an abstract thinker, or need things spelled out for you, you'll find this book tedious.

Quote- *Spend no more time contemplating what a good man should be, simply be it.*

MrFritzH • 5 points • 24 December, 2013 08:07 PM

BTW this is of course free online, no need for amazon links

emptyform • 2 points • 30 December, 2013 05:18 AM

True, though Amazon's kindle version is also free.

rogueman999 • 2 points • 9 February, 2014 10:39 PM

Very good. The edition I read started with some history on the guy, which helps to explain a bit how the book goes. First 10 years of his rule were ok - he had time to think and writing flows easily. Last 10 years - shit hit the fan. Family died, war all over (spent most time on campaign) and to top it off his son turns out to be a psychopath - which he must have sensed.

So if you feel the later "chapters" are getting dark and repetitive, it's not just you. Feel free to stop reading about a third way in.

Also, pick up some Seneca. Also a stoic, but one who thought about life a lot more than about death.

[deleted] • 1 point • 24 December, 2013 05:43 AM

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Why? Not to discourage you from posting, but what is the difference between, say, harry potter on dumbledore fanfic and this? Why should *I* invest my time in reading this? Even a short quote to grab out attention or a minor summary of the contents would increase the quality of your post a lot.

emptyform • 1 point • 31 December, 2013 07:57 PM

Anyone have recommendations on alternate free translations? This one seems to be a bit Old Englishy.

RobBobGlove • 1 point • 8 January, 2014 05:31 PM

maybe you would enjoy this? It's the audio book I listened to and it sounded good:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FNGuiKPGfM>

SE17 • 1 point • 11 January, 2014 10:48 AM

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