

REGISTRY REPORT

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Stoic community since May 2007

Stoicus communitas : Stoikos koinonia



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New Stoa News

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The First Annual Marcus Aurelius Conference of April 24, 25, & 26 in San Diego, California

Wait no more . . . This is really happening! The First Annual Marcus Aurelius Conference is almost here. Book your flights, your hotel rooms, and don't forget your sunscreen.

Here is our provisional Schedule of Events (which will be following US Pacific time):

Saturday, 24 April

4-9 PM : Meet, Greet, and Fun Dining @ Erik's House: Food & Drinks Provided

Sunday, 25 April

8:00 AM: Breakfast at Kono's

9:30 AM: Meeting at Pacific Beach Library

PRESENTATIONS:

- Tomasz Mazur, PhD, "Three Ways in Contemporary Stoicism"
- Erik Wiegardt, "Stoic Theology: a Philosophical God"
- Frank Wagle, "The Tao and the Stoa"

Lunch

- Brett Wheat-Simms, "Memorization as a spiritual exercise"
- John Brown, MD, "Stoic Physics Today"
- Jules Evans, "Stoicism and Psychotherapy"
- Open Discussion: How do you practice Stoicism?

Evening dinner at a local restaurant.

Monday, 26 April

Morning activities:

- Attendees can choose between various group activities: taking a surfing lesson, going to Sea World, strolling along the seafront, doing their own thing, or just sleeping in.

Lunch: *Happy Birthday to Marcus Aurelius*: Birthday cake furnished.

- Marcus Aurelius Journaling Workshop: talk and actual practice of hypomnemata as found in the *Meditations*.
- Open discussion: Stoicism and ‘the good death’
- Time free for other presentations by attendees.
- Farewell drinks and dinner at local restaurant

NOTE: Please feel free to email any comments or suggestions about the schedule to Jules Evans jjrevans@hotmail.com All attendees are free to contribute as much or as little as they want, and room can be made in the schedule for presentations of anything from 5 minutes to 60 minutes on topics of your choice. We actively encourage attendees to contribute topics for presentations or discussions. The discussions will initially be led by panels of 4 people - feel free to ask to be on one of the panels. Topics should try to be geared towards Stoicism as a living practice in the modern world.

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Accommodations for Every Pocketbook

Check out these inns or go to the Internet & Google:
“hotels/motels, Pacific Beach, San Diego, CA”

Mission Bay Motel: 4221 Mission Blvd, San Diego, CA
<http://www.missionbaymotel.com/> (858) 483-6440

Ocean Park Inn: 710 Grand Ave, San Diego, CA
<http://www.oceanparkinn.com/> (858) 483-5858

Banana Bungalow Hostel: 707 Reed Ave, San Diego, CA
<http://bananabungalowsandiego.com/index.html> (858) 273-3060

Beach Cottages Motel: 4255 Ocean Blvd, San Diego, CA
<http://www.beachcottages.com/> (858) 483-7440

Crystal Pier Hotel: 4500 Ocean Blvd, San Diego, CA
<http://www.crystalpier.com/> (858) 483-6983

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More New Stoa News

Logical Fallacies Club: The College of Stoic Philosophers has created a new club and website for its club members. The Logical Fallacies Club came into being when students at the College asked for more practice identifying logical fallacies commonly found in the discourses of society. The site is open to everyone in read-only mode. Only students are allowed to fully engage. Go to <http://www.nofallacy.net>

Humanist Interview: New Stoa Director Erik Wiegardt was interviewed by the Harvard Chaplaincy in the latest issue of *The New Humanism* <http://thenewhumanism.org/> The feature article of that issue, "Adieu to Immortality," was written by the Humanist blogger and member of the Stoic community, DT Strain.

Tom Daley: The Council Moderator is convalescing from brain surgery. There is an interview with him on Jules Evans' blog, <http://www.politicsofwellbeing.com/2010/01/facing-death-stoically.html>

The New Stoa Facelift: As you no doubt noticed, New Stoa has been given a facelift by the Design Team of the Stoic Council. We hope you find this new look pleasing to the eye and easier to negotiate.

and 13 New Members

Paul Aube (1967-) lives and works in Montreal, Canada. He said, "I'm a career security professional where Stoicism has practical use, especially during emergencies. In my personal life, Stoicism provides me with peace of mind and the ability to survive change.... I'm looking forward to sharing this experience with like-minded people."

Clemens D. Baader (1977-) is interested in Stoicism.

John B. Brown (1963-) is a medical doctor who resides in Moscow, Idaho. He says, "I find that Stoic practices and ideas have introduced a peace and purpose in my life and medical practice that had been lacking, as well as a return to transcendental values that I had been missing. I would like to be in contact with others attempting to live fully according to Stoic principles."

Christopher J. Ciolino (1988-) writes: "I came across Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations* a couple years ago, and it truly has become my "Bible" on how to deal with life. I let my emotions control too much of my character and wish to be taught and understand how to deal with them and make my character noble."

Paul S. Evans (1965-) is a UK based therapist working in the National Health Service who is interested in Stoicism and wishing to know more.

Tyler R Klotz (1986-) states: "I am new to Stoicism. I found it by chance when researching other subjects. Reading about it felt like finding the part of my life that had always been missing. I truly believe that the study of this philosophy is the key to fulfilling my life's meaning."

Sandra A. McNeely (1943-) is a retired caregiver in Winnsboro, Texas. She writes of her interest in Stoicism: "I first encountered stoicism as a student at University of Texas in Austin. I was fascinated with the philosophy of the Stoics as a guide to living..." "Live in accordance with nature" is such a simple formula for the good life, but a hard one to follow in this modern, materialistic, and self centered world. I look forward to learning and sharing with members of the

New Stoa community how to follow this simple formula for a peaceful, contented life, and to empower a more noble character that by nature is within."

Tomasz Mazur, Ph.D., (1972-) is a lecturer on Stoicism at Warsaw University and a founder of the *Centre for Stoic Practice* in Poland. Tomasz said he was "Trying to practice Stoicism everyday. Trying to find best way to talk about and popularize Stoicism in contemporary society. [And,] Trying to give clear Stoic answers to typical challenges of our days."

Russell McNeil, Ph.D., (1945-) is a Stoic author and retired teacher in Canada. He was educated as a physicist and has taught both Physics and Liberal Studies at universities in Canada and the US for over 20 years. A Lidar (laser radar) application he helped pioneer in 1972 as a doctoral student at York University successfully completed its mission on the Martian surface in 2009 on board NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander. He has also worked as a television producer and writer in Canada and for PBS in the US where he produced the 1978 documentary, "Nevada Fallout: The Hot Years," examining the impacts of atmospheric nuclear weapons testing on the residents of Nevada and Utah. Most notably, McNeil wrote *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius: Selections Annotated and Explained*.

Eric Ponitka (1973-) states, "I'm just a student of Stoic philosophy, which I discovered a few years ago. I can already see the positive effects of putting into practice the teachings of our ancient masters, but I realize that I still have to work hard to become a Stoic sage."

Elizabeth K. Richards (1964-) lives in Colorado and is a stock trader by profession. She states: "I came to Stoicism through Albert Ellis, Ken Keyes, and the option method. I also studied existential philosophy, comparative religion, and the science of happiness for years. I mainly want to surround myself with like-minded folk who are eager to discuss Stoic ideas and how we apply it daily."

Robert C. Tinsley (1976-) writes that, "I thought I was the only one. I read a quote attributed to Epictetus about 5 or 6 years ago, looked up his works in the Lakehead University library, and considered myself a Stoic ever since. Who knew there were more?"

Todd Ulrich (1970-) works in the Student Life IT department at Ohio State University and lives in Grove City, Ohio. He writes of his introduction and interest in Stoicism: "I first heard of Stoicism in a History class at DeSales University where we watched the film *Gladiator* and discussed Stoic themes and Marcus Aurelius. Since then, I've read Tom Morris's *The Stoic Art of Living*, the *Meditations*, William B. Irvine's book, and Epictetus. Along the way, it occurred to me that this is a belief system I grew up with and largely ignored, but now I feel like I'm on the right path again. I look forward to further studying these principles and applying them everyday."

Spotlight

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Spotlight

on

Tomasz Mazur

A distinguished guest speaker at the 1st Marcus Aurelius Conference will discuss 3 types of Stoicism today and the Stoic revival in Poland

Tomasz Mazur (1972-) was born and lives in Warsaw, Poland. His father was an engineer, but Tomasz decided as a young man that philosophy was his great interest. He studied philosophy at the Institute of Philosophy at Warsaw University where he completed his Master's Thesis in 1996 and Ph.D. in 2000. His Doctoral thesis included the book: *Redemption through philosophy*.



Tomasz Mazur, PhD

Today, Dr. Mazur is a lecturer on philosophy at Warsaw University and teaches philosophy at the high school level. He is also a founding leader of a group of Stoics in Warsaw who meet at the *Centre for Stoic Practice*.

Tomasz is married and has three children.

I asked Dr. Mazur how and when he first got interested in Stoic philosophy.

Tomasz: I discovered Stoicism during my philosophy studies. I was about 20. Stoicism appealed to me from the very beginning. My first Stoic lectures were Seneca and Marcus Aurelius; also Polish contemporary Stoic: Henryk Elzenberg (my Master Thesis and PhD concerns deeply with his works). First scholars writing on Stoicism that I was reading were Pierre Hadot and J. Rist. Stoicism, from the very beginning, appealed my expectation towards philosophy. I was bored with abstract and academic philosophy – Stoicism was concrete, practical, and personal. I became converted. Since the very beginning, I was also dreaming about reactivating Stoicism as a school, as a contemporary activity and practice.

How are you reactivating Stoicism as a school?

Tomasz: I'm trying to popularize and reactivate Stoicism in many ways. Since several years I have seminars on Stoicism at Warsaw University. These seminars concerns mainly our modern interpretation of Stoicism. This year I have 25 students in my class. Some of them already decided to write a Master's Thesis on Stoicism.

Also, I wrote and display a play on Stoicism in modern context: *The Return of Stoics*. The play was successful.

I founded *Centre for Stoic Practice*. Main goal of our group is to adopt ancient therapeutic techniques to contemporary reality on the level of language, knowledge, and main problems. Each meeting of our group focuses on given Stoic technique trying to practice it in modern shape. We are also preparing to direct these activities towards broad recipient.

How do you envision the future of Stoicism?

Tomasz: Future of stoicism is what we make of it. I think there is a place and role for Stoicism in modern world. There is a lot of signs to prove it. I think there is a need to establish an international Stoic association to coordinate works concerning adaptation of Stoicism to modern world. We need to discuss specific modern problems and challenges in Stoic way, finding universal and consistent Stoic answers. This is really difficult task.

I think though maybe there cannot be only one Stoicism nowadays. I can see many tendencies in adopting Stoicism now. Maybe we will not be able to find one good Stoic philosophy to cover them all. I can see three main types of Stoicism. I'm planning to write about that topic.

Stoicism, according to me, is something that can only be personal. You can talk and understand Stoicism only by being a Stoic, confirming that Stoicism applies to life. I am trying to be a Stoic. I am trying to understand and explain to other what does it mean to be a Stoic nowadays.

Thank you, Tomasz. A most impressive effort. We are happy to join you in the hard work of reviving Stoicism in the world today and look forward to meeting you soon at the Marcus Aurelius Conference.

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Please join us in San Diego. Don't delay. **RSVP Brett today** at stoic1975@gmail.com

And thank you for reading,

Erik