

Stoic Week 2016 Report Part 3: Impact on Well-being Tim LeBon

This report forms the third part of the report on Stoic Week 2016, which took place in first week of November.

Nearly two thousand participants took three established well-being questionnaires as well as the Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours scale.ⁱ Well-being and the degree of Stoicism were measured before and after Stoic Week, allowing us to assess the impact of doing Stoic Week on self-reports on well-being and on levels of Stoicism.

Overall Findings

In terms of improvements in well-being over Stoic Week, the results were remarkably similar to those of Stoic Week 2015 and 2014, with increases in well-being ranging from 10-15% in the week depending on the scale being used. This replication of previous findings gives us further increased confidence in the reliability of the findings. Table 1 below shows the overall outcome results.

	Stoic Week 2016	Stoic Week 2015	Stoic Week 2014
No of participants	1803	2503	1953
Increase in Flourishing	10%	10%	10%
Increase in Satisfaction with Life	15%	15%	16%
Increase in Positive Emotions	10%	10%	11%
Reduction in Negative Emotions	14%	14%	16%
Increase In Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours	11%	13%	12%
Completion Rate	15%	29%	29%

Table 1: Overall Findings

Impact on Flourishing

Participants reported on average a 10% overall increase in Flourishingⁱⁱ

Table 2 below shows the impact of Stoic which on each element of Flourishing.

Flourishing Scale Item	2016 %	2015 %	2014 %	2013 %	Theme
1. I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.	15	16	14	10	Purpose and meaning
7. I am optimistic about my future.	10	12	11	18	Optimism
2. My social relationships are supportive and rewarding.	13	11	11	10	Relationships

3. I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.	8	10	10	10	Engagement in activities
4. I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others.	10	10	8	8	Benevolent
6. I am a good person and live a good life.	8	8	9	8	Ethically Good
8. People respect me.	9	7	7	5	Respected
5. I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me	6	7	8	5	Competent

Table 2: Impact on Flourishing

As in previous years, results suggest Stoicism has a particularly large positive impact on **purpose and meaning** (item 1), with **social relationships** (item 2) also showing particularly significant improvement.

Impact on Satisfaction with Life

Participants reported an average 15% increase in satisfaction with life overall as measured by the Satisfaction with Life Scale.ⁱⁱⁱ

Table 3 below shows which aspects of Satisfaction with Life increased the most. As one might anticipate given Stoicism's teachings, the theme of **acceptance** (question 5) showed by far the biggest increase – 24%.

Percentage change by each question	2016 % increase	2015 % increase	2014 % increase	2013 % increase	Theme
1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal	10	20	15	18	Life is ideal
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing	24	20	17	17	Acceptance
4. I am satisfied with my life	13	14	15	17	Satisfaction
2. The conditions of my life are excellent	13	13	15	11	Externals met
3. So far I have got the important things I want in life.	10	13	13	11	Needs met

Table 3: Impact on Satisfaction with Life

Impact on Emotions

There was a substantial increase in positive emotions and decrease in negative emotions as reported by participants who took part in Stoic Week. There was a greater shift in negative emotions than positive emotions (14% as opposed to 10%) as measured by the SPANE.^{iv} The positive emotions that showed the biggest changes in 2016 were “contented” (15%) followed by “joyful” (12%). All the negative emotions showed a significant reduction of between 14 and 17%. Tables 4 and 5 below shows the impact of Stoic Week on positive and negative emotions.

Positive Emotions	2016 % change	2015 % comparison	2014 % comparison	2013 % comparison
Overall positive	10	10	11	9
Contented	15	14	14	12
Joyful	12	13	13	12
Happy	7	11	9	9
Good	8	9	10	7
Pleasant	9	9	10	8
Positive	10	8	13	8

Table 4: Impact on Positive Emotions

Negative Emotions	2016 % change	2015 % comparison	2014 % comparison	2013 % comparison
Overall negative	-14	-14	-16	-11
Unpleasant	-17	-16	-17	-8
Bad	-12	-15	-17	-11
Negative	-16	-14	-17	-12
Angry	-13	-14	-15	-13
Afraid	-13	-12	-14	-10
Sad	-14	-12	-14	-10

Table 5: Impact on Negative Emotions