

## Stoic Week 2018 Report Part 3: Impact on Well-being Tim LeBon

This report forms the third part of the report on Stoic Week 2018. Over 600 participants completed a set of questionnaires both at the beginning and end of Stoic week, allowing us to assess the impact of doing Stoic Week on self-reports on well-being and on levels of Stoicism. For the first time we were using SABS 4.0, a longer and more comprehensive measure of a participant's degree of Stoicism.

### Overall Findings

In terms of improvements in well-being over Stoic Week, the results were similar to previous years, though slightly reduced on some measures. The completion rate was also broadly comparable with previous years.

	Stoic Week 2018	Stoic Week 2017	Stoic Week 2016	Stoic Week 2015	Stoic Week 2014
No of participants at start	3702	2870	1803	2503	1953
Valid questionnaires completed at end	852	689	270	726	566
Increase in Flourishing	8%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Increase in Satisfaction with Life	12%	14%	15%	15%	16%
Increase in Positive Emotions	9.5%	11%	10%	10%	11%
Reduction in Negative Emotions	14%	14%	14%	14%	16%
Increase In Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours	10%	9%	11%	13%	12%
Completion Rate	23%	24%	15%	29%	29%

**Table 1: Overall Findings**

### Impact on Flourishing

Participants reported on average a 8% overall increase in Flourishing<sup>i</sup> Table 2 below shows the impact of Stoicism which on each element of Flourishing.

Flourishing Scale Item	2018	2017%	2016 %	2015 %	2014 %	2013 %	Theme
1. I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.	12	15	15	16	14	10	Purpose and meaning
2. My social relationships are supportive and rewarding.	10	13	13	11	11	10	Relationships
3. I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.	10	12	8	10	10	10	Engagement in activities
4. I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others.	7	10	10	10	8	8	Benevolent
5. I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me	6	8	6	7	8	5	Competent
6. I am a good person and live a good life.	7	8	8	8	9	8	Ethically Good
7. I am optimistic about my future.	9	11	10	12	11	18	Optimism
8. People respect me.	5	7	9	7	7	5	Respected

**Table 2: Impact on Flourishing**

As in previous years, results suggest Stoicism has a particularly large positive impact on **purpose and meaning** (item 1.)

### Impact on Satisfaction with Life

Participants reported an average 12% increase in satisfaction with life overall as measured by the Satisfaction with Life Scale.<sup>ii</sup>

Table 3 below shows which aspects of Satisfaction with Life increased the most. As in previous years, the theme of **acceptance** (question 5) showed by the biggest increase – 17%.

Percentage change by each question	2018% increase	2017% increase	2016 % increase	2015 % increase	2014 % increase	2013 % increase	Theme
1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal	13	16	10	20	15	18	Life is ideal
2. The conditions of my life are excellent	10	11	13	13	15	11	Externals met
3. So far I have got the important things I want in life.	9	10	10	13	13	11	Needs met
4. I am satisfied with my life	11	14	13	14	15	17	Satisfaction
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing	17	19	24	20	17	17	Acceptance

**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 9,5%) as measured by the SPANE.<sup>iii</sup> The positive emotions that showed the biggest changes in 2018 were “contented” ( up 14%). All the negative emotions showed a significant reduction of between 13 and 15%. Tables 4 and 5 below shows the impact of Stoic Week on positive and negative emotions.

<b>Positive Emotions</b>	<b>2018 % change</b>	<b>2017 % change</b>	<b>2016 % change</b>	<b>2015 % change</b>	<b>2014 % change</b>	<b>2013 % change</b>
Average positive	9.5	11	10	10	11	9
Contented	14	14	15	14	14	12
Joyful	11	14	12	13	13	12
Happy	10	11	7	11	9	9
Good	7	9	8	9	10	7
Pleasant	8	9	9	9	10	8
Positive	7	9	10	8	13	8

**Table 4: Impact on Positive Emotions**

<b>Negative Emotions</b>	<b>2018 % change</b>	<b>2017 % change</b>	<b>2016 % change</b>	<b>2015 % change</b>	<b>2014 % change</b>	<b>2013 % change</b>
Average negative	-14	-14	-14	-14	-16	-11
Unpleasant	-13	-15	-17	-16	-17	-8
Bad	-15	-16	-12	-15	-17	-11
Negative	-15	-15	-16	-14	-17	-12
Angry	-14	-12	-13	-14	-15	-13
Afraid	-13	-14	-13	-12	-14	-10
Sad	-15	-13	-14	-12	-14	-10

**Table 5: Impact on Negative Emotions**

## Impact on Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours (SABS 4.0)

The Stoics Attitudes and Behaviours Scale (v4.0) is a scale being developed by the Modern Stoicism team to assess a person's degree of Stoicism. Appendix D contains a full list of items, their meanings and also the range of scores at the end of Stoic Week 2018. Comparisons in SABS scores before and after Stoic Week allow us to assess whether participants changed with respect to being Stoic taking part in Stoic Week. It also enables us to see in which ways they became more Stoic.

Table 6 below gives the changes in average scores for each item between the beginning and end of Stoic Week for 2018. Overall there was an 10% increase in assenting to Stoic attitudes and behaviours from an average of 378 at the start and 416 for those completed Stoic week. The average SABS for everyone who started (including non-completers) was 372 which would give an average increase of 12%.

#	Item	start	end	% change
1	I think about what the ideal wise and good person would do when faced with various misfortunes in life	4.8	5.5	15.1
2	It can sometimes be a good thing to become angry at people.	4.1	4.8	14.7
3	I try to anticipate future misfortunes.	5.4	5.5	2.6
4	The best idea is to give up trying to control people and instead focussing on ourselves and our own behaviour.	6.2	6.5	5.1
5	Even if my circumstances in life are favourable, I will not be consistently happy unless I develop the right understanding and character.	5.9	6.2	5.1
6	As long as you have the right attitude, you can lead a good life even in the most difficult circumstances.	5.7	6.0	5.2
7	I rehearse rising above possible future misfortunes.	5.4	5.8	7.2
8	To flourish as a human being all you need is good understanding and good character.	4.8	5.5	15.9
9	I take active steps to reduce the suffering of others.	5.1	5.5	8.3
10	It doesn't really matter what other people think about me as long as I do the right thing.	5.3	5.9	12.8
11	I spend quite a lot of time dwelling on what has gone wrong in the past.	3.7	4.5	22.4
12	I often think about how small humanity is compared to how big the universe it.	5.1	5.4	7.2
13	I consider myself a part of the human race, in the same way that a limb is a part of the human body.	5.1	5.7	11.7

14	When making a significant decision I ask myself "What really matters here?"	5.3	6.0	12.2
15	We can sometimes influence how others behave but we can't completely control other people.	6.4	6.5	2.2
16	I cannot really be harmed by what other people say.	4.4	5.4	22.4
17	I am committed to helping humanity in general.	4.5	5.3	18.0
18	The universe is a living thing.	5.0	5.1	3.9
19	I need quite a lot of money in order to be happy.	5.0	5.3	7.7
20	When I have a problem, I am good at taking constructive action in a timely manner.	4.9	5.4	10.4
21	It is good to think about life as an ongoing journey towards becoming a better person.	6.2	6.5	4.8
22	Having good understanding and good character is all that is required in order to be happy.	4.7	5.5	16.8
23	I am committed to helping my friends.	5.8	6.0	4.6
24	We can't really control other people.	6.3	6.5	3.9
25	There is a rational and orderly plan in the universe and in the causation of events.	3.6	4.2	17.9
26	When making a significant decision I reflect on what a good role model would do.	4.6	5.4	17.1
27	Nothing except our judgements and voluntary actions are truly under our control in life.	5.9	6.3	6.9
28	I pay attention to my judgments as I am making them.	5.1	5.7	10.7
29	I need to be well thought of by others in order to be happy.	4.2	4.8	13.7
30	I spend quite a lot of time worrying about the future.	3.5	4.2	20.5
31	If bad things happen to you, you are bound to feel distressed.	3.4	4.0	16.8
32	Bad luck could stop me being happy.	4.0	4.7	18.3
33	I pay attention to my thoughts about what I intend to do before I act on them.	5.1	5.7	11.0
34	I treat everyone fairly.	5.2	5.8	10.2
35	Whatever happens to you, it's possible to rise above it and feel calm.	5.3	5.9	11.0
36	If things don't go well for my friends, I can't lead a good life.	5.0	5.2	3.2

37	I want to become a better person ethically.	6.3	6.5	2.8
38	When a negative thought enters my mind, the first thing I do is to remind myself that it is just an interpretation of the situation.	4.3	5.3	22.1
39	We should learn to accept things that are outside our control.	6.2	6.4	3.1
40	It is right to feel intense and overwhelming grief after a significant loss.	2.5	3.0	17.3
41	I view other people as fellow-members of the brother/sisterhood of humankind.	5.4	5.6	5.5
42	Peace of mind comes from accepting that you should not care about things outside your control.	5.4	6.0	10.2
43	Viewing other people as fellow-members of the brother/sisterhood of humankind helps me to avoid feeling angry and resentful.	4.9	5.4	11.4
44	If things don't go well for me, I can't lead a good life	4.7	5.3	11.2
45	Every day I think about how small we are in comparison with the whole universe.	4.2	4.8	15.9
46	Our voluntary actions are amongst the only things truly under our control in life.	5.8	6.2	6.3
47	It is my duty to help others.	5.4	5.8	5.6
48	I can't control how I feel.	4.9	5.4	10.4
49	I do not act on urges when it would be unwise to act on them.	4.6	5.2	13.1
50	Recognizing that being the best kind of person is the only thing that matters helps me face how short life is.	4.8	5.5	14.0
51	I need to be in good health in order to be happy.	3.7	4.3	17.5
52	I regularly spend time reflecting on what is most important for me to live a good and happy life.	5.1	5.7	10.0
53	I usually do the right thing.	5.3	5.7	6.9
54	Every day I spend some time reflecting in a constructive way on how I am doing as a human being.	4.3	5.3	21.9
55	I do the right thing even when I feel afraid.	4.8	5.4	12.1
56	Improving my ability to reason well and develop good judgement is very important.	6.4	6.5	1.7
57	I am committed to helping my family.	6.2	6.3	1.5
58	Every day I spend some time thinking about how I can best face challenges in the day ahead.	4.8	5.5	14.9

59	The universe is benevolent in its overall plan.	3.7	4.2	13.3
60	I regularly think about the inevitability of death.	5.0	5.2	4.1
61	Pleasure is one of the most important things in life.	4.2	4.7	11.2
62	Our judgements are amongst the only things truly under our control in life.	5.7	6.2	8.9
63	Even when I can't do anything more about a problem I still worry about it a lot.	3.3	4.2	27.4
64	I care about the suffering of others.	5.8	5.9	2.1
65	Every day I reflect on how all human beings are just like me in important ways.	4.3	5.0	15.8
66	I often do what I feel like doing rather than doing what I believe to be the right thing.	4.4	5.0	12.4
67	I try to treat everybody fairly even those people who I don't particularly like.	3.9	4.7	17.9
68	Every day I think about our place in the universe.	5.5	5.8	5.9
69	I see my happiness as fully compatible with caring for other people.	5.4	5.8	6.9
70	There is no overall plan to the universe.	3.2	3.7	14.3
71	I think about my life as an ongoing project to become a better person.	5.9	6.2	6.0
72	I try to treat people fairly even those people who have behaved badly towards me.	5.3	5.7	8.1
73	If things don't go well for my family, I can't lead a good life	4.4	4.8	10.2
74	Improving my ability to do what an excellent human being would do is very important to me.	5.9	6.2	5.6
75	I am committed to helping in my local community.	4.8	5.3	9.8
76	The universe embodies wisdom.	4.1	4.7	14.0
77	Some things that matter a lot for my happiness are outside my control.	3.7	4.5	23.2

**Table 6: Impact of taking part in Stoic Week 2018 on Stoic attitudes and behaviours**

The SABS items that showed the biggest percentage increases during Stoic Week were as follows

#	Item	Start score	End score	% change
63	Even when I can't do anything more about a problem I still worry about it a lot.	3.3	4.2	27.4
77	Some things that matter a lot for my happiness are outside my control.	3.7	4.5	23.2
11	I spend quite a lot of time dwelling on what has gone wrong in the past.	3.7	4.5	22.4
16	I cannot really be harmed by what other people say.	4.4	5.4	22.4
38	When a negative thought enters my mind, the first thing I do is to remind myself that it is just an interpretation of the situation.	4.3	5.3	22.1
54	Every day I spend some time reflecting in a constructive way on how I am doing as a human being.	4.3	5.3	21.9
30	I spend quite a lot of time worrying about the future.	3.5	4.2	20.5

The SABS items which had the highest scores at the end of Stoic week were as follows:

#	Item	Start score	End score	% change
24	We can't really control other people.	6.3	6.5	3.9
15	We can sometimes influence how others behave but we can't completely control other people.	6.4	6.5	2.2
4	The best idea is to give up trying to control people and instead focussing on ourselves and our own behaviour.	6.2	6.5	5.1
56	Improving my ability to reason well and develop good judgement is very important.	6.4	6.5	1.7
37	I want to become a better person ethically.	6.3	6.5	2.8
21	It is good to think about life as an ongoing journey towards becoming a better person.	6.2	6.5	4.8
39	We should learn to accept things that are outside our control.	6.2	6.4	3.1
27	Nothing except our judgements and voluntary actions are truly under our control in life.	5.9	6.3	6.9
57	I am committed to helping my family.	6.2	6.3	1.5

All SABS items moved in the expected direction



The 10% change in Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours overall is significant in that it supports the view that it is changes in level of Stoicism that is mediating the change in well-being rather than other variables, such as a placebo effect.

## Conclusions

For the fifth year running, taking part in Stoic Week led to a significant increase in well-being on all measures and in degree of Stoicism. The more comprehensive SABS 4.0 gives us more detail about which Stoic attitudes and behaviours changed the most.

## Appendices

### Appendix A The Satisfaction with Life scale

The SWLS is a short 5-item instrument designed to measure global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life. This scale is widely used as part of the measure of Subjective Well-being (also known as happiness).

Question	Theme
Q1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal	Life is ideal
Q2. The conditions of my life are excellent	Externals met
Q3. So far I have got the important things I want in life.	Needs met
Q4. I am satisfied with my life	Satisfaction
Q5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing	Acceptance

Using a 1-7 scale, users score between 35 (extremely satisfied) and 5 (extremely dissatisfied)

The SWL scale was developed by Ed Diener, Robert A. Emmons, Randy J. Larsen and Sharon Griffin as noted in the 1985 article in the *Journal of Personality Assessment*. See

Participants in Stoic Week's average SWL score was 23.1 at the start and 26.7 after Stoic Week.<sup>iv</sup>

### Appendix B The Flourishing Scale

The Flourishing Scale is a brief 8-item summary measure of the respondent's self-perceived success in important areas such as relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism. The scale provides a single psychological well-being score. This

scale was developed by Ed Diener and associates to measure a broader conception of well-being than purely subjective life satisfaction and presence of positive and absence of negative emotions.

<b>Flourishing Scale Item</b>	<b>Theme</b>
1. I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.	Purpose and meaning
2. My social relationships are supportive and rewarding.	Relationships
3. I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.	Flow & interested
4. I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others.	Benevolent
5. I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me.	Competent
6. I am a good person and live a good life.	Ethically Good
7. I am optimistic about my future.	Optimism
8. People respect me.	Respected

Reference: Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2009). New measures of well-being: Flourishing and positive and negative feelings. *Social Indicators Research*, 39, 247-266.  
<http://internal.psychology.illinois.edu/~ediener/FS.html>

Participants in Stoic Week's average Flourishing score was 41.5 at the start and 45.9 after Stoic Week.

## Appendix C The Scale of Positive and Negative Emotions (SPANE)

The SPANE is a 12-item questionnaire includes six items to assess positive feelings and six items to assess negative feelings. For both the positive and negative items, three of the items are general (e.g., positive, negative) and three per subscale are more specific (e.g., joyful, sad). Along with the Life Satisfaction scale, presence of positive and absence of negative emotions forms the other part of Subjective Well-being. Users are asked to select a number between 1 (very rarely or never ) and 5 (very often or always) to indicate how often they have experienced the emotion in the last 4 weeks.

### Positive Emotions

Contented  
 Joyful  
 Positive  
 Good  
 Pleasant  
 Happy

### Negative Emotions

Unpleasant  
 Bad  
 Negative  
 Angry  
 Afraid  
 Sad

Three scores are derived: SPANE-P – some of positive emotions SPANE-P – sum of negative emotions – SPANE –B Balance of positive and negative.

- Participants in Stoic Week's average overall SPANE score was 4.3 at the start and 7.7 after Stoic Week 2018.
- Participants in Stoic Week's average SPANE-P score was 17.6 at the start and 19.1 after Stoic Week.
- Participants in Stoic Week's average SPANE-N score was -13.3 at the start and -11.4 after Stoic Week.

Reference: Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2009). New measures of well-being: Flourishing and positive and negative feelings. *Social Indicators Research*, 39, 247-266.  
<http://internal.psychology.illinois.edu/~ediener/SPANE.html>

## Appendix D The Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours Scale (version 4.0)

### Instructions to Stoic Week participants

For each of the above items, please mark on a 7 point scale whether you agree with it from Strongly Agree (7) to Strongly disagree (1) as follows:

Strongly Agree 7

Agree 6

Slightly Agree 5

Neither agree or disagree 4

Slightly disagree 3

Disagree 2

Strongly Disagree 1

Please respond according to what you yourself think, not what you think the answer ought to be or what you ought to think.

### SCORING

To obtain the scores for reverse-coded items, subtract the score from 8 (e.g. a score of 7 becomes 1).

The higher the score, the more Stoic your attitudes and beliefs are. The possible scores range from 77 (very unStoic) to 539 (extremely Stoic).

The Average SABS score for participants at the end of Stoic Week 2018 was 416

In Stoic Week 2018 (at the end) a score of

480 or above would place you in the top 10%

460 or above would place you in the top 20%

444 or above would place you in the top 30%

429 or above would place you in the top 40%

416 or above would place you in the top 50 %

405 or below would place you in the bottom 40%

391 or below would place you in the bottom 30%

374 or below would place you in the bottom 20%

354 or below would place you in the bottom 10% in terms of degree of Stoicism

#	SABS ITEM	Reverse Coded?	Explanation and Comments	Average score (start)	Average score (end)
1	I think about what the ideal wise and good person would do when faced with various misfortunes in life		Many Stoics suggested we should imagine the Stoic "Sage on our shoulder", or an ideal Stoic advisor to guide us at difficult moments.	4.8	5.5
2	It can sometimes be a good thing to become angry at people.	(reverse -coded)	Read Seneca's On Anger to learn all the reasons Stoics believe that you should never become angry with people	4	4.8
3	I try to anticipate future misfortunes.		Stoics believe anticipating misfortunes can prepare us better for them. The negative visualisation exercises can help you do this.	5.3	5.5
4	The best idea is to give up trying to control people and instead focussing on ourselves and our own behaviour.		This is a key Stoic idea – we can't control other people, we can control ourselves – the "dichotomy of control"	6.1	6.5
5	Even if my circumstances in life are favourable, I will not be consistently happy unless I develop the right understanding and character.		This is central to the Stoic view of happiness – character (i.e. virtue) is the most secure route to happiness and not circumstances.	5.9	6.2

6	As long as you have the right attitude, you can lead a good life even in the most difficult circumstances.		Since a good life is one in which you exercise the virtues, difficult circumstances do not prevent you leading a good life.	5.8	6.0
7	I rehearse rising above future misfortunes..		As with item 3 this can be developed by negative visualisation exercises – it adds to item 3 a key idea which is that you rise above misfortunes (rather than, for example, imagining them happening and you being overwhelmed)	5.4	5.8
8	To flourish as a human being all you need is good understanding and good character.		Stoic virtue theory says that these are all the things you need to flourish.	4.7	5.5
9	I take active steps to reduce the suffering of others.		Stoic compassion involves helping others and can be developed with exercises like the Circles of Hierocles.	5	5.5
10	It doesn't really matter what other people think about me as long as I do the right thing.		Other people's views are not entirely in our control and are a preferred indifferent. What matters is our character and acting virtuously.	5.2	5.9
11	I spend quite a lot of time dwelling on what has gone wrong in the past.	(reverse-coded)	The past is out of our control and so should not be an object of our concern, except in so far as we can learn from it. Stoic versions of the Serenity Prayer (which can be found in Epictetus) can help here.	3.5	4.5
12	I often think about how small humanity is compared to how big the universe it.		Exercises such as the View from Above can help us gain a perspective on our position in the universe/	5	5.4

13	I consider myself a part of the human race, in the same way that a limb is a part of the human body.		This analogy is to be found in several Stoics and helps us develop an attitude of Stoic Cosmopolitanism.	5	5.7
14	When making a significant decision I ask myself “What really matters here?”		This is part of Stoic practical wisdom – according to the stoics, the answer should be – acting virtuously.	5.3	6.0
15	We can sometimes influence how others behave but we can’t completely control other people.		This is part of the Stoic dichotomy of control. Although some argue for a trichotomy of control, it’s also arguable that it’s better to see it as a dichotomy and we best influence others by acting virtuously. See <a href="https://howtobeastocic.wordpress.com/2017/07/24/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-dichotomy-of-control/">https://howtobeastocic.wordpress.com/2017/07/24/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-dichotomy-of-control/</a>	6.3	6.5
16	I cannot really be harmed by what other people say.		Since the only thing that really harms us is not being virtuous ourselves,.	4.3	5.4
17	I am committed to helping humanity in general.		Part of Stoic justice and cosmopolitanism. See <a href="http://www.paulrittman.com/Stoicism.pdf">http://www.paulrittman.com/Stoicism.pdf</a>	4.4	5.3
18	The universe is a living thing.		Part of Stoic cosmology. See <a href="https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/stoicism/v-1/sections/cosmology-and-theology">https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/stoicism/v-1/sections/cosmology-and-theology</a>	5.1	5.1
19	I need quite a lot of money in order to be happy.	(reverse-coded)	Money is a preferred indifferent. You don’t need money in order to be virtuous.	4.7	5.3
20	When I have a problem, I am good at taking constructive action in a timely manner.		This is a part of Stoic practical wisdom.	4.7	5.4

21	It is good to think about life as an ongoing journey towards becoming a better person.		According to the Stoics a key part of being a good human is to work on our ethical development. It is likely that Marcus Aurelius kept his diary (which became known to us as Meditations) for this reason.	6.1	6.5
22	Having good understanding and good character is all that is required in order to be happy.		According to the Stoics, happiness is under our control since we just need understanding and character (i.e. virtue).	4.6	5.5
23	I am committed to helping my friends.		Stoicism is not a passive philosophy of resignation – this is part of Stoic justice.	5.8	6.0
24	We can't really control other people.		This is part of the dichotomy of control.	6.2	6.5
25	There is a rational and orderly plan in the universe and in the causation of events.		This is part of Stoic cosmology and worldview.	3.6	4.2
26	When making a significant decision I reflect on what a good role model would do.		Stoic practical wisdom can involve imagining the “sage on your shoulder”	4.6	5.4
27	Nothing except our judgements and voluntary actions are truly under our control in life.		This is part of the dichotomy of control	5.8	6.3
28	I pay attention to my judgments as I am making them.		This is part of what has been called “Stoic Mindfulness”.	5.1	5.7
29	I need to be well thought of by others in order to be happy.	(reverse-coded)	Since only our virtue matters, what others think of us is at best a preferred indifferent.	4.1	4.8
30	I spend quite a lot of time worrying about the future.	(reverse-coded)	The Stoic will focus on the future only in so far as that is helpful. Worrying often involves unhelpful dwelling on things outside our control	3.4	4.2



31	If bad things happen to you, you are bound to feel distressed.	(reverse coded)	Stoics believe that we do have control over our emotions by focussing on our judgements as in Epictetus's famous saying "It is not events but our interpretations of them that upset us"	3.4	4.0
32	Bad luck could stop me being happy.	(reverse-coded)	Bad luck may mean we don't get so many of the preferred indifferents, but it's virtue that really makes us happy, according to Stoics, and that's not at the mercy of luck.	3.9	4.7
33	I pay attention to my thoughts about what I intend to do before I act on them.		Stoic Mindfulness before acting is a part of Stoic virtue and practical wisdom.	5	5.7
34	I treat everyone fairly.		Justice and fairness are Stoic virtues.	5.2	5.8
35	Whatever happens to you, it's possible to rise above it and feel calm.		Stoics believe that we can control our responses and in so doing manage our emotions (dichotomy of control and Stoic theory of emotions)	5.3	5.9
36	If things don't go well for my friends, I can't lead a good life.	(reverse-coded)	This is the opposite of the Stoic view about well-being, flourishing and happiness. The extreme version of the Stoic view is that you can be happy (that is, act virtuously) on the rack of torture.	4.8	5.2
37	I want to become a better person ethically.		The desire and motivation to be better is a very good starting point for being a better Stoic.	6.2	6.5
38	When a negative thought enters my mind, the first thing I do is to remind myself that it is just an interpretation of the situation.		This is what the practically wise Stoic does to become calm and also to help them do the right thing.	4.3	5.3

39	We should learn to accept things that are outside our control.		This is about putting the dichotomy of control into practice	6.1	6.4
40	It is right to feel intense and overwhelming grief after a significant loss.	(reverse-coded)	Seneca for example wrote about grief in his letter to Marcia. Stoics do not think that intense are overwhelming grief is appropriate given that loss is out of our control and an inevitable part of being human.	2.5	3.0
41	I view other people as fellow-members of the brother/sisterhood of humankind.		This is a statement of Stoic Cosmopolitanism and can be developed by exercises like the Circles of Hierocles Meditation	5.2	5.6
42	Peace of mind comes from accepting that you should not care about things outside your control.		This item connects the dichotomy of control with Stoic serenity.	5.5	6.0
43	Viewing other people as fellow-members of the brother/sisterhood of humankind helps me to avoid feeling angry and resentful.		This item links Stoic cosmopolitanism with the management of emotions.	4.7	5.4
44	If things don't go well for me, I can't lead a good life	(reverse-coded)	Stoics believe that if things don't go well we won't get some preferred indifferents but whether we lead a good life is entirely under our control	4.6	5.3
45	Every day I think about how small we are in comparison with the whole universe.		There are exercises to help develop a sense of perspective such as the View from Above.	4.1	4.8
46	Our voluntary actions are amongst the only things truly under our control in life.		This is part of the dichotomy of control.	5.8	6.2

47	It is my duty to help others.		This is part of Stoic justice and cosmopolitanism	5.4	5.8
48	I can't control how I feel.	(reverse coded)	Stoics believe that you can control how you feel. It's true you may not have control over your initial automatic responses, but by being aware of them and challenging them you can control how you feel.	4.8	5.4
49	I do not act on urges when it would be unwise to act on them.		This is part of Stoic self-control.	4.4	5.2
50	Recognizing that being the best kind of person is the only thing that matters helps me face how short life is.		If all that matters is virtue, then as long as we have been a good person it doesn't matter if we have a shorter life.	4.7	5.5
51	I need to be in good health in order to be happy.	(reverse -coded)	Good health is a preferred indifferent and not essential for happiness	3.5	4.3
52	I regularly spend time reflecting on what is most important for me to live a good and happy life.		This is good Stoic practice to help us be virtuous rather than just have an intellectual awareness.	5	5.7
53	I usually do the right thing.		This is part of Stoic virtue.	5.2	5.7
54	Every day I spend some time reflecting in a constructive way on how I am doing as a human being.		This is to develop virtue. It can be done for example by an end of day meditation.	4.2	5.3
55	I do the right thing even when I feel afraid.		This is courage, one of the Stoic virtues.	4.7	5.4
56	Improving my ability to reason well and develop good judgement is very important.		Reason and practical wisdom are important virtues for the Stoic	6.3	6.5
57	I am committed to helping my family.		This is part of Stoic justice and compassion and virtue	6.1	6.3

58	Every day I spend some time thinking about how I can best face challenges in the day ahead.		This can be done for example in an early morning meditation including some Negative Visualisation.	4.6	5.5
59	The universe is benevolent in its overall plan.		This is part of Stoic cosmology and the Stoic worldview	3.7	4.2
60	I regularly think about the inevitability of death.		This is the ultimate negative visualisation and was regular practice for many ancient Stoics.	5	5.2
61	Pleasure is one of the most important things in life.	(reverse-coded)	Pleasure is at best a preferred indifferent and virtue is of a different order of importance.	4.1	4.7
62	Our judgements are amongst the only things truly under our control in life.		This is part of the dichotomy of control	5.6	6.2
63	Even when I can't do anything more about a problem I still worry about it a lot.	(reverse coded)	This goes against the dichotomy of control, so unproductive worry is not a Stoic practice	3.2	4.2
64	I care about the suffering of others.		This is part of Stoic compassion and virtue.	5.8	5.9
65	Every day I reflect on how all human beings are just like me in important ways.		This can help with Stoic compassion and cosmopolitanism	4.3	5.0
66	I often do what I feel like doing rather than doing what I believe to be the right thing.	(reverse-coded)	This is the opposite of virtue.	4.2	5.0
67	I try to treat everybody fairly even those people who I don't particularly like.		This is part of justice, an important Stoic virtue.	3.9	4.7

68	Every day I think about our place in the universe.		This can develop a sense of perspective. The View from Above could help achieve this.	5.4	5.8
69	I see my happiness as fully compatible with caring for other people.		This an attitude that will help people be compassionate and just	5.4	5.8
70	There is no overall plan to the universe.	(reverse-coded)	This is not the Stoic worldview	3.2	3.7
71	I think about my life as an ongoing project to become a better person.		This captures two ideas – that becoming a better person is important and that we are working towards becoming this, it is a life’s work.	5.8	6.2
72	I try to treat people fairly even those people who have behaved badly towards me.		This is part of justice	5.2	5.7
73	If things don’t go well for my family, I can’t lead a good life	(reverse-coded)	This is the opposite of the Stoic view that happiness and leading a good life is under our control and depends on our virtue, and not on preferred indifferents.	4.1	4.8
74	Improving my ability to do what an excellent human being would do is very important to me.		A Stoic will rate being virtuous as the most important thing in life.	5.8	6.2
75	I am committed to helping in my local community.		This is part of Stoic cosmopolitanism and justice	4.8	5.3
76	The universe embodies wisdom.		This is part of the Stoic worldview	4.2	4.7
77	Some things that matter a lot for my happiness are outside my control.	(reverse-coded)	This is the opposite of the Stoic view that happiness is under our control (because it comes through practising virtue, which is under our control)	3.5	4.5

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<sup>i</sup> See Appendix A for a description of the Flourishing Scale.

<sup>ii</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>iii</sup> See Appendix C.