



On Anger

Seneca

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On Anger Details

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Yann says

Séneque rédige ce petit traité sur la colère alors qu'il est exilé en Corse après avoir impatienté l'empereur Claude. Le thème de la colère est un des favoris des auteurs antiques, et c'est un réquisitoire brillant que le célèbre Cordouan dresse contre une passion qu'il souhaiterait extirper des âmes sages. Force exemples viennent appuyer le propos, tirés de l'histoire, et par ceux ci, il inspire la haine de la vengeance disproportionnée et rend beaux la tempérance et la patience face aux outrages. Plutarque rédigera un essai qui va dans le même sens. Malgré tout, l'indignation est la pierre sur laquelle s'aiguise la vertu, elle est le ressort qui attise le désir de justice, et une trop grande complaisance, une coupable pusillanimité, face au mal est vicieuse. Senèque aurait pu adjoindre cette distinction dans son analyse, comme le fit Aristote, comme la fera Montaigne. Comment expliquer sinon que la nature nous l'ait donnée en partage, avec la crainte, et la sociabilité si elle ne participait pas, utilisée à bon escient, à notre sauvegarde? Il n'en reste pas moins que son texte inspire une vive admiration dans de nombreux passages.

Realini says

Dialogues by Seneca

A long time ago, I have read something that Seneca has said: "life is not short; the problem is how much we waste of it". Ever since I have read this wonderful piece of advice, I have been impressed by the simplicity, wisdom and depth of his words. I wish I'd been a stoic...maybe

The part one of The Dialogues deals with anger, a problem which I have, being angry quite often, issue which made me ever more curious and interested to read this book.

Some of the advice is wise and makes sense: avoid anger; hot heads are exposed to anger.

Credulity does a lot of harm

Do not get upset because of small things, unimportant and petty

Before being angry, think of the mistakes you made...we think about the mistakes of others, but we forget ours

The best cure for anger is delay

Anger is of no use

The first rule is not to get angry, the second is to stop

It is human nature to love and anger denies human nature

Be with people who do not provoke your anger

Take offense lightly, as a joke

We never say I could have done that, before getting angry

Fight with yourself to conquer your anger

We give ourselves false reasons to get upset

Keep a calm voice- Socrates talked with a low voice and people knew he was "angry", when he talked like that

Forgive

We are all ambitious, unpredictable

Be strong-every day think: what shortcoming I have repaired, faced today

Don't be angry with any dog, any slave, anybody

And finally: why should you be angry and waste my life, what's the point, what is the good...why hate?

Why not have a peaceful life?

Marko Bobi? says

koliko nam je do ne?eg stalo, a što nije po našoj volji, izražava se u gnevju. stoga, gde nastupa najve?i stepen gneva, tu leži i naša istinski najve?a neostvarena želja. nema ve?e ljubavi od te..

seneka uzdiže razum iznad besa, i sugerira da sa njim ublažavamo naše iracionalne nalete. isticanjem imperfekcije ?oveka, zagovara empati?nost prema svim ljudima i daje razložna obrazloženja zašto se ne svetiti i ne posmatrati bilo koga sa visine, u isto vreme zagovaravaju?i kaznu kao meru predostrožnosti za budu?e prekršaje. kažnjavanje treba da se obavlja iz racionalnih razloga, a ne iz pristrasnosti i naslade, što neko snosi kaznu, ili što je na?inio prestup. zanimljivim primerovanjem, ?esto pokazuje apsurdnost gnevnosti do mere humora, temljno ocrtavaju?i prednosti bezbrižnosti. obesmišljava sve uvrede od strane drugih ljudi na naš konto, i ?esto naglašava da se ne srdimo zbog tu?ih frustracija savetuju?i u isto vreme da i mi ne vre?amo i ne kudimo druge, jer sve te uvrede i mi sami posedujemo.

seneka tokom celog spisa, pri?a o mahnitnom razjarenom nakaznom gnevju koji rasplamsava celo bi?e, i usmerava ga na gnusne i nepravi?ne akte, kao da je to jedini intezitet gneva koji postoji. dok sa druge strane uzima kao "podrazumevano" (a uzima, jer je tad i uzimano kao podrazumevano) posedovanje robova. on savetuje, na par stranica, da robovi prihvate svoj položaj i prona?u duševni mir, ne reagiraju?i na skradne zahteve svojih vlasnika. prihvatanje pozicije roba, i zanemarivanje presije od strane ništa manje detinjastijih i razmaženijih vlasnika se naravno i dan danas dešava. nedostatak gnevnosti, dovodi do sve lakšeg porobljavanja ?oveka i pruža vlasniku toliku uobrazilju, da mnogi ljudi nisu ni svesni, za razliku od senekinog doba, da su robovi.bes je taj, koji je sposoban da dovoljno ostrasti ?oveka i za?ne motiv revolta. ne sugerišem da se revoltiranje izvršava pod okriljem gnevnosti, naprotiv, revoltiranje se mora izvršiti razumski i strpljivo, bez srljanja i impulsivnog reagovanja, što je karakteristika besnog stanja. ali, koren revolta se mora nalaziti u gnevnosti. u tom slu?aju, gnev nije nekoristan kako seneka tvrdi, i ne služi samo za destruiranje tu?ih, i svojih interesa. kao što i vatra, iako goropadna, nestabilna i po prirodi destruktivna, može i ugrijati i njena energija se može iskoristiti za mnoge svhrovite potrebe.

Andrew Torba says

I should reread this book every time I'm angry

Addy says

"We are all bad men", says Seneca, "living among other bad men. Let us learn to forgive each other." Such pleas for reason are common in this essay on Anger by the great Roman stoic who—after years of dutiful service to the State—was asked by Emperor Nero to kill himself (Seneca calmly acceded by severing his own veins and then bled to death).

Seneca calls anger "the greatest evil" and he frequently notes its prevalence in wild beasts. He repeatedly

implores us to accept our own humanity, and rise above this destructive force which leads men, nations and cultures to imminent ruin. But Seneca does not (and cannot) tell us how. This, dear reader, is entirely up to us.

Bruno Arine says

Interesting point of view, although I'm against supressing emotions. I'm sure Seneca talks about explosive bursts of rage instead of slow-cooked hate, and that anger in general may not be justified or miscalibrated.

julieta says

Así que hay que hacerle caso a Séneca, lo que me queda, que me encantó, es, hay que saber reírse, antes que dejar que la ira nos haga hacer tonterías. Lo pondré en práctica, que además eso me encanta de Séneca, lo puedes aplicar a la vida, no es teoría desconectada de la vida, son consejos, es lo máximo!

Luna says

Favorite quotes:

"Virtue alone is lofty and sublime, nor is anything great which is not at the same time tranquil."

"Anger, as we have said, is eager to punish; and that such a desire should exist in man's peaceful breast is least of all according to his nature; for human life is founded on benefits and harmony and is bound together into an alliance for the common help of all, not by terror, but by love towards one another."

"There is therefore nothing great or noble in anger, even when it seems to be powerful and to condemn both gods and men alike."

"Man's nature is not, therefore, desirous of inflicting punishment; neither, therefore, is anger in accordance with man's nature, because that is desirous of inflicting punishment. I will also adduce Plato's argument—for what harm is there in using other men's arguments, so far as they are on our side? "A good man," says he, "does not do any hurt: it is only punishment which hurts. Punishment, therefore, does not accord with a good man: wherefore anger does not do so either, because punishment and anger accord one with another. If a good man takes no pleasure in punishment, he will also take no pleasure in that state of mind to which punishment gives pleasure: consequently anger is not natural to man."

"Moreover, qualities which we ought to possess become better and more desirable the more extensive they are: if justice is a good thing, no one will say that it would be better if any part were subtracted from it; if bravery is a good thing, no one would wish it to be in any way curtailed: consequently the greater anger is, the better it is, for whoever objected to a good thing being increased? But it is not expedient that anger should be increased: therefore it is not expedient that it should exist at all, for that which grows bad by increase cannot be a good thing."

"How much more philanthropic it is to deal with the erring in a gentle and fatherly spirit, and to call them into the right course instead of hunting them down? When a man is wandering about our fields because he

has lost his way, it is better to place him on the right path than to drive him away."

"Neither ought it to be believed that anger contributes anything to magnanimity: what it gives is not magnanimity but vain glory. The increase which disease produces in bodies swollen with morbid humours is not healthy growth, but bloated corpulence. All those whose madness raises them above human considerations, believe themselves to be inspired with high and sublime ideas; but there is no solid ground beneath, and what is built without foundation is liable to collapse in ruin. Anger has no ground to stand upon, and does not rise from a firm and enduring foundation, but is a windy, empty quality, as far removed from true magnanimity as fool-hardiness from courage, boastfulness from confidence, gloom from austerity, cruelty from strictness. There is, I say, a great difference between a lofty and a proud mind: anger brings about nothing grand or beautiful."

Ross Cohen says

Seneca's dissection of Anger does what any dissection does: by the end, we understand the thing we've killed.

Colin says

Now I'm angry I didn't read this sooner!

Glenn Russell says

"Ungoverned anger begets madness."
? Seneca

The Roman Stoic philosopher Seneca (4 AD – 65 AD) held the prime purpose of philosophy as providing us with guidelines to live an enriched, tranquil, virtuous and meaningful life. To this end, he wrote many essays and letters addressing various facets of the Stoic path - among the most notable, his essay *On Anger*. Below are quotes from the text along with my brief comments.

"Some of the wisest of men have in called anger a short madness: for as there are distinct symptoms which mark madmen, such as a bold and menacing air, a gloomy brow, a stern face, a hurried walk, restless hands, changed color, quick and strongly-drawn breathing, so these same symptoms are seen in men under the spell of anger." ----- Aristotle said the virtuous man should get angry on the right occasion. This is the commonly held view of modern society as it was for most people in the ancient world. Seneca challenges this opinion, considering anger as a kind of madness and urging us never to surrender ourselves to this most despicable vice.

"The difference between anger and irascibility is evident: it is the same as that between a drunken man and a drunkard; between a frightened man and a coward. It is possible for an angry man not to be irascible ; an irascible man may sometimes not be angry." ----- Seneca displays subtle insight here – most of us get angry on occasion as most of us can occasionally get drunk; for the irascible person, anger is, so to speak,

part of their system the way alcohol is part of a drunkard's system.

"Mankind is born for mutual assistance, anger for mutual ruin: the former loves society, the latter estrangement. The one loves to do good, the other to do harm ; the one to help even strangers, the other to attack even its dearest friends." ----- Greco-Roman philosophers, especially Epicureans and Stoics, placed the highest value on a life lived in accordance with nature. And by Seneca's reckoning, when we are at our best and in most accord with nature, we are social, genial, warm and kind, the exact opposite of being angry.

"Man's nature is not, therefore, desirous of inflicting punishment; neither, therefore, is anger in accordance with man's nature, because that is desirous of inflicting punishment. . . . Punishment, therefore, does not accord with a good man: wherefore anger does not do so either, because punishment and anger accord one with another. If a good man takes no pleasure in punishment, he will also take no pleasure in that state of mind to which punishment gives pleasure: consequently anger is not natural to man." ----- There is a word for taking pleasure in punishing or inflicting suffering on others: sadism. Seneca reasons a sadist is unnatural and twisted. Years ago I've had the misfortune of being around a sadistic boss. A more warped, nasty, and, yes, angry specimen of humanity I have never encountered.

"May it not be that, although anger be not natural, it may be right to adopt it, because it often proves useful? It rouses the spirit and excites it; and courage does nothing grand in war without it, unless its flame be supplied from this source; this is the goad which stirs up bold men and sends them to encounter perils. Some therefore consider it to be best to control anger, not to banish it utterly." ----- The common view and also Aristotle's line of thinking is anger serves a very positive, utilitarian purpose; matter of fact, when in battle or face-to-face with threat, rousing anger can save our lives. Seneca counters this argument by noting how once we give in to anger, anger is unable to check itself and can spiral us down a deep, dark destructive hole, causing ruin not only to others but also to ourselves.

"Gladiators, too, protect themselves by skill, but expose themselves to wounds when they are angry. Moreover, of what use is anger, when the same end can be arrived at by reason?" ----- To further bolster his objection to rousing anger to our benefit, Seneca provides many examples of how anger is actually counterproductive. One of his telling observations: "Anger, therefore, is not useful even in wars or battles: for it is prone to rashness, and while trying to bring others into danger, does not guard itself against danger."

"But anger can be put to flight by wise maxims; for it is a voluntary defect of the mind, and not one of those things which are evolved by the conditions of human life, and which, therefore, may happen even to the wisest of us." ----- Seneca's advice on effectively dealing with our own anger is vivid and illuminating. He delves into the psychology of how we get angry and why we get angry. One major dilemma: we have an overly optimistic and inaccurate mental picture of other people and the world around us. Case in point: We wake up feeling energized and walk down a crowded street with a broad smile, feeling the joy of being alive. According to Seneca, if we project our own elation and sense of well-being onto others we are overly optimistic - people can be dealing their own heavy negative personal issues or they might be hung over from drinking booze or taking drugs. Thus, if they curse at us or act rudely, no reason for anger on our part since their behavior has very little to do with us personally.

Does all this sound intriguing? Take my word for it here, this is one thought-provoking essay. If you would like to better understand what it means to follow the path of philosophy, you will not encounter a better guide than Seneca.

“Anger, if not restrained, is frequently more hurtful to us than the injury that provokes it.”

? Seneca

On Anger by Seneca available on-line: <http://www.sophia-project.org/uploads...>

Al Meu says

The purpose of the book is to understand what is anger, where it comes from and how do we stop it. An easy book to read and understand, but meaningful. However, it doesn't fit my personality, but it made its purpose. I recommend it.

Alex mccaslin says

Alex mccaslin

Alex mccaslin

Luciana Nery says

Did not enjoy this particular translation. The essay in itself is amazing, that is why I'm searching for a better version of it.

Alexandru says

Anger management using stoicism.
