

# The Redwood Stoa

## MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 20, 2016, SUNDAY

REDWOOD STOA GROUP MEETING

Met at Muddy's Coffee, Valencia St., San Francisco

10:30AM–12:30PM

Weather: Rainy

**Attendees:** John, Alex, Katrina, Simon, Mark, Stonly, Christine

**This month's theme:** *Gratitude*

### Open discussion

- James, though not present, provided thoughts on gratitude for John to share with the group
  - (See attachment)
- Katrina watched a TED talk on Stoic optimism
- “Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others.”—Cicero
  - Gratitude can cleanse the mental pallet of envy, greed, desires
- We certainly can be grateful even in the current political situation, though Stoicism also permits action towards the good
  - David's gratitude post on facebook
- How did people get started in Stoicism?
  - Realizing the joy of a well-described, agreeable way of life
  - Looking for a daily code of conduct
- A fear of flying; facing that fear; and being grateful for having faced that fear
  - Also being grateful for the life that you have lived, realizing the plane might crash!
- Stoic ideas may have influenced Covey's 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People'
  - “The Change Starts from Within”
- Wallace's article “Indifference is a Power”
  - Caring about, but not wanting to control, something
  - Being nudged, but not shaken, by problems
- Stoicism permits all people to have the agency to control their own lives
- By experiencing loss, some people learn to value what they did not value before, and may even be grateful for having had whatever was lost
  - Pixar's movie 'Inside Out' teaches people that sadness is important
  - “Never say of anything, 'I have lost it'; but, 'I have returned it'.” —Epictetus
- Where does willpower fit into Stoicism?
  - Knowing what is in our power
  - Daily practice, application, testing, habits, ritual
  - Practicing living for a time as person with nothing but themselves
- Development of “*How did I practice Stoicism, theme-free, in the past month*” time for the group
  - Learning about how to apply Stoic values
  - Learning about what we each are capable of during times that may seem bad



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- Cold showers, traffic stress

## **Reports and Announcements:**

- Meeting location will continue to alternate between Berkeley and San Francisco.
- John is working on the next draft of the Toolbox
  - Will circulate at the next meeting
- Proposal of an additional meeting in January!
  - A potluck or dinner out to “kindle” our spirits in the wintertime
- During the officer’s meeting two weeks ago:
  - Simon was elected as Scribe
  - John was elected as Caretaker
  - Christine was elected as “Vice Caretaker”
- Stoic Pods (Scholae)
  - A second circular was sent out, with one response
- Proposals to bring more structured time to the group meetings
  - Facebook group is available for text discussion in between meetings (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/redwoodstoa/>)
  - Wordpress for more detailed discussion threads (see footer)
  - Writing letters to one another, and posting letters to online media!
- Game night was a success!
- The Stoic Fellowship — Globally Connected – Locally Engaged
  - Check out the site! — <http://www.stoicfellowship.com/>

## **Announcement of upcoming community service opportunities and events:**

- Help Restore Huckleberry Park – Oakland Hills 9:30AM Saturday December 10<sup>th</sup> @ 6934 Skyline Blvd.

## **Goals:**

### *Group goals achieved—*

- We met!
- We brought material for discussion!

### *Personal goals achieved—*

- Simon has read more of Sellars!

## **Next Month’s Meeting:**

- Next meeting will be in **Berkeley**, on **December 18th**
- Next month’s theme: **Fellowship**



# The Redwood Stoa

**Join the Redwood Stoa!** Now you can become an official member of the Redwood Stoa by adding your name through the following web form: <https://redwoodstoa.wordpress.com/join-the-redwood-stoa/>  
It's pleasant to do and will help the group effectively plan future events!

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REDWOODSTOA.WORDPRESS.COM

MEETUP.COM/THE-REDWOOD-STOA/



## attachment re James's gratitude:

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- Socrates: a 'start from zero' approach; that in the world we're entitled to nothing, really.
  - Considering the miraculous complexity of life,
  - With <sup>human</sup> life comes ~~the~~ ability and agency (more than ~~most~~ <sup>many</sup> animals have)
  - If we're still around and half-way healthy, we can be glad of it; there ~~are always~~ is no shortage of pain and misfortune that might befall us!
  - He's grateful for our Redwood Store and all our members.
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