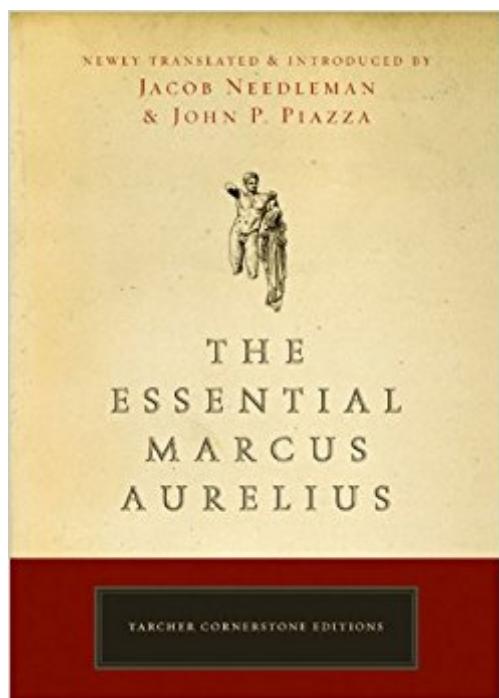


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# The Essential Marcus Aurelius (Tarcher Cornerstone Editions)



## **Synopsis**

This inaugural-and all new-Tarcher Cornerstone Edition presents a stunningly relevant and reliable translation of the thoughts and aphorisms of the Stoic philosopher and Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius, properly placing the philosopher-king's writings within the vein of the world's great religious and ethical traditions. The late antique world possessed no voice like that of Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (121-180 CE). His private meditations on what constitutes a good life have withstood the centuries and reach us today with the same penetrating clarity and shining light as the words of Shakespeare, Emerson, or Thoreau. In this remarkable new translation, bestselling religious philosopher Jacob Needleman and classics scholar John P. Piazza have retained the depth of Marcus's perspective on life. They have carefully selected and faithfully rendered those passages that clarify Marcus's role as someone who stood within the great religious and ethical traditions that extend throughout every culture in human history. The voice that emerges from their translation is a universal one, equally recognizable to students of Christ, Buddha, the Vedas, the Talmud, and to anyone who sincerely searches for a way of meaning in contemporary life.

## **Book Information**

Series: Tarcher Cornerstone Editions

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: TarcherPerigee (January 10, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1585426172

ISBN-13: 978-1585426171

Product Dimensions: 4.9 x 0.4 x 7.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 39 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #71,324 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #30 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Individual Philosophers #97 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Metaphysics #197 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Greek & Roman

## **Customer Reviews**

The acclaimed author of *The American Soul*, *Why Can't We Be Good?* and *Money and the Meaning of Life*, Jacob Needleman is Professor of Philosophy at San Francisco State University, and former Director of the Center for the Study of New Religions at the Graduate Theological Union,

Berkeley. He lives in Oakland, CA.

This collection of the second-century Emperor Aurelius' Meditations is a remarkable, timeless classic, reminding me of a few other rare collections of words based on open inquiry and earthy, honest observation, like the Tao Te Ching or some of the simpler writings of Tibetan yogis. But this collection has a few unique qualities; that it is more universally read and valued, that it is rooted in common sense without pretense, that it is pure philosophy with no religious baggage, that it is the work of a powerful Roman emperor at the root of Western civilization, and perhaps most essentially (as Needleman points out in his introduction) that, "The real secret of the book lies in fact that Marcus is writing these meditations to himself alone - not to you or me or any of the thousands of us who, over the centuries, have carried this book with them. He is writing to himself. He is expressing to himself what he is trying and inwardly questioning through his own awakening attention in the present moment." It's not unlike the many self-help books available today, except that it is authentic; ancient and yet as freshly and timelessly stated as if they were our own notes. Perhaps some of this is due to the translation efforts of Needleman and Piazza, I don't know since I haven't read others for comparison. But this one seems complete - containing both pithy aphorism and simple daily observations, lines that can be read randomly, a few words or pages at a time. Mostly though the beauty and effect of this collection is to remind us of our roots - not culturally, but something deeper - consciously, of Life in this moment. "Regain your senses, call yourself back, and once again wake up. Now that you realize that only dreams were troubling you, view this "reality" as you view your dreams." (6.31, p.51) "The person who truly see the present has already seen everything - all that has come from eternity and all that will happen in the infinite future - for all things are of one ancestry and likeness." (6.37, p.53) "Stop philosophizing about what a good man is and be one." (10.16, p.76)

I love Stoic philosophy and Marcus Aurelius is one of the four most known and read. The authors introduction is informative. I have read a couple of different versions of "Meditations", this one is my favorite. As much as I like Marcus's work it is not a complete vision of stoicism, this book is more of a personal journal. Please find Seneca, Epictetus and Musonius to help get the complete picture.

I chose this rating because this Caesar was particularly proficient in writing and philosophic thought. I wanted to know the man better and see why so much has been written about him. This book is exactly what I expected and I have enjoyed contemplating on the things I've read so far. I would

recommend this book to any student of history and to anyone who wants to improve themselves through the thoughts of a man who was wise to this world.

Marcus Aurelius book is an absolute classic! it is a tribute to the Greek Stoic thought with its clarity, honesty, and nobility! Helpful and precious to read when faced with everyday life's people and circumstances and the thought of death. The translation is fine and simple, the introduction too (some parts are repeated) and the edition is easy to read and carry. The star that is missing corresponds to the part of the book that has not been translated and was omitted.

LOVE this book! I've bought multiple copies for many years so that we always have on hand. My husband loves to give this book to friends and business associates. GREAT translation.

A collection of Marcus Aurelius' quotes. Some you may have seen.

perfection.

Excellent, thought provoking book. I had to keep reminding of his station and position in life.

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