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# Stoicism

## *Traditions and Transformations*

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## Stoic Emotion

Lawrence C. Becker

A successful rehabilitation of Stoic ethics will have to defeat the idea that there is something deeply wrong, and perhaps even psychologically impossible, about the kind of emotional life that Stoics recommend. The image of the austere, dispassionate, detached, tranquil, and virtually affectless sage – an image destined to be self-refuting – has become a staple of anti-Stoic philosophy, literature, and popular culture. It has been constructed from incautious use of the ancient texts and is remarkably resistant to correction. Reminders that the ancient Stoics insisted that there are good emotions are typically brushed aside by asserting that the ancient catalog of such emotions is peculiar;<sup>1</sup> that the emotions in even that peculiar catalog are not accorded much significance by Stoics; and that the ruthless emotional therapy practiced by Epictetus is a reliable guide to the sort of emotional life Stoics want all of us to cultivate – namely, a life of desiccated affect and discardable attachments.

Both Stoics and anti-Stoics alike have developed an unwholesome fascination with a picture of the Stoic sage drawn for extreme circumstances. We persist, in high art and low journalism, in telling and retelling stories of good people who resolutely endure horrors – injustice, torture, disease, disability, and suffering. Those of us who are attracted to Stoicism

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often find such stories inspiring, and even anti-Stoics give them grudging admiration.<sup>2</sup> But our fascination with them can be seriously misleading. It can cause us to treat the emotional remoteness and austerity exhibited by their heroes as central to the Stoic *theory* of good emotion, as opposed to something central merely to its traditional therapies for people in extremis. This is a mistake.

Rather, as I argue here, Stoic ethical *theory* entails only that we make our emotions appropriate, by making sure that the beliefs implicit in them are true, and by making them good for, or at least consistent with, the development and exercise of virtue – that is, with the perfection of the activity of rational agency. At this very abstract level, a Stoic theory of emotion is similar to an Aristotelian one. But we should not be misled by this high-altitude similarity. Stoic theories of value and virtue are very different from their Aristotelian counterparts, so it will turn out that what counts as an appropriate Stoic emotion in a given case is often strikingly different from what counts as an appropriate Aristotelian one. But the central, high-altitude theoretical point is nonetheless important. Robust psychological health of the sort necessary for appropriate rational activity is a constitutive element of virtuous rational agency – a constitutive element of Stoic virtue. It thus follows that, insofar as emotion is a necessary element of this aspect of psychological health, it is necessary for virtue.

It may be true that some ancient Stoics (notably Chrysippus) underestimated the extent to which emotion was a necessary component of psychological health and thus of virtue. But that is a matter of getting the facts straight, and surely all Stoics are committed to getting an adequate, accurate psychology as a basis for their normative account of good emotion. The things that Chrysippus said about the heart being the seat of consciousness – things ridiculed centuries later by Galen<sup>3</sup> – are surely errors that Chrysippus himself would have wanted corrected. Not ridiculed, but corrected. And if such errors informed his normative judgments, surely he would not only have corrected his errors about physiology but also have made the necessary adjustments in his normative views.

The obvious way to develop a contemporary version of Stoicism with respect to the emotions is therefore to fasten on what the theory requires – that is, on the conceptual relation between virtue and emotion in human beings – and on what the best contemporary psychology says about how such matters work out in practice. That is what I will do here, first by looking at some relevant features of empirical psychology, then by considering the value of emotions in human life, and finally by examining the nature of sagelike tranquillity and Stoic love.

## THE NATURE OF EMOTION

Psychologists who study emotion have not yet developed a standard line of analysis of their subject, or even a standard nomenclature. I do not mean to suggest that the literature is chaotic; far from it. But it is difficult to summarize, because it is difficult to line up the accounts given by various writers. Much depends on the level of analysis – whether one is speaking of the neurophysiological substrate of emotion (i.e., the activity of certain discrete anatomical structures in the brain stem and limbic brain),<sup>4</sup> the more generalized physiology of emotional arousal (e.g., changes in blood chemistry and blood flow, pupillary dilation, galvanic skin response, muscle tension),<sup>5</sup> the interaction between these physiological states and cognitive responses to them,<sup>6</sup> or the phenomenology of emotional states as reported by human subjects during the treatment of their emotional disorders.<sup>7</sup> In order to stay in contact with both Stoic theory and the full range of contemporary psychological accounts, it seems wisest here to situate the discussion first within what might be called commonsense phenomenology and then to pay special attention to both the cognitive content and the physiology of the states that we ordinarily describe and experience as emotional ones.

## Complexity: Affect, Sensation, Cognition, and Conation

As we commonly use the term, emotions have analytically distinct components, which may or may not be distinct phenomenologically. Unless we are simply going to construct a technical definition, then (e.g., by insisting, implausibly, that various emotions are *identical* to various constellations of beliefs, or gross somatic changes, or neurophysiological processes), we shall have to recognize the ways in which at least four elements configure emotional experience – elements we may call affect, sensation, cognition, and conation. To see this, consider the following bit of commonsense phenomenology.

There is a difference between emotional and nonemotional belief. For example, I can hold the beliefs ordinarily implicated in a given emotion without “feeling” one way or the other about the state of affairs those beliefs represent – that is, without being in a state we would ordinarily identify as emotional. I can believe that I am in mortal danger, for instance, and that things are going to turn out very badly for me, with no countervailing good results for anyone, and still have a “flat affect” about it. (Affect is difficult to define, but it may be enough for present purposes to think of it as varying levels of attention, alertness, readiness,

energized arousal, pro, con, or mixed valuational attitudes, and perhaps a second-level awareness of that awareness.) This point about flat affect seems true no matter how specific and value-laden one makes the beliefs: in each case the believer may or may not be in a significant affective state with respect to what the beliefs represent.<sup>8</sup> So whether or not beliefs are necessary elements of all emotion, they are never sufficient for it. Affect is a necessary element also, and it may come close to being a sufficient element at the extremes of mood and passion.

Further, some affective experience is coupled with an awareness of somatic phenomena – flushed face, racing heart, sweating, tightness in the throat, tears, tumescence, and so forth. We can get, and be aware of, such sensations without having the beliefs and affect requisite for a full-fledged emotion. Whiskey can produce a flushed face; slicing onions can produce tears. Moreover, we can have intense emotional experience without the awareness of such somatic changes. Think of a person who lacks sensation from the chin down, and thus literally cannot feel the hair on the back of his neck stand up when it does, or his nipples go erect when they do. So having the physical sensations characteristic of various emotions is neither necessary nor sufficient for having the emotions. That is why attempts to study emotion by studying facial expression, galvanic skin response, vegal tone, pupillary dilation, and so forth seem indirect at best.

Finally, we may make a similar point about conation – understood as the orientation or urge to act that is often characteristic of emotion. The point is that conation does not always track emotion. One may be “paralyzed” by fear as well as set in motion by it. Diminished conation is as characteristic of some emotional states (ranging from blissful tranquillity to depression) as heightened conation is characteristic of some others.

It thus seems best to treat full-fledged emotion in adult human beings as a complex phenomenon: affect, laden with beliefs, and sometimes laden with sensation or conation. In part because we want to assess Stoic claims about the way beliefs control emotion, it seems best to think of emotions as special sorts of affective states rather than special sorts of belief states.<sup>9</sup>

### Moods, Feelings, Emotions, and Passions

Now suppose we distinguish four sorts of affective states, again considering them at first only in a commonsense, phenomenological way. Let us call them moods, feelings, emotions, and passions. Although they differ

along several dimensions, we can for convenience imagine them as arranged along a line that forms a nearly closed circle, beginning and ending with more or less “pure” affect. At one end are “moods” or affective “tones” of various types (fleeting or prolonged, volatile or stable, discrete or diffuse, mild or intense), which begin at a point just discernibly different from no affect at all – a point at which, for example, a subject will report that consciousness is simply tinted or tinged with affect that does not seem to have a causal connection to either cognition or action, or to be related to any special physical sensation or somatic phenomena, or to be focused on anything in particular. Nonetheless, even the mildest, most fleeting moods can often be described in terms of quite complex subjective experience (anxious, secure, erotic, energized, serene, etc.), and neurological substrates for many of them can be identified and manipulated with drugs. Passions are at the other end of the line, ending in an extreme at which affect virtually obliterates cognition and agency – an extreme in which, for example, people are so overwhelmed with what began as anxiety or rage or fear or lust that they are “out of their minds,” or “don’t know the time of day,” and, if they can make reports at all, can report only a one-dimensional, ferociously focused affect. Passions can be much milder than this, of course, but we will use the term to apply to affect that is focused enough and strong enough to interrupt (as opposed to color, focus, direct, or otherwise shape) deliberation and choice.

Between these extremes lie feelings and emotions. Feelings, we will say, are distinct from moods primarily by virtue of the subject’s awareness of various sorts of physical sensations and somatic phenomena associated with the affect, as well as some causal implications for cognition and action – awareness that focuses and thus intensifies the affective experience, making it seem localized and often giving it an object. (Full-fledged sexual arousal is a feeling in this sense, whereas low-level erotic affect is a mood.) And let us then say that emotions are distinct from other affects primarily by virtue of the subject’s awareness and appraisal of the cognitive components of an affect – the beliefs about the world that are implicated in the affect, awareness that complicates and further focuses, reinforces, or intensifies the feelings. Worry is an example; so is object-specific, manageable fear.

### Contemporary Psychology and Stoic Theory

There is a fairly impressive convergence between Stoic positions and contemporary psychology – even psychotherapy<sup>10</sup> – on the general nature

of moods, feelings, emotions, and passions. As far as I can tell, empirical psychology has so far settled one dispute within ancient Stoicism, has strengthened a few philosophical criticisms of the ancient Stoic account, has raised new problems about the unity of rational agency, but has also confirmed much of the ancient Stoic doctrine on these matters. Contemporary Stoics will have to make some adjustments to the ancient doctrines, but nothing, I think, that will undermine their claim to being Stoics.

*The Persistence of Affective Impulse.* The ancient dispute that modern psychology seems to have settled is one between Chrysippus and Posidonius, as reported by Galen.<sup>11</sup> If it is true that Chrysippus believed Stoic moral training could effectively remove excessive emotions at their source, by removing the erroneous beliefs involved in them, and that this training could be so effective and so thorough that excessive emotion would never arise in the sage, then Chrysippus was wrong. Instead, Posidonius had it right when he argued that primal affect was a permanent feature of human life that sages, like the rest of us, would always have to cope with.

The modern evidence for this comes from two sources: neurophysiology and pharmacology. Neurophysiologists have identified at least four anatomically distinct structures in the “ancient” or subcortical portion of the human brain that generate affective states – roughly fear, rage, panic, and goal-oriented desire.<sup>12</sup> These structures are directly responsive to both external stimuli and internal changes in brain chemistry prior to significant cognitive processing. There is, for example, a naturally occurring hormone called cholecystokinin, which regulates secretions of the pancreas and gallbladder. When this hormone is introduced directly into the bloodstream (a natural, but not normal occurrence in human physiology) it generates an anxiety response unconnected to any external or internal threat.<sup>13</sup> Similar stimulants exist for other affective structures in the amygdala, and there are blocking agents as well – pharmacological agents that cause those affective structures to quiet down temporarily, to cease generating affect. This does not mean that subsequent cognitive responses are ineffective in controlling such affect. It only means that this sort of affective *arousal* and its immediate emotional or passional consequences cannot be eliminated by cognitive (Stoic) training, any more than Stoic training can eliminate perspiration. Stoics with bad gallbladders will just have to cope with anxiety, whether they are sages or not; similarly for people who have brain injuries, or brain tumors, that excite



affective structures. Modern medicine is clear that cognitive training is not always the treatment of first choice for such affective disturbances.

I assume that none of this causes fundamental or general problems for a Stoic account of the emotions, whatever it might mean for Chrysippus' particular theses. After all, other things being equal, if potable water is freely available to the thirsty sage, she will presumably drink it as a first remedy (reminding herself of its status as a preferred indifferent) rather than think away the thirst. So the fact that modern medicine sometimes recommends drugs or surgery as a first remedy should not, for that reason alone, make it inconsistent with Stoic theory. Moreover, the affects generated solely by subcortical structures in our brains correspond to the sort of primal impulses or excitation so often discussed by Stoics as leading more or less involuntarily to proto-emotions (*propathēiai*), and thence transformed by further cognitive processes into full-fledged emotions.<sup>14</sup> They thus fit comfortably into a contemporary Stoic account. The task for the Stoic is to recognize the source of affective agitation and proto-emotion, and to correct any false beliefs that may have arisen from it along with the affect. Done effectively, in accord with a Stoic account of the good, that process will eventually transform the *propathēiai* into *eupathēiai*. If anything is a fundamental or general aspect of a Stoic account of emotion, it is that. The reference to recognizing the etiology of the proto-emotion is a later amendment, but not one that is troublesome. More about that later.

Happily, there is settled agreement, in the modern psychology of emotion, that this fundamental aspect of the Stoic account is correct for a wide range of quite mild to quite strong affective states that are characteristic of psychological health. Leaving aside especially weak, strong, fleeting, or enduring emotional states for the moment, it looks as though there is no disagreement at all with even the ancient Stoic proposition that full-fledged emotions are distinguished from one another primarily by distinct (and constitutive) belief structures in the subject and are transformable by changes in the subject's beliefs.<sup>15</sup> The modern psychological amendment to this would simply be to insist that raw affect, generated in distinct neurological structures and having distinct behavioral consequences, often precedes the cognitive content that turns it into full-fledged emotion.

The only thing that is troubling for Stoic theory in this amendment is the reference to behavioral consequences. That reference is emblematic of the fact that modern empirical psychology is apparently much more comfortable with a modular conception of human agency than

Stoics would have expected it to be. In fact, it looks as though personality psychologists from Freud onward have generally worked with something more like a tripartite Platonic model of motivation and psychodynamics than a unified Stoic one. I think there is less to this than meets the eye, however.

The Stoic hypothesis is simply that rational agency in mature human beings is unified in the sense that it is a conative power in which the direct determinant of action is always the same one sort of thing – belief.<sup>16</sup> The idea is that in mature, healthy human beings, pure affect, as long as it does not initially overwhelm agency, is immediately subjected to cognitive appraisal and infused with cognitive content – beliefs that have consequences for the affect itself as well as for its translation to action. All affective states – or least all of those above the level of pure primal impulse – have at least implicit, controlling beliefs, and are ultimately subject to the agent's ability to control those beliefs. Thus Stoic psychotherapy is a form of cognitive therapy – an effort to focus on, and then to correct, the cognitive errors that underwrite pathology.<sup>17</sup>

It is clear that, in order to be consistent with modern psychology, we would now have to modify these references to belief by replacing them with references to cognitive states generally. Such states include both active and dispositional beliefs, but also include perceptual filters, information-processing routines, and so forth, some of which may be quite “modular” at the level of neurophysiology. The question is whether, even with this modification, the Stoic hypothesis about the unity and power of rational agency are consistent with modern empirical psychology.

It appears to me that the motivational part is consistent, almost by definition. If we distinguish between action and other sorts of behavior by using the former term to mark out the class of intentional or goal-directed behaviors, then it clearly follows that whatever the original motivating source of an action might be, that motivation will always be filtered through a cognitive state of some sort. And the evidence from psychology clearly supports the proposition that the content of the cognitive state determines the nature (if not always the timing) of the consequent action.<sup>18</sup> So that seems consistent with traditional Stoic doctrine.

Nonetheless, it does seem clear that modern empirical psychology would reject not only the idea that we can extirpate subcortical affective impulses but also the idea that rectifying our beliefs will always, ultimately, be effective in rectifying our affect. Modern Stoics will thus have to be more cautious than their ancient brethren in making claims for

the general effectiveness of Stoic training. We will acknowledge a wide variety of cases in which the human body can be overwhelmed by unhealthy affect, just as it can be overwhelmed by unhealthy microbes or viruses. This is not, it seems to me, an admission that compromises anything fundamental in Stoicism. All sages are ultimately overcome by disease or injury. Their bodies are mortal. And because Stoics are materialists, we have always acknowledged that our minds and emotions too, like everything else about us, are physical entities subject to disease and injury. Ancient Stoics, confronted by the modern evidence, would surely have no difficulty adjusting their ideas about the root physical causes and appropriate physical remedies for such affective neuropsychological diseases and injuries, even for sages.

The necessity for such adjustment is an example of the way in which modern empirical psychology strengthens some of the traditional criticisms of the Stoic psychology of emotion. There are several others, most of which have to do with the relation between psychological health (which Stoics recognize as a necessary condition for the development of virtue) and the amount and variety of affect in one's life (which Stoics have perhaps traditionally underestimated). I deal with those matters in most of what follows. But I want to conclude this section by noting that contemporary Stoics will have to pay somewhat closer attention to moods and threshold affective states than the ancient texts do. Here is the problem.

#### The Etiology of Affect: Nonreferential or Liminal States

On the standard Stoic account, one assesses the appropriateness of affect by assessing the truth of the beliefs implicit in it – beliefs about the external events or states of affairs that elicit the affect, and beliefs about what attitudes we should take toward those external matters, given their value in Stoic terms. Appropriate emotion is necessarily emotion that is in accord with nature, that is, in accord with *true* beliefs about events and their value. The ancient Stoics were confident that cognition could drive affect and that rectifying our beliefs about the world could rectify our emotions in this sense.

*Nonreferential Affect.* Moods pose a problem for this traditional account for two reasons. One is that they often have peculiarly indeterminate cognitive content – content that is incorrigibly true (and thus not in need of correction) but that nonetheless can compromise rational agency in the following way.

Think of anxiety, of the sort induced as a side effect by a drug or hormone. Beliefs about the world that are implicit in such anxiety are often quite general, and quite probably true: "There are some things out there – things that I am missing right now – that might be difficult and unpleasant for me to cope with, and I can't be sure what they are, and therefore how to cope with them." That is certainly true, as a general proposition. And so, because this belief about the world is true, the standard Stoic response would be to focus on the evaluative beliefs implicit in the anxiety – beliefs about whether it matters, ultimately, how such things turn out, and how it is appropriate for us to feel and act.

The problem is that such a response will misdirect our attention. We will be focusing on the inappropriateness of some very general worry about the outer world, when the source of that general worry is not anything in the outer world, but rather a wholly internal feature of our body chemistry, or the operation of an unconscious emotional disposition. In serious cases we may make serious mistakes about our health in this way, repeatedly quieting the anxiety thrown up by a disease process by reminding ourselves again and again of what is of ultimate importance. In this way we ultimately end in a misdirected Stoic version of praying without ceasing, because the process becomes an ever tightening circle – waves of increasing anxiety followed by attempts at calm, followed by renewed anxiety from internal causes that become increasingly inaccessible to us as we focus ever more persistently on the value question, rather than on the physiology or psychodynamic that is repeatedly eliciting the anxiety.

The obvious solution to this problem is to make sure that we pay attention to the question of etiology. Is our affect being elicited by external events or internal ones? Is the anxiety prompted by something in the environment that we cannot quite identify? Or is it prompted by changes in our blood chemistry? In the case of emotions that have clear objects in the external world – fear of things that go bump in the night, for example – the standard Stoic analysis may indirectly suffice. After all, if we assess our beliefs about night noises and find that they are false because we were having auditory hallucinations, then when the fear persists we will presumably be led to think about internal causes for it. In the case of affect that has no specific object, however, and prompts only general, incorrigibly true beliefs about the world, we cannot rely on the assessment of their truth to lead us in the appropriate direction. So, especially in the case of what we might call "nonreferential" affect, we have to add something to the standard Stoic account. There are now three rather than two sorts of beliefs we must assess: beliefs about the etiology of the affect; beliefs

about states of affairs; and beliefs about the appropriate response to those states of affairs.

Is this a significant change in Stoic theory? Probably not, but we should acknowledge that it makes the theory somewhat less tidy. We can no longer plausibly assert that the cognitive content implicit in the affect itself is all we need to address in order start down the right path toward assessing its appropriateness. We will have to include the question of its etiology as well.

*Threshold Affect.* There is a related problem about affect that hovers at the threshold of our awareness of it. Such liminal states are problematic for therapy because subjects have difficulty identifying the nature of their affect (putting an illuminating name to it), or difficulty in even identifying its existence as affect. There is no serious divergence between Stoicism and modern psychology about one extreme of the emotional continuum – namely the place where passions become so intense, so overwhelming, that they literally stop thought. Both agree that, at that threshold, maintaining or restoring self-control requires a reduction of the affect, and both agree that such self-control is necessary for health and a good life.

But consider affect at the other extreme of intensity – moods or feelings, for example, that are difficult for subjects to perceive or name. (“You are very angry today.” – Angry? I am? – “Yes. Just think about what you’ve been doing.”) Both Stoics and modern psychotherapists think that it is important for subjects to identify such states properly – to know themselves better. And just as we often need help in understanding that we are having difficulty seeing or hearing in threshold circumstances, we may need help identifying our affect. One obvious method for dealing with liminal auditory phenomena is to turn up the volume and keep it at a fully audible level. Doing something similar with our very mild affective states seems an obvious way of staying in cognitive contact with them. Even though deliberately dialing up the intensity of an affect sounds like a very un-Stoic thing to do,<sup>19</sup> I suppose there can be no serious Stoic objection to it as long as the resulting emotional state does not disturb one’s tranquillity. It is hard to imagine, however, that this would not be disturbing, even for a sage, at the very least because it deliberately generates something that we then have to cope with.

This is at least a small puzzle for Stoics. Some of what I have to say here about the value of emotion and about the nature of tranquillity may indirectly help address it, but I am not confident I have solved the

puzzle. Stoics would expect to solve it, of course, by noting that once such liminal emotion is raised to the point where it can be identified clearly, its cognitive content can be identified as well and dealt with in the usual way. The result of that, however, especially if the source of the original liminal emotion is neurophysiological, may simply be to reduce the deliberately heightened emotion back to its original liminal state, thus starting the cycle over again. Denial, or self-deception, or some form of sublimation – even if it is productive for psychological health – is not consistent with Stoic insistence on self-knowledge, so that option simply complicates things further. Again, we have reason to insist that the etiology of the affect be addressed.

### THE GOOD OF EMOTION

I turn now to the question of the value of emotion in human life. Here Stoics resolutely diverge from common opinion, having enduring reasons for thinking that the value is not very great – or is, at any rate, not the sort of value most non-Stoics imagine. As far as I can tell, nothing in modern psychology (or modern philosophy, for that matter) undercuts this aspect of the traditional Stoic account of emotion.

### Emotion as Natural

What good are human emotions? The answers one can get to that question are frustratingly circular. Ultimately, they amount to nothing more than this: human emotions, when they are good at all, are good for humans simply because humans are emotional creatures – creatures who are so constituted that they cannot stay healthy without certain sorts of emotional experience, or flourish without a rich and varied emotional life, or deliberate effectively about ends without giving those ends an emotional valence, or communicate adequately with each other without sympathy and emotional gestures, or form profound attachments to each other without empathy. But nothing in such answers suggests a transcendent value for emotions as such – something that would, for example, cause us to think that nonhuman beings would necessarily be deficient if they lacked emotion; something that would underwrite the temptation to think that if any unfortunate, emotionless creatures were intelligent enough to appreciate the difference between human lives and their own, they would be like the wistful androids of science fiction, superhuman in some respects but yearning to find love and laughter.

Now it is true, of course, that humans are not the only creatures who have affect. Many other forms of life on this planet, from reptiles to the great apes, have neurological structures that are homologous to some structures we have in subcortical areas of our brains – structures that are known to generate, in humans, raw primal affect such as fear, rage, separation anxiety, and desire (where that includes everything from pure curiosity to ferociously single-minded purposive behavior).<sup>20</sup> Moreover, we know that these subcortical structures operate initially, precognitively, in much the same way across all these species, and thus operate in human infants and very young children in much the same way as they do in some other species. But it is also clear that in adult human beings the firing of these primal, emotion-generating subcortical structures also lights up the neocortex – the information-processing apparatus associated with cognition and self-awareness – and that this cognitive activity dramatically reshapes our primal emotional responses. Adult human emotion is, as the ancient Stoics insisted, inescapably cognitive in ways that we cannot map onto the physiology of reptiles, the lower mammals, and even (in large part) those primates with whom we are most closely related physiologically. Their affective experience, whatever it is like, is apparently not much like adult human emotion. Consequently, the good of adult *human* emotion, whatever it is, is inescapably tied to *human* nature – to what constitutes (adult) human health, human flourishing, human deliberation, human communication, human relationships. And, of course, the obverse is true as well: the evils of human emotion lie in what constitutes ill health, failure to flourish, inability to deliberate effectively, inability to communicate fully, inability to form profound human relationships. This is circular, but instructive.

### Emotion and Health

Consider health.<sup>21</sup> We are told, by the human sciences, that human infants literally wither – fail to thrive physically; fail to develop a healthy physiology – if their primal emotions (“seeking,” fear, anxiety, desire, rage) are not appropriately responded to, where appropriate response means enabling their purposive activity, alleviating their fear and anxiety, satisfying or diverting their desire and rage, and in general holding, comforting, and caressing them. We are told that very young children develop pathological psychologies if they do not form healthy attachments to those humans nearest to them, where a healthy attachment means one characterized in part by reciprocal emotional interaction that creates a

sense of security and possibility and enables learning and purposive activity. We are told that the way these early stages of our emotional lives go has a profound effect on our basic temperaments (whether anxious, distrustful, and pessimistic, for example, or secure, trustful, and optimistic), on the templates for human relationships we try to re-create and preserve throughout our whole lives (or perhaps cannot help but re-create and preserve, despite our best efforts to avoid them), and on the narrative expectations we have for the way our various endeavors will go (whether we think they will go well, for example, through our own efforts or only through magic; whether we think we deserve for them to go well only if we are beautiful, or please others, or have won success through struggle). We are told that these basic temperaments, templates, and expectations have “default” epistemic consequences – that they shape what we immediately perceive, and consequently what we initially believe about the world, in ways that are resistant to rational reassessment. We are told that these epistemic defaults, because they influence cognition generally,<sup>22</sup> influence the cognitive elements of mature human emotions as well, setting up the conditions under which we will continue to strive, or to give up; the conditions under which we will love or hate; the people with whom we will form profound relationships; and the general nature of those relationships, including how open, secure, and wholehearted, for example, or guarded, anxious, and tentative. All of this has consequences for our health, both physical and psychological, throughout our lives.

### Emotion and a Good Life

Now consider *eudaimonia* – not just a healthy life but an abundantly good one, a flourishing life. Again we get circular arguments, but instructive ones. We say life without emotion (to the extent that is even possible, psychologically) would be unbearably bleak, dull, flat, boring, unmotivating, inert, depressing, *joyless*. But that is, of course, just another way of saying that emotion is good for emotional health; good emotion is emotionally good. And if circular arguments with a radius that short were generally available, philosophy would be remarkably easy.

Notice, though, what the circularity of this argument suggests: it suggests that adult human beings are so constituted that emotion is a necessary or basic good for us – something we must have in order to flourish in any form accessible to us, or at least to our imaginations, and hence to our choices as rational agents. If so, then if we want to flourish at all, we



must follow our natures in this respect and get the affect we need. (*Homo sapiens* to be sure, but also *homo ludens*.)

There are similar things to be said about communication, and social and personal relationships among humans. Many people say (or, at least since the rise of romanticism, have obsessively said) that we cannot fully connect with other people without being able to read and respond to their emotional frame of mind – the feeling, or lack of it, that informs their actions, their choices, their dealings with us. We describe people whom we cannot read in this way as remote, or inaccessible; sometimes as arrogant, rude, or lacking in the emotional generosity needed to allow us to respond fully to them. We say that profound personal relationships are necessary to the best forms of life, are a constituent of the most complete forms of human happiness, and that such relationships require that people be emotionally accessible to each other. The fact that this sort of talk is a peculiarly modern obsession, though of course not unknown in antiquity, should not lessen our confidence in its truth. But again we should be aware of a sort of circle in the implicit argument. The truth is that we need emotion only to connect with, communicate with, form profound relationships with emotional beings like ourselves. Being emotionally generous with a sponge is pointless as far as we can tell. And just as we sense, intuitively, in love relationships that the degree and timing of emotional honesty and intimacy are delicate matters, so too we sense that what counts as appropriate behavior in this regard varies widely from one person to the next, and one situation to the next with the same person. Some people are psychologically damaged in ways that make emotional honesty or openness in others threatening – an obstacle to their regaining their health rather than a necessity for it.

### Deliberation about Ends

There is a line of thought about the necessity of emotion in human life that goes roughly like this: means-end reasoning may be purely hypothetical or theoretical, aiming only at knowledge of causal relationships between an action and a goal in cases where neither is valued positively, or even thought to be permissible. That is to say, means-end reasoning may take this form: *if* one were to go for X, what would be the necessary (sufficient, the most efficient, best overall) means to take to get to that end? To turn such theoretical reasoning into genuinely practical reasoning, into deliberation, one must actually have an end, a goal, a purpose. Having a goal X is necessarily to value or prize X in a way that motivates

one to go for X, and valuing or prizing something in that motivating way necessarily has an affective dimension – one that we typically sum up in the term desire. One may feel such desire as either a push from within (an impulse) or a pull from without (an attraction). But in either case one does *feel* this.<sup>23</sup> This is not to say that having an end is thoroughly or even dominantly a noncognitive business. It is merely to say that having an end is always partly a noncognitive business. It is to say that insofar as we lack desire with respect to X, insofar as we feel no impulse or attraction to it at all, X cannot be one of our ends. Thus, people who lack desire entirely (if that is psychologically possible) lack ends entirely and are entirely unable to deliberate – entirely unable to engage in practical reasoning that leads to decision, as opposed to mere theoretical reasoning about means to hypothetical ends.

In the hands of philosophers and philosophically inclined literary folk, this line of thought often appears to proceed in a priori terms, but this is clearly a mistake. One may, after all, have a motivating categorical commitment to some end – a commitment that operates without intermediate desire. The refugee knocks on the door and we find ourselves with the immediate, categorical thought that we must help in some way, whether we want to or not. In fact, such motivating commitment to an end often operates *despite our desire* for conflicting ends. So it cannot be the case that there is a purely conceptual connection between having an end and having a desire for it.

There is, however, some empirical evidence of a psychological connection that underwrites this line of thought about deliberation. People who are brain-damaged (or medicated) in ways that appear to dramatically reduce or perhaps even eliminate a broad range of motivating desires have great difficulty in making decisions – in deliberating. But notice now that this gives us only another tight circle of argument about the good of human emotion: human desire is good for human deliberation because human deliberation (as a matter of human psychology) requires human desire. So what moral shall we draw from this? Follow nature? A very Stoic moral, and none the worse for that.

#### VIRTUE AND TRANQUILLITY

The question we must now consider is whether the Stoic commitment to virtue demands a psychology that diverges significantly – especially with respect to emotion – from one that is recognizably healthy by the standards of modern psychology. As we have seen, it is relatively easy to

make the case that there is a close connection between psychological health and the development of ordinary forms of rational agency along Stoic lines. The question that remains is about the sage, and about the fact that Stoicism requires one to strive to become a sage.

The question is this: is training someone to be a sage rather like training someone to become a very specialized athlete, whose specialized physique is, in the long run, quite unhealthy? (Think of a Sumo wrestler.) Our agency powers are one element of our human endowments. What is the cost to the rest of our human constitution of maximizing the development of agency? In particular, for present purposes, what is the cost to our emotions and feelings and to affect generally?

The abilities of the Stoic sage are extraordinary – at the apex of human agency. And it is not easy to describe in a positive way what those abilities would be like. The ancients were clear that while sages would have limited knowledge and power, by virtue of being finite creatures, and would therefore often fail in their endeavors (sometimes lethally fail), they would not be negligent in gathering and interpreting what information was accessible to them, and they would not make mistakes – in the sense of misinterpreting or misapplying their knowledge in humanly avoidable ways. Moreover, sages would be able to cope with all sorts of adversity, difficulty, suffering, and disappointment, to the utter limit of human endurance. That kind of perfection would require sages always to be free from psychological disturbances that would interfere with their optimal exercise of agency, and it would require that their optimal exercise of agency never be disturbed by their own failures (because these would not be due to avoidable errors) or by any other events beyond their control, such as the death of a loved one, enslavement, or losses of any kind.

What kind of psychology would such a sage have? Here it is easy to make a serious error, and answer that, in general, sages must have virtuosic abilities to cope with whatever befalls them. This is of course true, but only half the truth, and operating with that half-truth produces the following familiar but false picture of the sage:

Sages are poised – perfectly poised – to understand their circumstances and options and to move in whatever way reason dictates. They must be calm, alert, and not committed in advance to a particular course of action that would prevent them from responding adequately to unanticipated events. Attachments to externals – to people, relationships, wealth, health, anything not wholly within one's control – threaten to compromise their coping ability by restricting their options in advance, and must be modified accordingly. Passions and strong emotions

compromise coping ability as well because they generate momentum like running full tilt downhill – and render us incapable of certain responses we might need to make (like stopping before we get to the cliff). So passions and strong emotions must go. Similarly for any feelings and moods of a sort that disturb either perception, deliberation, or choice. What this leaves for the sage is a form of tranquillity and detachment consistent with maximal alertness and readiness to respond to anything that happens. It is as if we imagined the sage as a world-class tennis player ready to receive serve – up on her toes, parallel to the baseline, perfectly balanced for an instant move either to the right or the left, perfectly positioned for a lunge, or a run, or a reflexive block of a shot hit directly at her body, racquet loose in the hand, uncommitted as yet to a forehand or backhand grip, eyes on the ball, but senses registering everything that is salient to making an effective return of serve, and focused, calm, tranquil, detached in the sense that she is not distracted by the crowd, her husband's infidelities, the injustice of her pending prosecution for tax evasion, the recent death of her first child. And, of course, we then imagine that this sort of tranquillity and detachment is the sage's permanent (waking) psychological condition.

What is wrong with this picture is that it is constructed in terms of waiting for things to happen – in terms of being ready to *receive* serve. But the exercise of our agency is not just passive and reactive; it is also active, intentional, inventive, provocative, determinative. We have to step up and serve the ball and actually commit ourselves to making a particular sort of return, as often as we wait to serve, or wait to receive serve. And the picture of the sage in action is rather different than the picture of the sage in waiting.

For one thing, inertia – getting going – is as big a problem for action as getting stopped. So is commitment, and momentum. If you have to jump from one rim of the narrow gorge to the other, you don't do it by keeping your options open permanently. You need speed, and running downhill (if you are lucky enough to have a hill nearby) is a good way to get going and keep going, even if it means you reach the point of no return sooner than you would if you tried to jump from a standing start. Focused, energized, muscular affect (*tonos*)<sup>24</sup> of the sort American professional football players work up before each game, and within the game before each play, is not typically out of place either, because the momentum it generates contributes to playing the game *under control* at the highest level. It is, of course, possible to have an inappropriate type or amount of such affect, as inexperienced players often do. And some players find it hard to confine such energy to the game – to leave it on the field, as the saying goes – or to work it up without repeating a litany of false propositions that no Stoic could support. But no football coach thinks that such excesses

give him a reason to discourage players from “putting on a game face,” because it is understood that this is something that belongs only to the game, and only when it is consistent with playing under control. The point is simply that once we are committed to acting in a particular way, such focused, energized affect and momentum are sometimes appropriate. And agents must always, ultimately, commit themselves to action.

So we must not be misled by the ancient analogy between passion and running full tilt. This cannot mean that extreme, energized affect and momentum are always inappropriate. After all, the ancient Stoics were certainly aware of the way in which sleep, especially deep sleep, could compromise rational agency precisely because it creates the opposite sort of difficulty to running. In the running case, it is hard for agents to get stopped; in the sleeping case it is hard for them to get started. I am not aware of any ancient Stoic arguments to the effect that because of the difficulty of getting started, sages should not sleep, or not sleep deeply. And I am unimpressed by the comparable argument that because of the difficulty of getting stopped, sages should not run. This makes no sense in terms of the sage’s final end – the perfection of the exercise of rational agency. When running is appropriate, sages run. When momentum is appropriate, sages have it.

Notice, however, that this is not an Aristotelian point about the usefulness of passion (e.g., of anger) in *motivating* our actions, or even in sustaining the motivation. The ancient Stoics were right to insist that for the sage, the knowledge that a course of action is the appropriate one is always sufficient motivation to pursue it. The point here about momentum is rather a point about agent energy – about the physical and psychological resources an agent has to have to pursue an endeavor that is already motivated and already chosen. Sages who find themselves in close combat may find that they need ferocious energy, affect, and momentum as much as they need good blood gases – for fighting under control, to the limit of their abilities. And once we see that the intensity of the affect can be uncoupled from beliefs (recall that beliefs can be held with flat affect; ferociously intense affect can be generated precognitively, in the limbic system), we need not imagine that there is a necessary connection between achieving or sustaining such ferocity and holding false beliefs.

It is certainly true that Stoics will reject any passions, or other intense emotional states that involve false beliefs, and it may be true that passions and strong emotions are usually dependent on false beliefs in some way. But such dependence is neither a logical nor a psychological necessity. Because Stoics are committed to the perfection of the activity of rational

agency, they are committed to cultivating the affective states needed for it. In the case of ferociously intense affective states, Stoics will reject those that invoke false beliefs and find other ways to cultivate intensity when it is needed.

The general point is that in any environment rich with possibilities, the sage's exercise of rational agency will be exceedingly complex and call for a comparably complex affective life. There will be extended periods of careful deliberation and reflex reactions; mundane routines and high-stakes risk taking; strength moves; moves requiring little strength but major amounts of fine muscle control; coping with success; coping with unexpected good fortune; coping with failure; inventing remedies for boredom; inventing remedies for the stress of overwork; solving conflict, coordination, and cooperation problems with benevolent people; with malevolent people; being a friend; being a competitor; being an adversary; being an enemy; making war; making peace; making love; on and on and on. And all repeated in a bewildering variety of situations calling for subtly and not so subtly different conduct. It seems highly implausible to hold that any single, well-defined affective state (such as tranquillity) could possibly be adequate for sages engaged in a reasonably wide range of endeavors in a reasonably rich set of circumstances. And no matter how limited the sages' circumstances and options might be at a given time, they must be prepared for an unexpected reversal – they must be capable of handling great *good* fortune and an abundance of opportunities.

Thus, whatever ground-down form of affect may be required of the slave of a drunken despot or the prisoner in a death camp, Stoic training must aim to produce a psychology that can also respond appropriately to safety, security, freedom, and affluence. Stoicism is for emperors as well as slaves, the rich and famous as well as the obscure, the strong and beautiful as well as the weak and ugly – in the full range of situations in which those people can find themselves. That much has never been in doubt. We simply add here that the appropriate affective dimension of such lives will be as varied as those people and their circumstances, and we think that, once this point is understood, concentrating on the perfection of agency will not move us away from psychological health.

#### LOVE, DETACHMENT, AND PURITY OF HEART

That leaves love. There are two problems with it. One concerns the sort of quick release mechanism recommended by Epictetus in some notorious

passages about replacing lost wives and children, just as one replaces broken tea cups. Apparently the sage is supposed to be able to let go of externals so quickly that grief or suffering from a loss is not an issue. That persuades many people that there must be something phony about the way a sage loves in the first place. They suspect that the only way to achieve this sort of immediate release is to be more or less detached and unloving from the start. And, of course, Stoic insistence that virtue, rather than any external person or thing, is the only thing that is ultimately any good at all contributes to the impression that Stoics would resist becoming attached to externals – would resist, in that sense, a fundamental aspect of what we call love.

The second problem with fitting a Stoic account of emotion into our ordinary notion of love concerns the way in which Stoics must monitor their emotions intellectually, making sure that they do not involve any cognitive errors about what is ultimately valuable or about what affective responses are appropriate – that is, are psychologically healthy and otherwise consistent with the development of virtue. The result of such monitoring is undeniably a persistent sort of highly refined triple consciousness: first-order awareness within the emotional state itself, second-order awareness of being in the emotional state, and third-order awareness of the nature and value of being in that state. A Stoic is always going to be two parts observer and one part participant in emotional experience – something that will not only complicate the intentionality of Stoic loving but add a certain remoteness or distance to it as well. If purity of heart is to have simple intentions,<sup>25</sup> then it looks as though it is going to be difficult for a Stoic to be pure-hearted in love – or wholehearted either, for that matter. Recall the line from an exasperated E. E. Cummings: “since feeling is first / who pays any attention / to the syntax of things / will never wholly kiss you.”<sup>26</sup>

### Pure Love

Let me address this purity of heart problem first. Double consciousness – that is, awareness and awareness of being aware – is a necessary part of the kind of rational agency that develops in human beings as they mature. It is in that sense part of our nature as human beings. We can, of course, choose to regard it as a curse rather than a blessing and take steps to eliminate the self-consciousness part, leaving only first-order awareness. (I assume that people who valorize emotion would not want to go farther and eliminate first-order awareness.) But once we acquire language,

self-consciousness is exceedingly difficult to strip away from first-order consciousness for more than short intervals, and it can be exceedingly dangerous to our health to do so in unfavorable circumstances. That suggests the importance of third-order assessments that address, among other things, when it is appropriate to lose ourselves in our experience and when it is not. ("Kiss me you fool." – Not now. The attic is on fire.) And the endorsement of the importance of those assessments is not anything unique to Stoicism. It is a matter of common sense, not to mention sound psychotherapy.

In the discussion of tranquillity I suggested that it was consistent with the notion of Stoic sagehood to recognize that the demands of virtuosic activity (as opposed to receptivity) sometimes include temporary, rationally controlled loss of self-consciousness. It seems reasonable to extend that point here to include the observation that third-order monitoring of one's emotions will thus sometimes be intermittent, controlled by sophisticated dispositions sensitive to changes in circumstance. A tennis player who is playing "in the zone," as they say, presumably still has a dispositional readiness to respond to things that are dramatically out of the ordinary (such as an earthquake or an attack by a spectator), as well as the dispositional readiness to come out of the zone when the match is over. In this respect there is little difference between Stoics and non-Stoics.

Where there is a striking difference on these matters between Stoics and at least some non-Stoics (call them romantics) is in how willingly they embrace the complexity of intention in actively monitored emotional states and the distancing it involves.<sup>27</sup> Stoics characteristically have no regrets about this at all, when it is the appropriate thing to do, and are unlikely to go out of their way to minimize the occasions when it is prudent to monitor their emotions. Romantics seem dismayed and regretful about the necessity of such monitoring and are likely to make persistent efforts to avoid it. The argument between them, however, is not properly construed as one about the availability of wholehearted Stoic kisses. It is rather about the value of emotion itself for the good life.

### Detachment

Now to the question about detachment. The first thing to point out is that Stoics recognize what amounts to a very intimate and deep form of attachment as a fundamental mechanism in human psychology, and an indispensable mechanism for the development of virtue. I refer to the ancient discussions of *oikeiōsis* – the appropriation or incorporation



of externals so that one's interest in their welfare ceases to be merely instrumental and becomes instead like one's interest in one's own welfare. That is surely the beginning of love: when one cares about another for the other's sake, not one's own. And when this occurs by way of *oikeiōsis* – by way of the psychological incorporation of the beloved's interests into one's own – the attachment is as strong and intimate as can be imagined. The ones we love are literally "parts" of us then, as romantics say. Such attachments occur in the normal course of human events, whether we take further steps toward becoming Stoics or not.

What is distinctive about Stoic love is how Stoics define human welfare, and consequently what our deepest cares and concerns are, both for ourselves and for those we love (for those who have become a part of us, psychologically). Stoics care ultimately only about virtue: excellence in the activity of rational agency. But as I have argued, that entails caring about health – both about physical health and psychological health, including the range and depth of emotional experience necessary for it. It also entails caring about life itself, and liberty, and having the material resources necessary for the exercise of our agency. But we care about those things in a subsidiary way. It would be self-defeating to be concerned about them a way that forces us to compromise virtue. Thus death, disease, discomfort, or even slavery is preferable to a vicious life. Because those we love are a part of us, we love their lives, health, ease, and liberty the way we love our own – as preferable to their opposites, certainly, but as nothing compared to virtue.

That means that a sage will not love others in a way that diminishes her virtue – her excellence in the exercise of her rational agency. She will not, for example, become so attached to others that she literally cannot bear the prospect of losing them, any more than she would be attached to her own life in a way that made the prospect of her own death unbearable. Nor would she wish others to love her in that way – to be desolate and helpless when she is gone, unable to bear the loss. What Stoics wish for others is what we wish for ourselves: good lives; virtuous lives; including the ability to cope with loss. And we add this thought: when a loved one dies, it is literally not possible thereafter to care about his interests for his own sake, because he no longer exists. We must therefore think carefully about the cognitive content of the sorts of attachments and emotions that survive in us after his death. Whatever they are, however appropriate they may be as an extension of the concerns he had during his life, they cannot be the kind of love they once were: caring for another as we care for ourselves. When we pay attention to that, the alienating brutality of

some of the ancient texts on the subject of grief, love, and loss will be lessened.

Is Stoic love austere? Not especially. To see this, I think it is only necessary to reflect in a commonsense way on this thought: imagine a person who wants you to be able to say, truthfully, these sentences: "You are my love, my life, my whole life. If I were to lose you my life would be ruined; over." Those sentences are not about loving you for your own sake; they are not ultimately about you at all. They are rather the declaration of a medical emergency and a plea for help (or a threat). So what can it mean when people say that they want *you* to have that kind of emotional attachment to *them*? That they want *you* to lose your life when you lose *them*? Is that compatible with loving you for your own sake? If so, then it is that sort of love that is austere, not the Stoic sort. The only austerity in Stoic love comes not from its lack of attachment (there is plenty of attachment) but rather from its readiness to sacrifice everything *except* virtue for love.

#### Notes

1. In a famous passage in *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (7.116), quoted here from LS 65F, Diogenes Laertius says:
  - (1) They [the Stoics] say that there are three good feelings: joy, watchfulness, wishing. (2) Joy, they say, is the opposite of pleasure, consisting in well-reasoned swelling [elation]; and watchfulness is the opposite of fear, consisting in well-reasoned shrinking. For the wise man will not be afraid at all, but he will be watchful. (3) They say that wishing is the opposite of appetite, consisting in well-reasoned stretching [desire]. (4) Just as certain passions fall under the primary ones, so too with the primary good feelings. Under wishing: kindness, generosity, warmth, affection. Under watchfulness: respect, cleanliness. Under joy: delight, sociability, cheerfulness.
2. See, for instance, Stockdale 1993.
3. Galen 1981: 2.5.
4. Panksepp 1998.
5. Thayer 1989.
6. Lazarus 1994.
7. Craske 1999.
8. Suppose that affect is a necessary feature of human experience. It does not follow that it suffuses or attaches to every waking thought.
9. References to emotion are often ambiguous, alluding either to some affective quality of experience ("I got angry then – really emotional") or to some persisting disposition ("I'm basically an angry person, and too emotional for my own good"). I focus here on emotions as affective experience, but much of what I have to say depends on the view that such affective experience produces and is produced by underlying mental-neurophysiological

- structures – emotional dispositions that often carry the same labels as their counterparts in our affective lives. Stoic therapy clearly has to deal with both emotional states and emotional dispositions, and it is important to consider the possibility that the latter may have consequences for behavior that are not filtered through identifiable emotional states. It is a virtue of psychoanalytic theory, and also of Richard Wollheim's recent book *On the Emotions* that they call our attention to such things. Wollheim goes much farther along these lines than I am prepared to go, however. After sharply distinguishing mental states from mental dispositions, he argues that emotions are dispositions – either conscious, preconscious, or unconscious ones. See Wollheim 1999: 1–8.
10. For explicit consideration of this point by people working in psychiatry, see Nordenfelt 1997, and the extensive series of comments generated in the same journal issue (pp. 292–306). This discussion proceeds without much attention to the theoretical framework of Stoic ethics and goes astray at several points, but is instructive nonetheless.
  11. Galen 1981: books 4–5.
  12. Panksepp 1998.
  13. Panksepp 1998: 206, 217–19.
  14. See Sorabji's essay in this volume (Chapter 5).
  15. Here is a commonplace model of such change that I assume both ancient Stoics and modern psychologists would accept: Suppose you enter a room in which your lover – whose back is turned to you – is cursing you angrily, shockingly, without warning, blaming you by name for some unnamed injury and breaking off your relationship with finality. You have a rush of sudden feeling and emotion – a rush, bewilderment, anger, hurt. And in the next moment, you see that your lover is reading a script – rehearsing a part in a play that has nothing to do with you. What happens to your emotions? The bewilderment, anger, and hurt drain away immediately, replaced by relief, hilarity, perhaps self-mockery. What happened? What changed? Cognition changed. Beliefs changed, and evidently drove the change in affect, including not only the conative impulse (whatever it was) but even the underlying state of physiological arousal. And we can multiply such examples without end. Psychotherapists quite generally go even farther than this, by acknowledging that many pathological emotional states are also transformable by changes in the subject's beliefs. Consequently, treatment regimes for many sorts of psychological illnesses – including depression, anxiety, phobias of various sorts – rely heavily on what can only be called Stoic principles. (At least one current variety of psychotherapy acknowledges this explicitly: rational emotive behavior therapy. See notes 6 and 17.) This sort of change is commonplace, and naturally enough suggests the Stoic hypothesis – namely, that for rational agents (e.g., humans at or above the age of reason) beliefs underwrite the *original* emotions in such examples as well.
  16. Cooper 1999.
  17. Contemporary versions of such psychotherapy are quite abundant, the most obvious being rational emotive behavior therapy. See, for example, Ellis 1974 and Lazarus 1995. And see, for the suggestion that some forms of

- psychoanalysis might be "Stoic" in a thoroughgoing sense, D. H. Ingram's review of Becker 1998 in the *American Journal of Psychoanalysis* (Ingram 1999).
18. Lazarus 1994.
  19. The canonical Stoic remedy would be to crank up the level of one's attention or perceptual ability. But there are physiological limits to sensory perception, and there is no reason to believe that there are not similar limits on the introspection of our mental states.
  20. Panksepp 1998: chs. 2-4.
  21. Chaplin and Krawiec 1979; Flanagan 1991: ch. 15; Stocker and Hegeman 1996.
  22. Stocker and Hegeman 1996: ch. 3.
  23. "Blow out your candles and make a wish. Want something. Want *something*." Amy, from *Company* (1970), music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, based on plays by George Furth.
  24. I thank Brad Inwood and Richard Sorabji for suggesting I phrase this point to link it to the Stoic use of *tonos*. See definition II.4 in H. J. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. H. S. Jones (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968).
  25. Kierkegaard 1993, 152-54: "Purity of Heart Is to Will One Thing."
  26. E. E. Cummings 1994:291: "since feeling is first."
  27. Personal correspondence, 16 March 1999, from the psychoanalyst Douglas H. Ingram M.D., on an early draft of this paper. "From my perspective . . . it is richness of emotion – including the simultaneous containment of conflicting emotions, layered emotions, and the ironic multiplicity of mingled emotions – that makes for a muscular psychological health. I believe that any suppression of emotion – including that suppression created by calling some emotions 'good' and some 'bad' – leads to a narrowing, even an impoverishment of the capacity for rational agency."