

Gunther Hammel

The Way, Vol. I – Practical Poetry Inspired by Stoicism

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Poetry Inspired by Stoicism

For mom; because you encouraged me to do what is right, not what is easy.

For dad, because you are my watcher.

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On Philosophy

Philosophy should
make you warmer to the world,
not cold or detached.
We're here an instant;
to spend time lamenting life
would be wasting it.
Instead, make of use
the power you are given
to help those near you.
Same as your body,
your mind needs to exercise,
so **read, learn, think, act.**
What good is it if
you stop after reading and
put none to practice?
Would a star athlete
watch tapes and then do nothing?
Only if they're hurt.
Luckily, if so,
your mind is unaffected
if you choose it's not.

On Being a Part of the Whole

Everything that is –
your hair, toes, eyes, hands, fingers,
brain, heart, lungs, feet, limbs,
coffee, tea, bagels, lasagna, pizza, salads,
mushrooms, peas, apples,
pets, brothers, sisters,
mothers, fathers, sons, daughters,
cousins, grandparents,
kitchens, pipes, houses,
streets, stop signs, neighborhoods,
cities, states, countries,
continents, oceans,
comets, asteroids, planets,
stars, solar systems,
galaxies, parsecs,
superclusters, and, in fact,
the whole universe –
exists as a whole.
We are a tiny fragment
of the grand cosmos.

On Death

Contemplate your death.
Do not obsess over it,
but remember it.
As a part of life,
your death deserves some respect
while you can give it.
It will help you see
you're a part of something grand
outside of yourself,
which will continue
to unfurl far past your time.
Our stay is not long –
make the most of it!
Become a better human;
let go of grudges,
be present always,
love your lot, and above all –
recall that you'll die.
This should not scare us.
It should encourage us to
live the best we can.

On Community

We do the right thing
not because any reward,
but to serve others.
Or, more pointedly,
we contribute to the Whole
of which we're a part.
We're all connected,
our daimons a fraction of
life's divinity.
Let this fact guide you;
consider how your actions
will affect others.
Living for yourself
is not the mark of life lived,
but that of restraint.
Unshackle your mind!
Live for more and break the chains
which hold your heart back.
The cosmopolis
is ready for your action;
contribute your verse!