

Gunther Hammel

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

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For Dorothy – You have always listened to my philosophical ramblings with a kind heart and an open mind, and you extend that same inquisitive warmth to everyone you meet. You are an example of what kindness truly is.

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On Stillness

Take a deep breath in.

"I am one with the cosmos."

Be still – just exist;

hear the sounds around,

sense the seat underneath you

as the wind blows by,

and slowly exhale.

Everything is connected.

"The cosmos is one."

Take time to notice

what's around you every day

at the edge of sight,

for there is beauty

everywhere, surrounding us,

if we'd only look.

Repeat this mantra

and remember to inspect

this grand existence

in which we reside.

"I am one with the cosmos.

The cosmos is one."

On Physics

Meticulous math –
laws of the grand universe
and cosmic mandates –
governs the movement
of celestial forms and
atomic exchange.
Nature behaves best,
perfect in her calculus
and machinations,
leaves nothing lacking,
and provides all creatures with
what they need to grow.
Inside **all** matter –
living and inanimate –
there is intention;
each atom exists
precisely where it's needed
in order to serve
as part of the whole.
The gods exist in these things,
as well as in us.

On Providence

Known by many names –
Nature, Fortune, God, Zeus, Fate,
The Whole, Providence,
The Cosmos, The Gods,
Divinity, and Logos –
it is perfected,
and as things unfold
we shall play our tiny part
in Fate's symphony.
Every last atom
in the universe contains
a breath of logic –
a mote of reason –
which is flawlessly arranged
with divine purpose
to interact with
and to be examined by
fellow particles.
We are shards of God –
of Nature – attempting to
understand itself.

On What Is Good

One thing's worth chasing:
not fame, wealth, nor even health –
it is called virtue.

"What, then, is virtue?"

It is the good we can do.

"What's defined as good?"

Courage, wisdom, and
living in agreement with
nature and the gods.

"What does that *look* like?"

Making use of everything
that happens in life.

"What does *that* look like?"

Making a correct response
to all impressions.

"And what is correct?"

A zoomed out view of all things –
steeped in gratitude –
which then gives you space
to see yourself in context
as part of the whole.