

# The Early Stoics

## The Passions

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"Stoicism is the greatest system of organized thought which the mind of man had built up for itself in the Greco-Roman world. ... It represents a way of looking at the world and the practical problems of life which possesses still a permanent interest for humankind, and a permanent power of inspiration." —Gilbert Murray

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This item comes from the Cave's  
*The Best of the Early Stoics: The Lives, Writings & Teachings of the Early Stoics.*

## The Early Stoics

### The Passions\*

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*A passion or an emotion is a judgment or a decision. There are both good passions and bad passions. A good passion is a motion in line with reason. A bad passion is a motion or excessive impulse of the soul that is contrary to nature and reason.*

### GOOD PASSIONS

**Joy** (*chara*) is the opposite of pleasure; it is sensible elation, that is, elation backed by good reason.

**Caution** (*eulabeia*), that is, discretion or circumspection, is the opposite of fear. It is avoidance backed by good reason, or the reasonable turning of one's course. (For example, even though the wise man will never fear anything, he will nevertheless act with caution.)

**Willing** (*boulēsis*) is reasonable appetite, that is, appetite backed by good reason.

### SUBORDINATE GOOD PASSIONS

**Gladness** (*terpsis*), **merriment** (*euphrosunē*), and **cheerfulness** (*euthumia*) fall under joy.

**Respect** or **modesty** (*aidōs*) and **religious purity** (*hagneia*) fall under caution.

**Goodwill** (*eunoia*), **kindliness** (*eumeneia* or *eumenēs*), **being welcoming** (*asposmos*), and **brotherly love** (*agapē*) fall under willing.

### BAD PASSIONS

**Grief** or pain of the mind (*lupē*) is a contraction of the soul contrary to reason.

**Fear** (*phobos*) is the expectation of something bad or unfortunate.

**Desire** or longing (*epithumia*) is an appetite (*orexis*) that is contrary to reason.

**Pleasure** (*hēdonē*) is an elation that is contrary to reason that arises from getting and amassing what seems to be choiceworthy.

### SUBORDINATE BAD PASSIONS

#### *under grief*

**Pity** (*eleos*) is the pain felt at undeserved suffering.

**Envy** (*phthonos*) is the pain felt when one sees the goods of other people.

**Jealousy** (*zēlos*) is the pain felt when someone has a thing that one desires.

**Rivalry** (*zēlotupia*) is the pain felt when someone possesses what one has.

**Heaviness** (*achthos*) is a pain that weighs us down.

**Annoyance** (*enochlēsis*) is a pain that confines us and gives us a sense of a lack of room.

**Distress** (*ania*) is a pain brought on by anxious rumination that lasts and increases.

**Anguish** (*odunē*) is a difficult pain.

**Confusion** (*sunchusis*) is an irrational pain of the mind that wears one out and prevents one from viewing the situation as a whole.

#### *under fear*

**Terror** (*deima*) is a fear that produces fright.

**Shame** (*aischunē*) is the fear of a bad reputation.

**Hesitation** (*oknos*) is the fear that one will have to act.

**Consternation** (*ekplēxis*) is fear due to a presentation of some unusual occurrence.

**Panic** (*thorubos*) is fear after a rush of sound.

**Mental agony** (*agōnia*) is fear of some uncertain event.

#### *under desire*

The **state of want** or **lacking** (*spanis*) is the failure of desire, when desire does not reach its object but is nevertheless attracted to it in vain, stretching out to it.

**Hatred** (*misos*) is the growing and lasting desire for things to go badly for someone.

**Love of strife** (*philoneikia*) is desire connected with partisanship or a philosophical school.

**Anger** (*orgē*) is the desire for revenge against the one who appears to have done one an undeserved injury.

**Erotic love or desire** (*erōs*) is a desire that is not present in excellent men. It is the effort to win affection due to the visible presence of beauty.

**Spiritedness** (*thumos*) is the first stirring of anger.

**Wrath** (*mēnis*) is a longstanding and vengeful anger, ever-waiting for its chance to act.

*under pleasure*

**Enchantment** (*kēlēsis*) is pleasure that charms the ear, casting a spell over it.

**Joy in the misfortune of others** (*epikairekakia*) is *schadenfreude*, the pleasure that comes when bad things happen to other people.

**Delight** (*terpsis*) is, as it were, a turning of the soul. It is a certain stimulus for the soul toward loosening or letting go.

**Relaxation** (*diachusis*) is the breaking down of virtue.

\*Not included are the additional passions mentioned by Cicero: disparagement, mourning, sadness, woe, lamenting, apprehension, despair, timidity, dread, faintness, bewilderment, awe, rage, enmity, discord, ardent longing, ostentation.

So ends this item. See you in **another reading or item** from the Cave.

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