Scrhoz

A Stoic Practice, in Plain Language Prompt Pack

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15 simple prompts for a daily Stoic practice: a morning intention, an evening review, difficult people, anger, envy and setbacks, and old ideas explained in plain words.

How to Use This Pack

- Copy a prompt, paste it into any AI assistant (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini or similar), and replace each [BRACKETED] part with your own details.
- A few minutes a day, or once a week, goes further than one long session. Several prompts ask you questions, and a pause before you answer is part of the practice.
- Ask the AI to put ideas in its own words. If it names a philosopher or a passage, check the attribution in a reliable source, because famous lines are often misattributed. If you paste a passage from an old text, use a translation that is out of copyright, such as an older edition on Project Gutenberg.
- Leave out names and anything you would rather keep private.

Note: These prompts are for reflection and everyday thinking. They are not therapy or medical advice. If you're struggling with low mood, anxiety, anger that worries you or a difficult time in your life, please talk with your doctor or a mental health professional.

Daily Practice

1. Set the Ground Rules

> For this conversation, be a calm, practical companion for a Stoic-style practice. Explain ideas in plain language and in your own words, without quoting long passages. If you mention a philosopher or an idea, say how sure you are that it's correctly attributed. Ask me questions and let me reach my own conclusions. Don't give medical or psychological advice. Reply with "Ready" and wait for my first request.

Tip: Paste this first in each new chat. The AI doesn't carry it over.

2. A Morning Intention

> Guide me through a two-minute morning intention. Ask me, one at a time, what today holds that is outside my control, what I can do well whatever happens, and one small thing I'd like to do with care. Then help me put my intention into one calm sentence I can reread during the day.

Tip: Write the sentence somewhere you'll see it before midday.

3. Choose One Quality to Practise

> I'd like to practise one quality this week. What's going on in my life: [BRIEF DESCRIPTION]. Suggest three qualities that might help, such as patience, courage, fairness or self-control, and say in a sentence why each might suit me. Once I choose one, ask me what a small, specific action would look like on an ordinary day.

Tip: A single quality is easier to notice than four. Perhaps pick one.

4. The Evening Review in Three Questions

> Guide me through an evening review using three old Stoic questions, one at a time: What did I do well today? Where did I fall short of how I wanted to act? What did I leave undone that I could do tomorrow? Wait for each answer and reply briefly and kindly. Finish by helping me write one line to carry into tomorrow.

Tip: Five quiet minutes is enough. Kindness helps the habit last.

5. A Weekly Look Back

> Here are my short evening notes from the past week: [PASTE YOUR NOTES]. Read them as a thoughtful friend would. Tell me what themes you notice, what I seem to be handling better, and one question worth carrying into next week. Don't diagnose or judge. Describe what the notes say and let me decide what they mean.

Tip: A line or two a day is plenty to look back on.

With Other People

6. A Difficult Person

> I find it hard to deal with [PERSON OR TYPE OF PERSON, E.G. A COLLEAGUE / A RELATIVE]. What happens: [DESCRIBE BRIEFLY]. Help me think it through in three steps: how the situation might look from their side without excusing it, what is in my power to do or say, and one calm response I could try. Ask me questions before you offer any advice.

Tip: You can understand someone and still hold a boundary.

7. Pause Before I Answer

> I'm angry about [SITUATION] and I'm about to reply. Here is the message I received: [PASTE]. Here is the reply I'd like to send: [PASTE]. Don't send or rewrite anything yet. Ask me three questions that slow me down, such as what I want to happen next and what I might regret. If I then ask, offer a calmer version of my reply that still says what matters.

Tip: Give yourself an hour before you send anything, whatever the AI says.

8. Comparison and Envy

> I keep comparing myself with [A PERSON, A GROUP OR WHAT I SEE ONLINE]. What I notice myself feeling: [DESCRIBE]. Ask me gentle questions, one at a time, about what I'm actually envying, what I might want for myself underneath it, and which part is in my power. Then suggest one small action for this week.

Tip: Envy often points at something you want. It's worth asking what.

9. Praise and Criticism

> Someone recently [PRAISED / CRITICISED] me: [DESCRIBE]. Help me look at it calmly. What might be true in what they said, what may say more about them or their mood, and what I'd like to take from it. Keep your questions gentle and let me decide what to keep.

Tip: Take what's useful and let the rest go by.

When Things Go Wrong

10. Setbacks as the Path

> I've had a setback: [DESCRIBE]. Explain the old Stoic idea that an obstacle can become the way forward, in plain words and without forced positivity. Then ask me three questions about what this setback might be asking of me, what I can still practise here, and what I'd like to do next.

Tip: Some setbacks are simply hard. The idea doesn't ask you to enjoy them.

11. What's Done Is Done

> I keep going back over [PAST EVENT OR CHOICE]. Help me separate what happened from the story I've built around it, and then separate what I can still act on from what is settled. Ask me questions one at a time. End with one small thing I can do, or one sentence I can say to myself, when the thought returns.

Tip: If the thoughts feel heavy or won't ease, a trusted person or a professional can help.

12. What Would a Wise Person Do?

> I'm facing [SITUATION OR CHOICE]. Imagine a calm, fair and experienced person, perhaps someone I admire: [OPTIONAL NAME OR QUALITIES]. Ask me five questions that person might ask me about it, one at a time. Don't give a verdict. At the end, summarise what my answers seem to say and let me decide.

Tip: Picturing a real person you respect can make the questions easier to hear.

Read the Old Ideas

13. Explain This Passage in Plain Words

> Here is a short passage from a Stoic text, from a translation that is out of copyright: [PASTE UNDER 200 WORDS]. Explain it in plain, modern language and in your own words. Say what the passage seems to ask of the reader, mention any word or idea that could be read in more than one way, and tell me where to check the source if I want to quote it.

Tip: Many older translations are free on Project Gutenberg.

14. Turn an Idea Into a Small Practice

> Explain the Stoic idea of [IDEA, E.G. AMOR FATI / VOLUNTARY DISCOMFORT / DOING ONE THING AT A TIME] in plain words and in your own words. Then suggest three tiny practices, each under five minutes, that I could try this week, and ask me which one feels right.

Tip: Try one for a week before deciding whether the idea suits you.

15. Make a Reminder in My Own Words

> Here are a few thoughts from my practice that I'd like to remember: [PASTE YOUR NOTES]. Help me turn them into three short reminders in my own words, each under 15 words, that I could keep on my phone or my desk. Use my wording where you can, and don't attribute them to an ancient writer.

Tip: A reminder in your own words tends to stay with you longer than a borrowed line.

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- Think Clearly Prompt Pack (14 prompts)

More from Theo Marlowe

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