

Meditations: A New Translation (Modern Library)

Marcus Aurelius



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Few ancient works have been as influential as the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius, philosopher and emperor of Rome (A.D. 161–180). A series of spiritual exercises filled with wisdom, practical guidance, and profound understanding of human behavior, it remains one of the greatest works of spiritual and ethical reflection ever written. Marcus's insights and advice—on everything from living in the world to coping with adversity and interacting with others—have made the Meditations required reading for statesmen and philosophers alike, while generations of ordinary readers have responded to the straightforward intimacy of his style. For anyone who struggles to reconcile the demands of leadership with a concern for personal integrity and spiritual well-being, the Meditations remains as relevant now as it was two thousand years ago.

In Gregory Hays's new translation—the first in thirty-five years—Marcus's thoughts speak with a new immediacy. In fresh and unencumbered English, Hays vividly conveys the spareness and compression of the original Greek text. Never before have Marcus's insights been so directly and powerfully presented.

With an Introduction that outlines Marcus's life and career, the essentials of Stoic doctrine, the style and construction of the Meditations, and the work's ongoing influence, this edition makes it possible to fully rediscover the thoughts of one of the most enlightened and intelligent leaders of any era.



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