Facilitator moves

THE MAIN MOVE

"What do you mean by…?" When someone says *good*, *happy*, or *stoic*, ask what they mean before going on.

Then ask: **"What might a Stoic say about that?"**

When the room needs help

- **Silence.** Wait ten seconds. Then ask for a small example: "Where did you see that this week?"
- **Dominating.** "Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken and wants to."
- **An expert lecturing.** "That's helpful. How would you put it for someone hearing it for the first time?"
- **Newcomers looking lost.** "Here's the one idea we're exploring today: character over circumstances."
- **Going deep too soon.** "Good question. A later meeting takes that up; let's note it."
- **Personal hurt.** Thank them; offer a pause, or move on. Do not probe.

PROTECT THE TIME

Keep the introduction to ten minutes. Give each topic about twelve minutes: introduce it in a sentence or two, take a few answers, and move on. Start the practice by minute 70 and finish at 90.

When asked for your view

Offer it briefly: "Here's my tentative view. What would make you doubt it?" Keep the question open.

Notes and follow-up

Fuller explanations, sample responses, and the readings are in this meeting's expanded guide and Meeting Primer. Key texts: Stoicism 101; Epictetus, *Enchiridion* 1 and 5; Seneca, *On Anger* 3.36.

What Is Stoicism?

What would it mean to live well, whatever happens to you?

Today introduces Stoicism as a practical philosophy for everyday life. Each of its four topics opens a question that later meetings take up, so open them; don't try to settle them.

THE MEETING

Date: _____ **Place:** _____

90 minutes of discussion · Getting Started

Before you begin

Silence your phone, set a quiet timer, and keep this guide open. Have your talk notes or the video ready, a few Stoicism 101 trifolds for newcomers, and a pen for your own notes.

Open (10 minutes)

Welcome everyone, especially first-timers. Passing on any question is always fine. Encourage curiosity, respectful disagreement, and everyday examples. Go around for first names.

Ask the whole group: **"What brought you to this discussion?"** Also ask: **"What comes to mind when you hear the word 'Stoic'?"** Keep answers brief.

Introduce (10 minutes)

TALK OR VIDEO · STOICISM 101

Give a short talk using Stoicism 101 (QR code), or watch the five-minute video together.

Stoicism 101

Cover four points: **where it began** (Athens, about 300 BCE, then Rome: Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius); **its aim** (living well through wisdom and character); **Zeno's claim** (anyone who can reason and wants a good character can flourish); **what it isn't** (suppressing emotions or accepting injustice).

Open · 10 min	Introduce · 10 min	Discuss · 50 min	Practice · 12 min	Close · 8 min
Names; what brought you	What is Stoicism?	Four topics, about 12 min each	Choose one daily practice	Takeaways; a regular day

Discuss

1. A good life. The Stoics said a good life depends on character, not circumstances.

What makes a good life, and how much does it depend on our circumstances?

Probe: Can money or health ever do harm? When?

2. What's up to us. Our own judgments and choices are up to us. Other people's opinions, events, and outcomes are not.

Pick an everyday frustration. What's outside your control? What choices remain?

Probe: What would a thoughtful response look like?

3. The four virtues. Wisdom: seeing clearly. **Courage:** doing right despite fear. **Justice:** treating others fairly. **Temperance:** moderation and self-restraint.

A colleague takes credit for your work. What response would show these virtues?

Probe: How might firmness, fairness, and restraint work together?

4. Judgments and emotions. How we interpret an event shapes how we feel. A first reaction comes fast; reflection decides what we do next.

An important message goes unanswered. What do you know? What are you adding?

Probe: What response would be reasonable and useful? How could pausing help?

GOING DEEPER · IF THE ROOM IS READY

Zeno claimed that anyone who can reason and genuinely wants a good character can flourish, whatever their circumstances. Do you believe it?

Practice: choose one daily practice

Present three simple practices. Give two quiet minutes for each person to choose one and decide when they'll use it this week. Invite a few people to say theirs aloud.

UNTIL NEXT TIME · PICK ONE PRACTICE

1. Morning intention. Anticipate a challenge and decide how you want to meet it.

2. A deliberate pause. When something happens, ask: "What is mine to choose here?"

3. Evening review. Review what went well, what was difficult, and what you could do differently.

Choose one, decide when you'll use it, and try it this week. Stoicism is an ongoing practice of thoughtful choices, treating others well, and learning from experience.

Seneca reviewed each day this way (On Anger 3.36). Any of the three is enough to start; the point is to choose one and try it.

Close

Return to the opening: **"What would it mean to live well, whatever happens to you?"** Allow final questions. Then invite each person to finish one sentence: **"One idea I'm taking away is…"** or **"One thing I want to try is…"** If this is a new group, agree on a regular day and time before you leave.

Thank members, confirm the next meeting, and finish on time. Announce the next meeting's topic and its opening question. Today's topics come back one at a time.

After the meeting: send a short recap through your group's usual channel with one or two takeaways from the room and the three daily practices.