

THESIS

FRIENDSHIP AND THE ROLE OF EMOTION IN ARISTOTELIAN AND STOIC
CONCEPTIONS OF *EUDAIMONIA*

Submitted by

Nicole G. Lins

Department of Philosophy

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Arts

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Summer 2016

Master's Committee:

Advisor: Andre Archie

Matt MacKenzie

Patrick Plaisance

Copyright Nicole G. Lins 2016

All Right Reserved

ABSTRACT

FRIENDSHIP AND THE ROLE OF EMOTION IN ARISTOTELIAN AND STOIC CONCEPTIONS OF *EUDAIMONIA*

Ancient conceptions of virtuous and perfect friendships – specifically in Aristotle and the Stoics (i.e. Cicero, Epictetus, and Seneca) – attempt to describe the proper relations between people, when and why friendships arise, and how we ought to treat our friends. I will argue that the Stoic conception of friendship, when looked at through modern-day psychological research on what is necessary to a good friendship, presents a better model for friendship than Aristotle. This is because the Stoics better capture the positive aspects in friendship through their stance on emotion and how one ought to live in order to live well. When one lives as a Stoic, he is better placed to maintain a stable level of psychological well-being, and he is better able to care for his friends. Aristotle’s conception of friendship falls short because of his claim that friendship is grounded on moral virtue alone, as well as his claim that there are necessary contingent goods to happiness, both of which make his conception of friendship unstable and less preferable. My positive argument for the Stoics having the better conception of friendship rests on psychological research on friendship and well-being, on their ability to capture the plurality for grounds of friendship, and on their own mental stability and attitudes of affection toward others. Because the Stoic conception is supported by empirical evidence and what people actually experience in good friendships, it provides a better model for how one ought to live and act concerning their friends.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: EMOTION, FRIENDSHIP, AND THE GOOD LIFE	3
Aristotelian Friendship.....	10
Human Nature and the Self in Stoicism.....	20
A Stoic Conception of Friendship: Cicero, Seneca, and Epictetus.....	30
Conclusion	39
CHAPTER 2: POSITIVE, HIGH-QUALITY FRIENDSHIPS	42
The Positive and Negative Components of Friendship.....	43
Mutual Liking and Affection	48
Equality.....	63
Altruism	67
CHAPTER 3: EVIDENCE FOR THE STOIC IDEALS	72
Well-Being and Eudaimonia.....	72
Well-Being and Friendship.....	87
The Self-Sufficient Stoic.....	94
Conclusion	98
BIBLIOGRAPHY	101

INTRODUCTION

Much of the literature on friendship today makes mention of Aristotle's conception of friendship presented in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and his three types of friendship are generally used as starting points from which to further discussions on friendship. However, I think the Stoic conception of friendship is widely underrated and under-discussed, and it may offer an even better account and model of friendship than Aristotle. Both Aristotle and the Stoics discuss friendship in the general topic of *eudaimonia*, or human flourishing, and the roles of friendship arise out of each of the philosophers' handling of the emotions in a good human life. For Aristotle, emotions are part of the harmony of the soul and in order to have a proper unity of character and act in accordance with reason, one must feel the emotions in the right way and in the right circumstances. For the Stoics, the negative, or irrational, emotions, such as anger, fear, and jealousy, should be entirely banished and only the positive emotions should be cultivated. Under such confusing conditions, the amount of emotional investment and self-disclosure in a friendship is unclear, and this gives rise for people to perhaps undervalue the contribution of the Stoics to positive friendships. Aristotle appears to better account for emotional intimacy in a relationship since emotions will play a key role in being an excellent man and therefore an excellent friend.

In this thesis, my aim is to raise a few key issues concerning Aristotle's conception of friendship and ultimately argue that the Stoics offer a preferable model. In Chapter 1, I will first provide Aristotle's account of the good human life, emotion, and friendship, and then turn to the Stoics' conceptions and where they differ and align with Aristotle's. In Chapter 2, I will provide empirical studies on friendship and what prominent characteristics permeate the best friendships, termed positive, high-quality friendships. These friendships can be seen as the basis for what

should be looked for in conceptions of ideal friendships and what friendship is; philosophical discussions of friendship should be able to account for how people actually experience friendship and what they want from it. The prominent features of friendships discussed in Chapter 2 will be mutual liking, affection, equality, and altruism, since they present the main concerns with Aristotle's account. With the empirical studies as evidence for certain behaviors and psychological states that are present in good friendships, I will argue that the Stoics present a model of friendship which better captures the relevant characteristics of positive-high quality friendships.

Finally, in Chapter 3, I will cover the psychological traits found in people who have good friends. Research supports the notion that the presence of certain characteristics in a positive friendship results in a higher-quality life for people in terms of sociability, satisfaction, and happiness. If this is the case, then it indicates how one ought to live in order to live well – the question for both Aristotle and the Stoics – and also the proper role and types of friendships we ought to have. Through the empirical evidence, I will argue that the Stoic conceptions of emotion and friendship will better result in happy people with positive, high-quality friendships.

CHAPTER 1: EMOTION, FRIENDSHIP, AND THE GOOD LIFE

Eudaimonia is the Greek word for human flourishing, thriving, or happiness that is often understood by ancient philosophers as the ultimate aim of a human life.¹ Everyone desires happiness, and thus the question becomes how one ought to live in order to achieve this contented state. Generally, *eudaimonia* is a type of objective good or well-being achievable by any human who lives his life in the right way. In Ancient Greece, a few of the main positions on *eudaimonia* included the Epicureans, Aristotelians, and Stoics. The historical background is important because ancient Greece was a forum for philosophical conversations, and both the Epicureans and the Stoics offered responses to Aristotle, and in turn, they continued the conversation with each other and other major philosophical schools of thought. All three of these specific groups offer their own take on *eudaimonia* and how it ought to be achieved. While the Epicureans will not be a topic in this thesis, I will briefly mention that their stance argues that virtue is merely instrumental to achieving happiness, and the key aspects of happiness are felt pleasure and the absence of pain. This view is commonly attacked as leading to hedonism or being too subjective, whereas with *eudaimonia*, we are looking for something objective and applicable to all people as a way to live.

The Stoics are on the other end of the spectrum, claiming that virtue is happiness and the only requirement for *eudaimonia* is being virtuous; all other goods are “indifferents.” More on the Stoics will be discussed further on in Chapter 1. In the middle of the spectrum is Aristotle and also Plato, although he will not be discussed here; Aristotle argues that the virtues are partly constitutive of happiness and they are desirable both for their own sake as well as for the sake of

¹ Gregory Vlastos, “Happiness and Virtue in Socrates’ Moral Theory,” in *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher* (Cambridge Univ. Press: 1991), 203.

happiness.² In order to achieve happiness, there are many parts which contribute, such as virtue, wealth, health, beauty, friends, and fame, and while happiness is always chosen for its own sake, other aspects are chosen for their own sakes and for happiness – such as the virtues and friends.³

For Aristotle, the virtues, such as temperance, courage, justice, and moderation, are rational, emotional, and social skills which must be habituated and put into action in order for a man to properly flourish. Virtues cause “its possessor to be in a good state and to perform their functions well.”⁴ In order to achieve true happiness, however, not only virtues will suffice, and there are a myriad of other external goods which are required for happiness: friendship, pleasure, honor, and wealth.⁵ These contingent goods will supplement the life of an excellent man when his internal states (rationality, emotion, and social behavior) are also unified. In order for a man to be happy, he must employ proper deliberation, feel the emotions in the right way and at the right time, and also engage with his fellow humans in accordance with his virtuous character.

In this section, I will discuss the Aristotelian conception of the role of emotions in living the good life. The emotions are part of the human life and must be acted on and felt in the right ways, and once we have an understanding of a well-adjusted mind, we can see how this person will act in a friendship, which will come out in later sections.

To begin Aristotle’s take on emotion, I will discuss the proper practice of reasoning and deliberation since these are necessarily in use when feeling proper emotions; if a man cannot properly reason, then he cannot know what he ought to feel under what circumstances. The most important part of man for Aristotle is the rational aspect, and when it is in control, a man can reason practically and make the right decisions. In order to properly make the right choices, a

² Vlastos, *Socrates*, 204.

³ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Indianapolis : Hackett Publishing Co., 1985), 1106a17.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1099a31-b6.

man must habituate his character through the right activities. A man must, in order to have the proper habituation, understand his own nature and actualize his capacities through activities. Not every man is born exactly the same and characters and natures vary; however, once a man understands his own type, he can know within what direction to work and what kind of tempering his character needs in order to be the virtuous, happy man he desires. What any man can do, regardless of position and the fortune he is already born with, is make choices about how to act.

Action is key for Aristotle, as he claims that virtue and happiness are both activities; they are achieved and maintained through action.⁶ Again, we can see the importance of reason in being able to act because only through reasoning can one make an educated and practical choice about how to act. One may decide to act poorly if one does not have a properly habituated character or if he listens to his passions which harken to commit vice. In order to avoid actions which include vice, man must partake in excellent and virtuous activity in order to ground the virtuous habits and states which will be conducive to a virtuous life. Thus, we can recognize the first aspect of happiness as proper deliberation and practical reasoning which allows a man to act virtuously. It is only through proper upbringing and reflection that a man can properly utilize reason to ascertain the right course of action. However, as happiness is not equal to virtue, if one is lacking in any of the constitutive goods, such as wealth, power, friendship, beauty, or fame, then *eudaimonia* may be out of reach. This is because virtuous activity, for Aristotle, is most accessible when other aspects of life are in place. Outside forces can have an effect on a man's reasoning skills and what he desires. For example, if he lacks money, he may act basely in order to procure it, or if he lacks friends, perhaps he will not have the opportunities to act in virtuous ways or contemplate proper action. Lacking in any of the contingent goods can effect a man's

⁶ Vlastos, *Socrates*, 203.

happiness because it can disrupt his proper reasoning about what is good and also diminishes his total happiness because happiness is constitutive and cannot exist with merely virtuous activity.

These ideas of constitutive happiness are further seen in that even if a man begins with all the proper external goods and cultivates all aspects of his soul, he can lose his happiness if a grand misfortune befalls him.⁷ If he suddenly loses his fortune, or falls deathly ill, he can no longer be called happy because pieces of it are missing. In a sense, there is an aspect of luck which determines who can achieve *eudaimonia* on the Aristotelian account, since not everyone is born into the same circumstances and misfortunes can befall anyone.

In addition to our rationality and practical decision making, humans are also emotional. When speaking of the emotions, Aristotle uses the term *pathos* and emotions arise as passive responses to external circumstances or objects.⁸ *Pathos* is likened to sensations in that they are associated with pain and pleasure, and as such, can have an effect on our judgments about what to believe, as well as how to act. Aristotle's notions on emotion have been likened to the appraisal theory of emotions, wherein they are states that make the mind inclined to think one thing rather than another.⁹ Emotions, most generally, fall into desires or appetites, and these are the motivations for action. *Pathos*, then, is a human capacity which can be actualized in response to an external cause and can move us to respond with an action. Properly developing our emotional responses is an important part of the good life since these will motivate our virtuous activities and can also lead us astray if they are not in line. In order for emotions to be malleable, another part of man must be in charge, and this is rationality. Since rationality is the best part of the soul and the one which is in charge in the excellent man, *pathos* is susceptible to rational

⁷ Aristotle, *NE*, 1100b25-1101a10.

⁸ David Konstan, *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature* (Toronto: University Press, 2006), 4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 34

influence, and while we may respond in a certain way, we can choose how to act; in addition, we can recognize the emotion we are feeling and decide *to* act on it, given the circumstances.

However, we cannot directly choose what emotion to feel which is why they must be properly habituated to feel a certain way in certain circumstances.

In this way, the emotions are characterized by two major attributes: every *pathos* is “accompanied by pain and pleasure” and all *pathê* are “those things on account of which people change and differ in regard to their judgments.”¹⁰ *Pathê* are sensations which have an effect on judgments, as evidenced through their ability to influence belief and, when a strong emotion is present, aide in the persistence of a certain belief. Because of these effects, the emotions have cognitive aspects and invade our lives and judgments, making them important and relevant in decisions. In order to make right decisions, the virtuous man will, under certain circumstances, feel the right emotions in the right amount, and he begins to understand what this medium is through habituation and repeated practice. These aspects of *pathê* are a key difference between Aristotle and the Stoics, and the ways in which these play a role in the well-being of a person will have implications for how one lives and how well they can be a good friend. More on *pathê* and their roles in judgment, well-being, and friendship will be discussed in Chapter 3, where I cover the type of person who creates and maintains good friendships.

Returning to Aristotle, he lists the emotions in the *Nicomachean Ethics* as appetite, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, love, hatred, longing, emulation, and pity.¹¹ Since Aristotle claims that the emotions ought to be felt in the right way, at the right time, and to the right extent, all emotions are not weighted equally, and like much else in Aristotle, the best kind of emotion will

¹⁰ Konstan, *Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 27.

¹¹ Aristotle, *NE*, 1105b21.

be “the intermediate between excess and deficiency.”¹² For example, the mean between fear and confidence is bravery.¹³ The mean in emotion, then, will be the virtue associated with it; temperance arises as the mean between pain and pleasure, and generosity arises as the mean between wastefulness and ungenerosity. However, not all mean emotions are virtues, and some are instead fleeting feelings of a virtuous person; one such example is shame.¹⁴ Shame is not a consistent or stable feeling present in a virtuous person, but instead arises when the virtuous person recognizes a wrong he did. Thus, it arises in a virtuous person in order to correct action, but a complete person should not feel shame constantly as that would indicate they are acting wrongly consistently, which an excellent person would not do. In addition to emotions which are not means, there are also some emotions which should *not* be felt at all by a virtuous man; such feelings are envy, spite, murderous intent, and thievery.¹⁵ These states are always vices and ought not to be indulged to any degree by an excellent man.

Because of their influence on right action, the *pathê* must be morally significant. Only a person who feels them properly will be able to act virtuously, i.e. in accordance with the mean of their emotions, and thus the emotions have an important role to play in the good life. *Pathê* are fixtures of the self, a natural and essential feature of being human, but they must be felt in the right degree and to the right proportion. Sometimes, then, we should only feel a little anger and other times we should feel much anger; it will depend on the situation, who has slighted us, and how we ought to respond. We can only know this, though, if we can properly deliberate and decide on the right course of action. Rationality and emotion are tied together in the good human life, and a lack on either end will result in improper action and therefore unhappiness. In addition,

¹² Aristotle, *NE*, 1106a29.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1107b1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1108a31.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1107a5-25.

an excess of emotion, or allowing the passions to rule our soul, is misguided, as reason is the proper governor of the soul. In this way, there is an aspect of *phronesis*, or practical reasoning, to the *pathê*, and when they work in accordance together, with neither in excess, we can properly decide on the virtuous actions. Thus, with the relation between rationality and emotion, a man can live virtuously and well in the good life.

We can see rationality and emotions merge in the third aspect of human nature, sociality, because in order for a human to be excellent, virtuous, and complete, he must act properly in regard to his fellow man. The way in which rationality and emotions merge can best be understood through Aristotle's conception of friendship, as friends are the most important contingent good in *eudaimonia*. In Books VIII and IX of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle answers the question of what it takes to have proper conduct with others. He begins by presenting three various conceptions of friendship, although he terms the first two as incomplete and not the type which will emerge between excellent people. The incomplete types are found between base people who are after utility or pleasure, while the complete type is for men with excellence of character, in that they act in line with the good and therefore form friends with those possessing similar virtues. However, to get to this third form of friendship, Aristotle says that the excellent man will love the friend as "another self," and this is an extension of the self-love the excellent man has toward himself. Initially, this claim may pose a problem for Aristotle since it sounds like an egoist: if everything relates back to the self and the self is what comes before anything else, a person will first and foremost always do what is best for him and may not properly consider others, even their friends. If this is the case, then a man may not treat others properly and not have the right affect found in friendship. Another issue may be that in an

excellent friendship, it is more of an admiration for the good in another, rather than a true love toward the unique personality of the other, which generally grounds most friendships.

On the other hand, many scholars argue that Aristotle's notion of friendship is actually altruistic and that the excellent friendship can maintain intimacy and even aide the friends in becoming even more excellent people through the appreciation and love of the other.¹⁶ These issues will be discussed further in the upcoming sections on friendship, as well as in Chapter 2, when they get juxtaposed with modern conceptions of good friendships and whether Aristotle's ideas, or the Stoics, better capture the characteristics of positive, high-quality friendships. Before that, I will begin by outlining the Aristotelian notion of friendship, and then investigate into whether it is more egoistic or altruistic and raise concerns over the type of love one friend will have for the other.

Aristotelian Friendship

For Aristotle, friends are a necessary contingent good for achieving happiness. An excellent man, by living in accordance with his reason and proper affect, recognizes this necessity; he sees that, through his friends, he can better understand what virtues to live by, how to conduct proper action, and when to feel certain emotions. Essentially, the best way to contemplate proper action is through the observance of others, since we are better able to recognize when other people act wrongly or rightly than when we do. Because of this, there must be other people in the virtuous man's life so he can better understand how he ought to live, and when he does so, he still keeps others in his life in order to continue practicing his virtues through having opportunities to showcase them and benefit his friends. If these friends are also virtuous and pursuing the same goals in life, the excellent man, along with his friends, will flourish and become even more excellent people. Some key aspects to friendship for Aristotle are

¹⁶ Julia Annas, "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism," *Mind* 86, no. 344 (1977): 544.

equality, similarity, reciprocity, virtue, and good will. However, not all types of friendships will have all these aspects, and Aristotle differentiates between incomplete and complete friendships, with the complete friendship saved only for virtuous people. I will first describe the incomplete friendships to show where they are lacking in comparison with the excellent friendship, and these lower types also have relevance to modern research on friendships, as they have a role to play in a person's well-being, and will be discussed in Chapter 2.

The first form of friendship Aristotle discusses is that of utility, and these arise when one or both parties are benefiting something from the other. The friend is liked insofar as he is providing some service or gift to the other. These types of friendships are easily dissolved, since once the usefulness ends, the basis of the friendship is also gone. Friendship of utility generally arises between unequals, where one friend is superior to the other.¹⁷ An example of these types of unequal friendships can be seen in politics, where one has power and prestige, while the other is lacking in wealth and success; they form a friendship in order for (1) the superior man to give to the lesser, and (2) the lower friend will receive gifts and benefits from the superior in order to be happier. In such a relationship, there must be the right proportion of benefits and equality, so that the inferior is balancing out the superior's weight and providing more to keep the superior from abandoning him.¹⁸ By being loved, the superior may gain honor (since he is aiding the community), and by being beloved, the inferior gains money or other profit. Friendship in utility will have many advantages, as it is strongly political and corresponds to the worth in each friend; the more worth you have in that society, the more you will benefit.¹⁹

However, as this type of friendship has such a weak base, it is also prone to slander, distrust, and conflict. In the unequal utility friendship, it is difficult to even out the gains of each

¹⁷ Aristotle, *NE*, 1158b25, 1159b12

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1158b26-9.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1159b30.

party so that the friendship can be equal. If the proper balance isn't found, conflict and accusations may arise.²⁰ One way in which a conflict will arise is if either side of the party does not receive what he thought he would. In this case, the explicit conditions of the friendship were broken and one of the friends is now a cheat or a liar. Another way argument arises is if one member gives a gift, but then does not receive anything in return. In this case, the disgruntled friend will get angry and cause an argument.²¹ If these cannot be resolved, then the friendship will dissolve since a key component of friendship – equality – cannot be maintained. If you want to salvage the relationship, though, Aristotle recommends we make a fair return for every benefit received in order to ensure equal friendships, but since it is too exacting, it remains base. Like elsewhere, Aristotle is keen on moderation or equality in a person's life and in his relations with others. This may pose problems for him later, since such equality and moderation is difficult to calculate and therefore may be an impossible task; it is also unclear whether such calculations are even a part of friendship or if they even *are* friendships. If this is the case, then Aristotle's treatment of friendship, as well as emotions, may need to be reevaluated in order to be more practical.

Next, I will explicate the other incomplete form of friendship, pleasure. According to Aristotle, pleasure is neither good nor bad, but it is a positive aspect which accompanies an unimpeded activity. Pleasure should not be sought for its own sake, but it will naturally result as a by-product when one engages in an enjoyable activity. However, in friendships of pleasure, the friend's company is merely sought for the pleasure derived, thus making it an incomplete friendship, since the friend should be sought for his own sake and not for pleasure itself. Like utility friendships, friendships of pleasure are easily dissolved if either party is no longer

²⁰ Aristotle, *NE*, 1162b5.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1164a1-5.

receiving pleasure. Since the ground for friendship was the pleasure, then once it is gone, so is the reason for friendship. In these types of friendship, too, each friend may have dissimilar aims; one may enter the friendship for pleasure and the other may enter it for utility.²² Since neither friend is of like-mind, this is evidence for their dissimilarities as well as their base nature, as they are pursuing another for aims outside of the good. Thus, their friendship can never last, since one will eventually expect a benefit and then not receive it. When this happens, as we have seen, the friendship is dissolved.

In friendships of pleasure, however, there are fewer accusations than the friendships of utility since the people involved generally only meet for what is pleasant and are thereby generally in a happy state.²³ Since pleasure arises from doing activities, the friends share in more activities together and create a stronger bond than people in a friendship of utility. Because of the stronger bond, they are more enduring than friendships of utility and also include levels of intimacy and closeness not present in the ones based on utility. With intimacy comes more time spent together, the possibility of living together, and an overall stronger attraction because of the pleasure derived from interactions. Because of these attributes, friendships of pleasure may also lead to excellent friendships because there is a stronger connection between the two people, and if they both become virtuous, then their incomplete friendship can blossom into a complete one. These friendships also generally occur between young people as they pursue what is pleasant and their emotions are prone to change; yet this also makes their relationships fragile and quick to be broken.²⁴ Friendships of pleasure, then, while having higher levels of intimacy and attraction than friendships of utility still fall short of the virtuous friendships since they do not love the friend for his own sake and can lack moral character.

²² Aristotle, *NE*, 1162b25.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1162b13.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1156a32-5.

The epitome of friendships, then, and the one toward which we should all aim, is the complete friendship, the one of virtue. Complete friendships are formed from goodness and the characters of excellent people who perform actions in line with their rationality and moderate emotions; they pursue goals simply out of desiring the good for its own sake and will not undertake something for gain or profit, of either utility or pleasure. The two people involved in the relationship are similar in that they both are virtuous and they wish good to the other for the friend's own sake.²⁵ Because it is based on goodness and virtue, the relation is stable and enduring, and the friends feel confidence and trust in the other.²⁶ The trust and love found in friendship are considered virtues, and Aristotle discusses these virtues found between people in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The first virtue is friendliness in social intercourse, as it is the intermediate state between being ingratiating and cantankerous.²⁷ While Aristotle says this particular virtue between like-minded, excellent people is nameless, it is akin to the kindness one friend feels for another. Yet this virtue is not saved for special feelings toward friends, family, or enemies, but can be felt toward all mankind. This type of kindness and goodwill, though, is essential to any friendship as someone must be magnanimous to other people, particularly those he likes and who reciprocates such feelings; it has to do with his pleasure nature and mannerisms, which will draw people to him and allow him to make friends in the first place. The other virtue Aristotle mentions in social interactions is truthfulness.²⁸ This person will not be boastful or self-deprecating, but will be straightforward and honest; honest in the way that what he says aligns with what he does – he is a man of his word and is not acting nor befriending for an ulterior purpose. The person he befriends knows that the way he appears is the way he actually is and

²⁵ Aristotle, *NE*, 1156b7-10.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1156b27.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1126b15.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1127a20-1127b5.

therefore knows that the friendship is grounded in truth and not in lies; he can therefore create a more intimate bond since he knows the breadth of the man's character.

With these virtues discussed, one can see how the friendships of utility and pleasure are only between base people; they lack the virtues of kindness and truthfulness. They are entering the friendship for ulterior motives and cannot ultimately be trusted with important matters and cannot partake in virtuous activity as they lack the virtues themselves. While they may have goodwill in their friendships to the extent that they want the other to do well *only so they can continue benefiting*, such friendships do not arise from goodwill, as true goodwill wishes the good for the other's sake, and not for any ulterior motive. In virtuous friendships, the friends love the friend for his own sake and also because he contributes to their own happiness; they are also benefitting and part of their love is constituted by this. However, it is not instrumental like the utility friendships because, just as we saw how virtues are sought both for their own sake and for the sake of happiness, the friend is loved for his own sake *and* because of the benefits received. These are constitutive aspects of the friendship, just as there are constitutive aspects of happiness. However, the instrumental values found in friendships of utility and pleasure are base in nature because that is the reason the friendship is created and maintained, and within such friendships, there is a lack of virtues, such as kindness and truthfulness, and without such aspects, the incomplete friendships will never be complete.

While the lower friendships lack virtue, complete friendship has both aspects of utility and pleasure, but they are byproducts of the friendship rather than the motivation or the end. Because the people involved are not after an ulterior motive and value the other for his sake, these relations are immune to slander and distrust.²⁹ In order to build trust and intimacy, the friends partake in activities together, live together, and such virtuous activities are necessary as

²⁹ Aristotle, *NE*, 1157a17-25.

“solitude fits them least of all.”³⁰ Since they spend much time together and further the others excellent, rational nature, the best friendship requires similarity, equality, and contemplative activities. The virtuous friendship is not merely a feeling, but is a state wherein each party member finds enjoyment in the other’s character, which is the ground of all their actions and choices. Aristotle calls it a state because decision is necessary in reciprocal loving.³¹ One must decide that the other is good, recognize that the feeling of love is mutual, and then welcome such a state wherein he recognizes the other for his own sake. In such a friendship, we can recognize the aspects of rationality and emotion in this practical deliberation and feeling of love. A virtuous friendship will be reciprocal and equal, in that the love given and received is the same, and both members are virtuous and treat each other with kindness and trust.

Since the friendship arose out of mutual love between good people, it will be the most enduring type of friendship.³² Such love, too, is choiceworthy in itself (as are the other virtues), and loving another is a substantial source of pleasure for the virtuous man, as well.³³ He will have someone to share his joys and successes with, and there will be many activities they can partake in together when such success is present. The friend, too, as he is similar, will have successes and joys in his virtuous and happy life, and thus they are equal and worthy of each other. In this way, an excellent man will see the worth in the other, just as he sees the worth in himself, and recognize the virtue that arises from such love. As Aristotle claims, loving is the virtue of friends.³⁴

³⁰ Aristotle, *NE*, 1127b21.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1158a30.

³² *Ibid.*, 1156b18.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1159a25.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1159a28.

Because loving is central – not being loved – it is finer to benefit friends as it is our nature to live together with others.³⁵ Since happiness is an activity, if a good person finds other good people to be around, then they can more easily be virtuous together, as even friendship is a virtue.³⁶ As aforementioned, Aristotle says happiness and virtue are activities, and if friends are to be virtuous together, they must perform virtuous actions that actualize their capacities as excellent people. In addition to being virtuous, an excellent friendship will have reciprocal goodwill, as goodwill is the basis of friendship.³⁷ In goodwill, the person feeling it has a sense of affection toward the other and wishes this other person well. However, if this feeling is not reciprocated, then it cannot properly be called friendship, as any form of shared feelings or shared activities is absent. Because of the virtue, joy, and affection present in the excellent friendship, Aristotle calls friends the greatest external good.³⁸ An excellent person needs others to benefit, to share pleasures with, to contemplate and increase their own reasoning capacities, and to love. In order to live in accordance with human nature and live happily and well, one must be rational, emotional, and social and it is therefore necessary to live together with other excellent people to be truly happy and virtuous. In this way, friendship provides pleasure, is virtuous, realizes human capacities, and is needed for self-sufficiency.³⁹

Only virtuous people, then, can have complete friendships which are stable and consistent because only they wish good to their selves, wish to live well, enjoy spending time alone, and are willing to share their distresses and pleasures with the other friend. Before one can embark on sharing all this, though, the virtuous person must first love himself. For Aristotle, friendship is taking the love one has for oneself and seeing those same attributes in another in order to love

³⁵ Aristotle, *NE*, 1169b13, 19.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1169b30-1170a4.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1167a8-11.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1169a25.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1170b12-19.

him as another self. A decent person acts for the fine, acts for his friend's sake, and may disregard his own good, but he should also love himself most of all. This self-love, though, is not base or purely self-interested, but is instead recognition of one's own self as having achieved the highest human good and living with complete happiness – he has full rational control in his deliberations, can make proper decisions, and also feels the emotions in the right way. He understands himself and how to live because he follows his human nature and therefore practices virtuous action.⁴⁰ In his virtuous action, he only seeks what is good and these goods benefit himself and others. Once he has achieved his own unity of the soul, he can recognize and befriend others like himself, which will enable him to continue living well and in virtuous activities; also, bringing others into his virtuous life is the only way to make it complete, as without others, he will continuously lack the social interaction necessary to living in accordance with human nature. After all, humans are rational, emotional, and *social* creatures, and making friends, after honing one's virtues, is the next necessary step in achieving *eudaimonia*. However, if happiness is so dependent upon outside, uncontrollable factors, the good life for Aristotle may be fragile, and fragility may not be what we want from a *eudaimonistic* account of the good life.

Another possible issue for Aristotle may be that the virtuous person is still self-interested and befriending others is a byproduct, not an end, of living well. If that is the case, then the friends the virtuous person makes will be byproducts, not ends or good in themselves, as they are simply another necessary aspect of the virtuous life and as such, are means to an end – the good life. If this is the case, then the friend becomes purely instrumental in the virtuous man's life, and as we saw, this cannot be the case as only incomplete friendships are purely instrumental, not complete ones. The excellent man, according to Aristotle, awards himself, and not anyone else –

⁴⁰ Aristotle, *NE*, 1168b30-35.

not even his friends – what is most fine, and putting oneself before anyone else is not a good instantiation of loving the friend for his own sake. More on this issue will be discussed in Chapter 2, when I bring up the altruism necessary to friendship, and whether Aristotle can actually achieve this or not.

To conclude this section on Aristotle, complete friendships are the best kinds of friendships, and it is even debatable whether, or to what degree, the incomplete “friendships” deserve the name. If a true friendship must have good will, affection, kindness, and trust, it seems as though only the complete friendships can capture that since only there do we find active and unselfish benevolence. These are the finest and pleasantest friendships and require effort and continued virtuous activities. In contrast, base people will merely create and maintain friendships of utility or pleasure as they lack virtue, are prone to conflict, lack goodwill, and merely seek some profit; such a relation does not seem to capture friendship, even in common conceptions. This may be an issue because even though Aristotle presents various kinds of friendships, which do seem to be the case, these “lower” friendships can even present some high-qualities that Aristotle ignores.

As Aristotle claims, “the friendship of base people turns out to be vicious. For they are unstable, and share base pursuits, and by becoming similar to each other, they grow vicious. But the friendship of decent people is decent, and increases the more often they meet. And they seem to become still better from their activities and their mutual correction.”⁴¹ Thus, while Aristotle does support self-love and loving another as another self, he does appear to try and capture the intimacy, affection, and kindness found in positive friendships present in the good life. Whether these concepts hold will be the topic of Chapter 2, and for now, I turn to the Stoic conceptions of

⁴¹ Aristotle, *NE*, 1172a8-10.

emotion and friendship in the good life and see where they align and diverge from the Aristotelian notions.

Human Nature and the Self in Stoicism

For the Stoic, their conception of the good is that man ought to live in accordance with nature. Part of human nature is that we are rational and social animals, which is akin to Aristotle, but their treatment of the emotions is different. Instead of treating the “intermediate between excess and deficiency” as virtue, the Stoics argue that all negative emotions ought to be banished while only the good ones are cultivated, and these good ones are the virtues to be sought in life. Only when a man is living in accordance with his rational and social side is he following nature, and the proper emotions, then, will be rational and social. The only rational emotions are positive ones which are appropriate to the situation, and if one is to live in accordance with nature, he must be virtuous and be good since those are rational. More on discerning which emotions are rational will be discussed later in this section.

According to the Stoics, all of nature and the universe is divine; it is organized and follows a logical coherent system. Nature is good, and it is because of these reasons that it is to be accepted and followed according to whatever happens to us or those around us. While we may not always *like* what happens to us because we (mistakenly) view it as bad, it is never bad because it has occurred in nature, and nature, considered as a coherent, logical whole, is good. Thus, when we get angry because our house was robbed, we should instead recognize this as part of our fate, as part of nature, and not feel anger because the event is not actually bad as we believe it to be. More on appropriation of good and bad will be said further on. What is important here is to note the difference between how Aristotle and the Stoics set up what is good: Aristotle does so through determining what the end is, which is happiness, and the Stoics use nature to

proclaim what is good. For humans, the starting point of our actions is impulse, and these impulses are also natural, and therefore good. The Stoics use the Greek term *hormai* to discuss the impulses or action tendencies.⁴² *Hormai* is the mental state which initiates action, and when we act, this shows that we have assented to that action. While it is the body which reacts to events, the action is molded through the intentional characteristics of our psyches; what we consistently do, we have in the past consistently assented to, and these actions all arose through impulses and our assent to following these impulses. Still we can alter our psyches and therefore change how we act and in what way we respond to events. Oftentimes, these impulses and actions have been distorted through mistaken evaluations and therefore need to be corrected; the most mistaken actions often arise from irrational emotions, which are excessive impulses. More will be said on emotion later, but the impulses which are natural are those which are rational and social, and because of this, the goodness of impulses will depend on what actions we pursue with them once they have been habituated. Natural human impulses can and should be cultivated by the Stoic sage.

One of the natural impulses that bears importance here is the kindly impulses and friendly feelings toward others. The beginning of this natural impulse is understood through the kindly impulse we feel towards ourselves, and we can begin to learn how to properly treat others through the practice of self-reflection, self-mediation, and self-discussion. The extension of one's care of one's self to others is *oikeiosis*. If one can properly understand the self and how to live well, then we can extend this self-care towards others because we recognize that we are part of a whole – nature – and in order to live well within this whole, we must engage well and kindly with others since they, too, are part of nature. *Oikeiosis* begins with care for ourselves, and then

⁴² Margaret Graver, *Stoicism and Emotion*, (Chicago: University Press, 2007), 26.

it extends to our family, our friends, our community, and then the entirety of the human race. On the one hand, then, the Stoics value love and benevolence for all.

Another key part of their philosophy, which may conflict with these altruistic ideas, is self-sufficiency. Similar to Aristotle, the Stoics place heavy importance on self-sufficiency, although it is probably more properly termed here as self-reliance. As one Stoic, Cicero, states, “Your entire well-being depends upon yourself and yourself alone.”⁴³ To make such a strong claim for self-sufficiency while also valuing care for others is problematic for the Stoics. My defense for their claims will come to light in Chapter 2 and 3, and here, I will compare these claims with Aristotle. Unlike Aristotle, the Stoics do not think that there are contingent, external goods which are required for happiness; instead, it is up to the self to cultivate a good character and gain knowledge about what is truly good and bad, good indicating fulfillment of happiness and bad indicating the downward spiral to unhappiness. For the Stoics, the only thing necessary to happiness is being virtuous; the only thing really bad are the vices. Here we can see a stark contrast between Aristotle and the Stoics, since Aristotle recognizes multitudinous goods which can lead to happiness while the Stoics claim all those extra things – such as fame, friends, wealth, health, etc. – are merely preferred indifferents, meaning that people have certain preferences for one thing over another, but whether this preference is actually fulfilled is indifferent to whether one achieves happiness. The only thing truly necessary for a good human life is virtue. Thus, when the Stoics speak of knowledge, they speak of this distinction between what is really good – the virtues – and what only appears as good, but is really an indifferent – eating good food, having many friends, having a healthy body, and having a lot of money. In order to discover this distinction and thereby gain knowledge, one only needs one’s self; their form of self-sufficiency, then, turns on only needing the self, which habituates and learns the virtues, in order to be happy.

⁴³ Cicero, “On Friendship,” in *On the Good Life* (London : Penguin Books, 1971), 179.

For Aristotle, as we have seen, there are many other contingent goods which are required for happiness.

Part of the recognition of what is good and bad is the Stoic notion of “appropriation,” which is the “awareness that our nature shapes our needs and our responses to the world, in terms of both self-preservation and reaching out to others. Appropriation is the Stoic version of the self’s reflexive relationship with itself.”⁴⁴ Appropriation is evaluating a state of affairs and determining whether the thing is to be avoided or elevated, whether the thing is good, bad, or indifferent. The Stoics believe that there are facts about what is good or bad, that our beliefs are amenable to rational assessment, and that all externalities are indifferent, neither good nor bad.⁴⁵ Good things are to be pursued, bad things are to be avoided, and indifferents are simply affairs that will not affect our happiness; indifferents are not things which we should feel indifferent toward, but rather their existence will neither make us happy nor unhappy. Indifferents, then, are important in terms of how they are used because they are conduits for action.⁴⁶ In order for something to be good, it must be beneficial on every occasion, and since external goods are *not* always beneficial, they can never be good.⁴⁷ To be truly good, it must be beneficial, and have the proper rightness or fit in the order of nature, which is a logically coherent system that we are all a part of.

When we pursue knowledge, we must categorize our various motivations and beliefs according to their “appropriate” natures. Often, we treat what is indifferent as actually good or bad, and in doing so, we make a mistake and must learn to correct our beliefs and have the proper motivations. The only thing which is really good is virtue and the only thing which is

⁴⁴ Gretchen Reydam-Schils, *Roman Stoics*, (Chicago: University Press, 2005), 26.

⁴⁵ Tad Brennan, *The Stoic Life* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2005), 89.

⁴⁶ Graver, *Stoicism*, 48.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

really evil is vice; all other things are indifferents, meaning they will neither make you ultimately happy nor ultimately unhappy.⁴⁸ Epictetus claims we can understand this distinction through the dichotomy of control. We should recognize and distinguish between those things which are in our control and outside our control; virtue and vice are both within our control, as they arise from habituations and choices we make, whereas indifferent cannot be good or bad as we do not have control over them and they simply act upon us. Learning to differentiate between the two is the path to knowledge and only by undertaking this path can one ever hope to attain virtue and therefore happiness.

One of the kinds of motivations that must be relegated by rationality and appropriation are the emotions. The Stoics, like Aristotle, use *pathos* to refer to the emotions, and as briefly aforementioned, emotions are excessive impulses; they are judgments about an external state of affairs. We can make decisions about our judgments, and whether certain circumstances ought to elicit certain feelings within us. The emotions are very intellectual and cognitive in that we can reason about what we ought to feel and whether we have made the proper judgment about something. A Stoic sage, once he has judged properly and made the right evaluation, will see that some emotions are irrational because they are all excessive, overpowering, and unrelated to what is truly good or bad. They come to this conclusion because, like Aristotle, they note that the emotions are generally aroused from some outside source and also directed toward some outside source. Because these irrational emotions are geared toward something external and therefore outside our control, when they arise, they are false opinions and not knowledge. We are not recognizing something as it actually is and are mistakenly viewing it as something which will further our happiness, but in reality, it will not since they are outside our control and irrelevant to virtue or vice.

⁴⁸ Brennan, *Stoic Life*, 96.

To show how irrational emotions are mistaken, the Stoics discuss four different types of false opinions and why they are irrational. These are the emotions which ought to be banished:

- (1) Desire: “the opinion that some future thing is a good of such a sort that we should reach out for it”;
- (2) Fear: “the opinion that some future thing is an evil of such a sort that we should avoid it”;
- (3) Pleasure: “the opinion that some present thing is a good of such a sort that we should be elated by it”; and
- (4) Pain: “the opinion that some present thing is an evil of such a sort that we should be depressed about it.”⁴⁹

These are all irrational because they mistakenly claim something as good or bad when they are not. Because of this, the Stoics argue to ban them by using the term *apatheia*, no emotions. We should not seek something from desire, fear, pleasure, or pain, because these emotions are not actually good and will not make us ultimately happy. However, the Stoics do not jump to make the claim that people should never feel anything, but rather claim that we should make the proper evaluations of good and bad things, and when we do so, these will be *rational* emotions. Rational emotions are eupathetic responses and are true beliefs about something being good or bad, and these eupathetic, or affective, responses are capable of capturing every feeling a human being can have which is good, or conducive to, his happiness. This is because these feelings are still impulses and are therefore part of nature. They can, and should, be felt. The rational emotions, or motivations, with which we can replace the irrational ones, are:

- (1) Volition: “the knowledge that some future thing is a good of such a sort that we should reach out for it”;
- (2) Caution: “the knowledge that some future thing is a bad thing of such a sort that we should avoid it”;
- (3) Joy: “the knowledge that some present thing is a good of such a sort that we should be elated by it.”⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Brennan, *Stoic Life*, 93.

We can still have proper emotions, be motivated to act, and pursue things which are good and avoid those which are bad on the Stoic account. Whereas Aristotle claimed that we simply must feel the right emotions in the right way, the Stoics claim that irrational emotions are only conducive to dissatisfaction, and only natural, affective, and rational emotions are the types to bring about happiness; the emotions on the Stoic account are more restrictive than Aristotle's because of the two different categories, and for the Stoics, it is not about finding the intermediate between excess and deficiency. Instead, they are concerned with having proper knowledge about what is good and bad and making the proper judgments about external situations and internal states, and through doing so, feel the proper responses and be happy. Oftentimes, the external states of affairs are not cause for the inner distress we feel and we have made a mistaken judgment. Instead of trying to fight nature, we should accept what befalls us, whether it be misfortune or fortune, and only concern ourselves with our own opinions, attitudes, and impulses. We should not feel excess fear or sadness from external circumstances, but should instead habituate ourselves to feel joy and become resilient toward outside factors.

Some rational emotions which fall under joy would be affection, kindness, honesty, and magnanimity.⁵¹ Having these rational emotions in abundance will lead to joy because they are the "very expression of the correct use of reason."⁵² When we understand this in terms of other people, the Stoics, as they recognize their social duties to others because they have knowledge about what is good and bad, can form intimate relations with others because to be social is in their nature, and following nature is the ultimate good. In his relation with others, not even only to friends, but to *all* humans, the Stoic will show kindness and care simply in virtue of them

⁵⁰ Brennan, *Stoic Life*, 98.

⁵¹ Reydams-Schils, *Roman Stoics*, 49.

⁵² *Ibid.*

being fellow humans – they are part of nature – and sharing in the same human experience of living in the world.

When we banish the irrational emotions and flourish in rational emotions, i.e. eupathetic feelings, we will be free of distress, fear, exuberance, and desire, where distress and exuberance concern our beliefs about whether something is presently good or evil, and fear and desire involve those same beliefs, only geared toward the future.⁵³ These negative emotions are banished because they are against human nature: they are irrational and antisocial. For example, take distress. Distress may arise when a loved one passes away. According to the Stoics, we should be prepared for this loss and not grieve over it, as people are impermanent and it is a part of life. To show distress over it is a mistaken evaluation of this external circumstance being bad – meaning it will decrease our happiness in the long run. This ought not to be the case, since all humans are mortal and will pass away, and our own happiness is not dependent upon everyone living forever, since that would be against nature and even unwanted. Whenever distress arises, some belief of ours is probably misguided and we need to correct our views and understanding of it in order to live joyfully.

The other negative passions can be understood in the same way as irrational emotions that arise when we have misapplied some attribute to nature, which can be neither good nor evil, but is simply what occurs. Because the Stoics believe that a rational human ought to differentiate between what we can control and what we can't control and because these negative emotions arise in response to things we *cannot* control, we have made an improper judgment about the situation deserving our fear or distress. We must recognize, instead, that nothing we do will change the fact that some perceived “bad” event happened to us. External events are neither good nor bad, since we have no voluntary control over them; we cannot control the world, the people

⁵³ Reydams-Schils, *Roman Stoics*, 49.

in it, or the misfortune which might befall us. Because of this, we should not let them affect us negatively – we should not feel anger or distress about something which we did not cause, nor can change, and in addition, feeling anger or distress will only upset our own inner peace and decrease happiness.

As we cannot control what occurs in nature, we should not distress over what happens or want more than we need, and we should not fear for things to happen in the future or want them to happen certain ways, as this will lead to distress or disappointment and disrupt our Stoic joy. Thus, we must learn to cope with some of the “evil” things that happen in life, like the loss of loved ones, or a fire burning down our home, or getting a flat tire, and instead view these events rationally – as things that simply occur in nature which we have no control over – and if we do this, then we can achieve joy and inner peace; what occurs in nature or what circumstances befall us do not control our ability to live well.

Along with these ideas in *apatheia*, there is also *eupatheia* and how we ought to cultivate positive affective responses which are in line with nature. Reconsidering the three main categories of rational emotions, wish can be considered a “well-reasoned reaching”⁵⁴ where we look toward the future and hope that we continue to only live virtuously and be happy. While these rational emotions are more calm than irrational ones, they should not be considered diminished feelings and should instead be viewed as corrected versions of human emotions.⁵⁵ Joy can be considered “well-reasoned elevation” which is directed at genuine goods which have or are occurring.⁵⁶ For example, this can be generous action, whether one’s self is being generous or is watching another engage in generosity; there is always reason to feel joy so long

⁵⁴ Graver, *Stoicism*, 52.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

as one is being virtuous, and since it is entirely up to a person whether to be virtuous or not, there is endless opportunity to be joyous. Even the potential for virtue is a cause for joy.

In these ways, the Stoics do not proclaim to banish all emotions, but rather to correct the emotions directed toward things which are neither good nor bad and to instead direct the feelings toward real goodness and badness. Emotions, then, are natural, but it is not natural to be overpowered by them⁵⁷ and to become unhappy because of any set of external events.

However, much of this discussion on self-reliant rationality and appropriation seems to leave no room for friendship or intimate relations. To answer this concern, one must recall that for the Stoics, human nature is just as social as it is rational, and for the Stoics, the self is embedded in the world. We cannot become hermits and live off by ourselves since this is antisocial, and instead we must interact with and engage in the world, which includes our relations with others as well as our relation with our self. However, human relations are prone to conflict and strife, and in order to prevent being overcome by anger or distress in our relations, we must practice considerable self-meditation in order to maintain inner tranquility. Like Aristotle, if a man is virtuous and knowledgeable, he will be stable, as he properly recognizes those things which are truly good and bad and is not under any illusions about what causes his grief. However, it might reasonably be asked how the Stoics can claim human nature is both rational *and* social since it seems that friends, as an external good, will not have a role to play in their conception of human nature. If only virtue is good and only vice is bad, then friends ought to fall to the wayside, rather than have any important role to play.

In addition, the Stoics argue for the use of “reservation” as a way to maintain inner-tranquility. “Reservation” is a kind of detachment from externalities.⁵⁸ It is this detachment that

⁵⁷ Graver, *Stoicism*, 59.

⁵⁸ Reydams-Schils, *Roman Stoics*, 29.

leads some to say that the Stoics are austere and passionless, cold and unfeeling. Even Aristotle claims that a man who does not ever feel anger or the other emotions in response to outside sources cannot be considered human.⁵⁹ If this is the case, then it is problematic how a Stoic can even form friendships or have affection for other people, which is a necessary part of their conception of human nature. As I will argue, though, the Stoics' detachment from the external world and from impermanence will not negatively affect their relationships with friends because the Stoics value altruism, genuine affection, and kindly impulses. In fact, the value of affection precludes any detachment from your friends, and even this "detachment" is not a Stoic ethical ideal, as shall be shown. While this notion will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 2, I will say for now that this detachment is a psychological state which is used in order to achieve meaningful and consistent engagement with others; it is neither full separation from others nor an end in itself. In order to further clarify and evaluate these ideas, let us look at what three different Stoics had to say on the proper creation and maintenance of a friendship.

A Stoic Conception of Friendship: Cicero, Seneca, and Epictetus

This section will mainly be concerned with the accounts presented by the Roman Stoics, namely Cicero, Seneca, and Epictetus; this is because they all explicitly provide discussions on friendship and illuminate various Stoic ideas and issues. Out of the several Stoics I will be discussing, I will turn to Cicero first, as he presents the most thorough account of friendship, and then use Seneca and Epictetus to elucidate certain Stoic points.

Cicero's account is useful since he had read Aristotle's work and explicitly responds to him on many accounts; he considers similar questions, such as how a friendship is formed, how it's maintained, and what types of people can be friends. While friendships can only be between good people, Cicero does not mean "good" as synonymous with "wise" so it is not limited to

⁵⁹ Aristotle, *NE*, 1126a5.

only the sage or the excellent man. Part of this difference turns on the Stoics' thought that any man who is not a Stoic sage, i.e. perfectly virtuous, is still vicious; sages are very rare, and recognized as such, so the Stoics wanted to make more practical advice for the everyday man and how he can still be good and work toward perfect virtuosity. In their accounts of friendship, the Stoics are speaking to these everyday men, and state that any "noble being" with a capacity for living and reciprocating affection can have an authentic friendship, and these noble feelings are found in perfectly ordinary people.⁶⁰ Similar to other Stoic writing, Cicero's conception and discussion of friendship is practical and applicable to the everyday man and a good, authentic friendship can be held by people who are viewed as good by their society; so a good person may possess qualities of kindness, generosity, honesty, and loyalty – the common conception of what most people consider to be a good person; if a man is decent, then he will pursue friendships and find them valuable.⁶¹

However, Epictetus also defines the good man, and says that in friendship, the "good must be the sole object of their attention [and] of their love."⁶² He claims this because if the object of their love is not good, then their love will be changeable, as seen when considering other external goods, such as riches, pleasures, food, and drink; we sometimes treat them as good or bad and so our attitudes and feelings for them are apt to change. If we treat our friends like these other external goods, then our love will change often. The good man, then, "identifies his interests with those of sanctity, virtue, country, parents, and friends."⁶³ Yet this is not so out of line with what Cicero says, as an ordinary, good man will not treat his friends in the same way that he treats material goods; friends, or any other people, are not instrumental. In this way, an

⁶⁰ Cicero, "On Friendship," 203, 225.

⁶¹ Ibid., 219.

⁶² Epictetus. "Of Friendship," in *Discourses and Enchiridion* (New York: Walter J. Black, 1944), 154.

⁶³ Ibid., 156.

authentic friendship is not out of reach for everyday people and is not reserved for the “excellent man” alone. However, this account maintains that friendship is only accessible to good men, as there are basic kind ways to treat other people. This is an improvement over Aristotle because while not everyone may be “excellent,” there are accepted levels of kindness in society which are necessary to friendship; being a good person is an acceptable and necessary component of having and keeping friends, and the Stoics make authentic friendship more accessible to all people, as being kind and friendly are not so rare as virtuous excellence.

First, as the Stoics lay much weight on nature and living in accordance with it is the ultimate good, authentic friendship, too, originates in nature, and as such, the proper treatment of friendship and how we ought to act are all given to us by nature.⁶⁴ Acting from our friendly impulses and therefore acting kindly are simply the natural things to do.⁶⁵ Cicero accounts for nature’s being this way on the count that “nature abhors solitude,” so it created us with dispositions to make friends, and just as nature is permanent, so too will be our friendships. This permanency is not there because we will live forever, but because we can remember the other in our memories, and as we form more friendships, we, and our relationships, live on in other people’s memories. Because nature is the originator of friendship, creating friends and treating them kindly, remembering them well, and enjoying being around others is simply part of what it means to be human. While friendship is not *necessary* to happiness, since it is an external indifferent not under our control (a title only reserved for virtue), it is still the greatest of all gifts; it is delightful, noble, and the finest equipment life can offer to help us through difficult times and share in our successes.⁶⁶ Seneca, as well, states that the wise man “seeks friends not because

⁶⁴ Cicero, “On Friendship,” 203.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 193.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 187, 201, 205.

he needs them or because he wants to be happy, but because it is natural.”⁶⁷ Within man, there are natural promptings which stem from man being a social creature who requires society for his existence.

Friendship, as a natural phenomenon, is an important part to any human life, and it is formed “from a feeling of affection, an inclination of the heart.”⁶⁸ The beginning of a friendship is in the recognition of goodness in those near us with whom we can form an intimate bond with; we are drawn to their habits and character, and when they show kind treatment in return, we then pursue a friendship. Yet we do not only recognize goodness in people around us, but also in our former enemies or in people we’ve never directly conversed with, but have only slightly been acquainted.⁶⁹ From this simple beginning of attraction and recognizing goodness in the other, we form affection, and once we have this affection, we consider the other a friend.

Because it is grounded in affection, the first major aspect of friendship is benevolence. In our relations, there must be mutual love, mutual sympathy, and mutual respect. Reciprocated love is the footwork of any relationship; mutual sympathy helps us to master the passions; and respect is the most splendid ornament of friendship because it helps us behave decently.⁷⁰ If these feelings are all reciprocated, the friends will share their concerns and goals with the others, listen well to what the other has to say, and aide the other in achieving goals (so long as they are within the moral standards and do not require anything vicious).⁷¹ Seneca, too, states that practicing friendship brings joy, since we have someone to love and benefit. According to Seneca, the purpose of making friends is to “have someone for whom I may die, whom I may

⁶⁷ Seneca, “On Philosophy and Friendship,” *Wikisource*, March 04, 2016, https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Moral_letters_to_Lucilius/Letter_9, Section 13.

⁶⁸ Cicero, “On Friendship,” 191.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 192.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 200, 221.

follow into exile, against whose death I may stake my own life, and pay the pledge, too.”⁷² The friend, to the Stoic, is someone with whom to share our lives, someone with whom we bare our souls.⁷³ Again, we see this tension between the Stoics intense focus on the internal with their desire to be social and intimate with friends. While these claims appear to conflict with the Stoic stance on emotions, I shall argue in Chapter 2 that they are more intimate, loving, and affectionate than is given their due.

Another major foundation, along with benevolence, is trust.⁷⁴ Each party must trust the other with his cares and goals, as well as trust him not to suggest partaking in vicious acts. There is trust that the other will help him when he is in need, and that the friendship is serious, steadfast, and reliable.⁷⁵ If trust is absent, then the friends cannot flourish properly together as they will not feel comfortable sharing ideas or concerns. Another important attribute is that good friends will share the same interests. They will be close companions who go through life together, treat each other congenially, and also be straightforward with their concerns and situations. However, they cannot be harsh in their advice to one another, as confidence and trust must be maintained as well as sympathy. The friends will not criticize each other or listen to criticism of their friends from others.

Because of these necessary aspects, Cicero places two rules for friendship: 1) There must be no pretense or hypocrisy, and 2) The friends must have pleasant manners and conversation.⁷⁶ Thus, the main aspects of friendship are closely tied to the foundations of friendships. If a man is warm-hearted, he will have pleasant manners and hold a conversation well; he can also do so because he is similar with his friend and has shared interests. If a man trusts his friend, then he

⁷² Seneca, “On Philosophy and Friendship,” Section 10.

⁷³ Cicero, “On Friendship,” 207, 224, 225.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 210, 221.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 209.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 209, 224.

must be a true friend and cannot have entered the relationship based on any pretense or falsehood and he must also not be hypocrite in his words or deeds, lest the trust be diminished and vanish. This can also be understood as the necessary conditions for a good man who can have a friend: one who is kind and trustworthy. These two characteristics will allow men to make friends and maintain friendships.

The Stoic accounts of friendship differ from Aristotle's in many ways, as well, mainly in regard to friendships of utility. Friendships of utility are worth touching on because they are discussed and bear relevance to modern conceptions of friendship in that they represent the various degrees of investment which we have in different friendships. As I will show in Chapter 2, friendships of utility, as Aristotle describes them, lack the necessary high-quality attributes that are found in "lesser" friendships which might not be considered best friendships. In addition, Aristotle's discussion of equality, both in friendships of utility and virtuous friendships, will be called into question. The ways in which the Stoics vary from Aristotle's account on friendships of utility allow for them to better account for modern day conceptions of friendship, including the various degrees of investment in different reasons for friendship, and better capture the relationships present in good friendships and even weaker friendships. Unlike Aristotle, friendships of utility on the Stoic account do not reach nor partake in any form of friendship, for if a man treats another as a "necessary utensil" he will throw him away eventually, and this is not similar to authentic friendship in any way.⁷⁷ Cicero states that a friendship is not about exchanging services or reaping benefits, and instead, whatever you give or receive is simply consequences of a true friendship, but should never be sought as ends.⁷⁸ If there is such a thing as friendship of utility, it is a mean and narrow calculation that is merely concerned with lousy

⁷⁷ Epictetus, "Of Friendship," 158.

⁷⁸ Cicero, "on Friendship," 191.

balancing – friendship does not appear to be about equality, which is a main attribute for Aristotle. Seneca calls friendship of utility a mere bargain that regards convenience only and therefore is not friendship.⁷⁹ Friendship, for the Stoics, is about enjoying affection, not calculating what you benefit from another. These attributes may even be found in imperfect friendships.

The Stoics also touch on friendship between unequals, a form of utility friendships in Aristotle. As previously discussed, Aristotle claims that in friendship between unequals, the inferior person should love and give more, but in a different way, based on the exchange, than the superior man in order to make the friendship equal. However, Cicero says that the superior man should not think of himself as superior, but should instead understand himself on the same level as the inferior.⁸⁰ The superior man does not look down on his friends and view them as inferior, and instead wishes to see them gain stature. The superior friend has an obligation to lift his friends as much as he is able. Thus, in a friendship of unequals, it is still about sharing gifts and is not about a transaction for equality, as it appears in Aristotle. However, the superior friend must only raise the others insofar as their characters and capabilities call for, and he cannot, of course, raise everyone up to the positions they all ask. A friend should not approach the superior with these gains in mind, nor expect them.

This idea of lifting up your friends even if they are lower than you in rank or goodness also ties in with Cicero's objection to Aristotle's notion of the friend as another self. Cicero argues that we put friends before the self, so they cannot be *another self* if they come before us. He says that we do things for our friends that we would never consider for ourselves, such as beg favors from inferior people or be savage towards those who cause offense – an action which is

⁷⁹ Seneca, "On Philosophy and Friendship," Section 10.

⁸⁰ Cicero, "On Friendship," 211.

only respectable if done in protection of friend, but never for one's self.⁸¹ We should help friends succeed in self-betterment and gain confidence, not because they are an extension of our self, but because we sincerely, from our warm hearts, wish for them to do well and will help them succeed even *before* we worry about ourselves.⁸² For Aristotle, a friend will share in successes and virtuous activity, but the self always comes first. Even if the friend is another self, Aristotle says to award your *own self* first what is finest. I will only aid a friend insofar as I would aid myself, and even then, when it comes down to it, I will aid myself first. The Stoics, on the other hand, often put the friend first and will aid him when he needs and even do things for the friend that he would never do for himself. If he would not do it for himself, then the friend cannot be understood as another self and must be appreciated as a separate individual in his own right. In this way, the Stoics view friendship as more selflessly aiding another individual, not merely aiding them because we see them as another self. This idea will bear pertinence in Chapter 2 in the discussion of altruism and friendship.

In addition, Cicero also discusses the types of people which can be friends and whether the bad can be friends with the bad. Like Aristotle, he says that the bad cannot be friends with the good or the good friends with the bad. However, this is not because they are not attracted to the other or interested in the other, but because of a vast difference in character and tastes. At first, the two may think they can be friends with the other, but after spending time and learning about what the other likes to do, how he treats others, and how he passes his time, they will simply find the other not to their tastes because they cannot enjoy or partake in many shared activities. According to Aristotle, this chasm prevents friendship forming between a superior man and a vicious man, since the goodness is what grounds any complete friendship; if that is

⁸¹ Cicero, "On Friendship," 206.

⁸² Ibid.

lacking in another, then the excellent man cannot and will not befriend him. This poses an issue for Aristotle because he ignores the most common ground for friendship, mutual liking, and it is not the kind which concerns virtue, but instead personality and uniqueness. Because he misses this key point in good friendships, the Stoics, as will be more clearly laid out in Chapter 2, have the better account.

Lastly, the Stoics advise when and how to end friendships. While Aristotle says that the two incomplete forms of friendships are only prone to quarrelling, and the virtuous friendship is exempt, the Stoics don't particularly say certain types of friendships which are prone to arguments. This is probably because the Stoics do not, like Aristotle, differentiate friendships by *types* but rather are discussing what can be found in authentic friendships between all men and discuss how we should treat our friends through applying Stoic principles. On the topic of quarrelling, Cicero does admit that friendships are prone to distress, but urges that this is not reason to avoid them.⁸³ Instead, there are ways to handle distress when it arises. Quarreling will arise when there is excess greed for money or when the friend asks you to do something morally wrong.⁸⁴ When there has been no serious hostility, then the best course of action is to slowly ease out of the other's life, and when there has been some vulgar outburst, then it is proper to immediately withdraw.⁸⁵ Most likely, these will rarely occur between decent people, since they will not be greedy, will keep to the same moral standards, and will not engage in rash and angry decisions. Still, as they are using "good" in its most ordinary terms, even good men can go astray, and when that does happen, there are proper courses of action. Thus, the Stoics seem to accept that there *is* distress in good friendships, just as there is distress in maintaining moral standards,

⁸³ Cicero, "On Friendship," 202.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 195, 197.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 215.

and instead of saying such things will not be present in friendships (like Aristotle), they provide reasonable advice on what to do.

In these ways, Cicero's account of friendship touches on many of the same issues as Aristotle's does, only he places more emphasis on having friendly impulses, a warm heart, sincerity, and trust than Aristotle does, who focuses on equality, similarity, and living together. While both views also encapsulate all of the above aspects of friendship, the varying emphases showcase the difference in approach and the differences in kind between the two conceptions. Aristotle's approach is more about the necessity of friends in becoming an excellent, virtuous man and attaining self-actualization; the friend, as another self, will aide you in flourishing, and is the best mode for contemplation of actions; together, you can live in accordance with reason. In addition, there are baser forms of friendship found in the common, base man which do not have all of these characteristics. The Stoic approach is more about nature, and how making friends is natural since we have innate friendly impulses toward other humans; we want to see them succeed and achieve their goals, not because we think it is helpful in some way to us, but because we have sincere and genuine affection toward a being entirely separate from our own selves.

Conclusion

Thus, we can recognize some of the similarities and differences that arise in the two conceptions. Both Aristotle and the Stoics say that trust, kindness, shared activities, and loving are necessary components of friendships, and also that friendship is an important aspect of living life as a social human. While both Aristotle and the Stoics deal with *eudaimonia*, their understanding of human nature varies. Aristotle places a bigger importance on emotion in the role of a human life, while the Stoics argue for the banishment of certain problematic emotions;

because of this, Aristotle and others argue that the Stoic conception may be inhuman or unfeeling. Both sides argue that man is self-sufficient, although by this Aristotle means that a virtuous man will lack nothing – he will have all his contingent goods as well as his inner stability and unity. The Stoics, on the other hand, say that a virtuous man will only need himself for all of the virtues, and external factors out of our control are merely “indifferents” and will not have bearing on one’s living well. Some indifferents are preferable and some unpreferable, though, and friends fall under the former. So, a virtuous man does not *need* friends, but he does prefer them. Because of this difference, the Stoic conception of the good life seems more stable, less fragile, and less luck-based than Aristotle’s.

Another difference is in their definitions of good men who can have authentic friendships. For Aristotle, ‘good’ means excellent, virtuous men, while the Stoics mean something more practical and common – good men are simply the types that most people consider to be “good” – those who are kind, generous, loyal, honest, etc. While the virtuous men on Aristotle’s account do have these qualities, they are only there because the man is completely virtuous and whole; for the Stoics, the more common man can have access to these qualities even if he is not wise or even a practicing Stoic. Because of this goodness in common men is necessary to friendship, both friendships of utility and friendships of pleasure may not even be considered friendships on the Stoic view as these are both instrumental in nature and merely treating another person as a means to some end is *not* a character of a good man, even a common one. As will be seen in the next chapter, using people for favors and gains is not a characteristic of good friendships, and neither is keeping balanced favors; Aristotle’s description of friendship in these cases, then, is mistaken, and lower friendships, those not being ones of virtue, still exist in modern times, yet they do not include these aspects, either.

Both views have their problems and nuances, and overall, the two views generally present a similar take on friendship in that it requires kindness, trust, and similarity. However, the problems are very different: for Aristotle it is the necessity of external goods and whether the incomplete friendships can even rightfully be called friendships. For the Stoics, their problems include their possible unfeeling, inhuman natures, and whether banishing negative emotions will be conducive to a good and proper human life, and the other issue is their claim that friendship, as not necessary, may not be properly sought or valued.

In the next chapter, I will present the modern conception of positive, high-quality friendships and elucidate the reasons why Aristotle's account is inferior to the Stoic one. Taking studies on the types of people who have good friendships and what these friendships entail, I will argue that the Stoics present a better case for increasing positive attributes and minimizing negative ones in friendships, and they also provide better advice on how to live well and achieve *eudaimonia* than Aristotle, which in turn enables them to be better friends since they are better adjusted psychologically.

CHAPTER 2: POSITIVE, HIGH-QUALITY FRIENDSHIPS

Since the time of Aristotle and the ancient Stoics, more and more research has been done on types of friendships. While the knowledge concerning what types of friendships we have and the reasons we have them has increased, the ancient conceptions remain relevant. In this chapter, I will use empirical evidence to present a type of positive, high-quality friendship that most people experience and desire, and by using this as a model for ideal friendship, argue that while both Aristotle and the Stoics capture many aspects of these kinds of friendships, the Stoics conception of friendship is preferable over Aristotle's. The empirical studies bear import because they present a lens through which to evaluate the two claims on what friendship is. I will argue that the positive, high quality friendships presented in empirical studies provide evidence for what is necessarily part of a good, or ideal, friendship. If the empirical evidence is not found within the accounts, then they are lacking because they are not capturing what people actually experience, and this is important since the claims on friendship, being so relevant and saturated in every person's life, ought to align with lived-experience. In addition, the empirical studies reveal how having certain aspects in a friendship make it better and how those aspects allow the people involved to be happier. Happiness is a key factor in determining what kinds of friendships we want to have, and if there is evidence for a certain kind of friendship to lead to happiness, then those friendships should be sought after; those friendships, as I will argue, are the positive high-quality friendships, and they are also the Stoic friendships.

I will argue that Aristotle's account of friendship falls short through (1) the kind of mutual liking present in friendship, (2) his valuing of the friend as another self, and (3) how the necessitation of friendship to happiness makes those friendships more unstable. While the Stoics

face some similar issues, they are better friends because their stances on emotions and well-being better capture the positive qualities, minimize the negative aspects, and ensure a stable state of mind required for good friendships. In order to show this, I will first present the behaviors found in good friendships, and then in Chapter 3, I will present the psychological characteristics and well-being necessary to creating and maintaining such relations. Within each aspect, I will compare how well both Aristotle and the Stoics capture these in their conceptions and ultimately argue that the Stoics are more likely to create positive, high-quality friendships, and if this is the case, then they are better equipped to achieve ideal friendships and happiness. My argument for the Stoic conception includes the notions that only psychologically well-adjusted people can have good friendships (as so conceived by both the Stoics and the modern everyday-man), and through reference to positive psychology, living as a Stoic is the best way to achieve these levels and live happily. With positive, well-adjusted people, there can be positive, high quality friendships, and the Stoics present the best model to achieve these aspects of human flourishing. With these ideas in mind, let us turn to the main topic of this chapter: the behaviors and characteristics of positive, high quality friendships.

The Positive and Negative Components of Friendship

In developmental psychology, a “high-quality friendship” is defined as one which showcases prosocial behavior, intimacy, low levels of conflict, and low levels of rivalry.⁸⁶ Such prosocial behavior includes helping and sharing with friends, praising and encouraging friends, and providing a boost to self-esteem. In addition, there are levels of self-disclosure, wherein the friends showcase trust in the other by sharing their secrets or disclosing intimate information about feelings or their lives. They also demonstrate loyalty by defending their friends against

⁸⁶ Thomas J. Berndt, “Friendship Quality and Social Development,” *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 11, no. 1 (2002): 7.

others and participating in exclusive behaviors and time allocation. These high-quality friendships exemplify positive features, such as intimacy, loyalty, and support, between people. With these positive features of high-quality friendships, we can recognize similarities with the ancient philosophers. As seen in Chapter 1, both Aristotle and the Stoics characterize friendships as having trust, loyalty, intimacy, and high-levels of time spent together. Both of them appear to capture the aspects of modern empirical studies on friendships.

However, some friendships are still known to portray negative features, and this may be problematic as both Aristotle and the Stoics supposedly underplay the level of conflict present in a good friendship. Reported conflicts are not just present in low-quality friendships – although there is more of it – but even arise between people who proclaim themselves to be best friends.⁸⁷ There are also levels of rivalry between friends when they try to outdo one another or prove that they are “better” in some way. These aspects of friendships are sometimes referred to as its “dark side”⁸⁸ since they can inhibit positive social behavior or overall well-being in life. In positive high-quality friendships, such negative aspects are drastically low, and these are mainly reported in low-quality friendships (if they can even be termed such).

It has also been argued that how much positive quality and negative quality is present in a friendship can have effects on the actions and psychological well-being of those involved.⁸⁹ In negative friendships, the people involved are more emotionally unstable, unhappy, and deviant. As psychologists have discovered, “conflict-ridden and contentious relationships are associated with increases in delinquent behavior.”⁹⁰ If there are more negative qualities, such as conflict, rivalry, or distrust, in a friendship, then there are also negative social and psychological effects

⁸⁷ Berndt, “Friendship Quality,” 7.

⁸⁸ Willard W. Hartup and Nan Stevens. “Friendships and Adaptation across the Life Span,” *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 8, no. 3 (1999): 76.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 78; Berndt, “Friendship Quality,” 8.

⁹⁰ Hartup, “Friendship and Adaptation,” 78.

on the people involved. During childhood and adolescence, this is especially evident and problematic, as that time in a person's life is more receptive to proper development of life skills. The more negative features there are in a friendship, the more unstable the people involved. A poor-quality friendship, then, mainly arises between equally unhappy or mean people. These negative aspects of low-quality friendships, as empirical evidence supports, showcase how only good people can be good friends; if they are good friends, then they must be happy, psychologically well-adjusted people. If they are not, then their friendships will not be positive and will instead promote deviance and unhappiness. These empirical studies support what the ancient philosophers argued about regarding friendships – that only good people can be friends – and while they may have seemed idealistic in the previous chapter, many of Aristotle's and the Stoics' claims about virtuous people only having the best kind of friendships are actually found in everyday life and are supported by the empirical studies under discussion.

While negative aspects may still be reported in positive friendships, the correlation between negative and positive is low. Generally, the conflicts are very few and these do not necessarily reflect a poor character in either party. Instead, those who have “supportive and intimate friendships tend to be resilient”⁹¹ and have “greater involvement in school, higher self-perceived social acceptance, and higher general self-esteem.”⁹² Aristotle supports these kinds of low-key conflicts in friendships, and states how they may even be useful in virtuous activity. Deliberative conflicts may arise between happiness and broader issues, and these conflicting aims may be equally rational; conflicts may arise between virtuous action, intellectual activity, or contemplation.⁹³ All of these are equally good and therefore a conflict may arise between friends if one is pursuing a different venture than the other. A conflict may also arise if the “goal in

⁹¹ Hartup, “Friendship and Adaptation,” 78.

⁹² Berndt, “Friendship Quality,” 8.

⁹³ Nicholas White, *Individual and Conflict in Greek Ethics*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 221.

friendship is one's own good or the good of one's friend."⁹⁴ Since a virtuous man's concern is for obtaining what is most fine for himself, he may feel conflicted if that comes into opposition with something his friend needs. There is an opportunity for conflict if the friend wants to be helped, but finds that he is not. Such conflict may not end the friendship, but instead, it can further the goodness of one or the other; upon contemplating the friend's action, he can decide which course – whether his friend's or his own – is more virtuous. Either choosing his own good or his friend's good would be a rational choice, and the conflict can be solved.

The Stoics, as well, make room for some conflicts in their good friendships. Since they considered each person as an individual and provided advice on how one ought to live well, each person's beliefs are not always going to be in harmony.⁹⁵ Only a sage is able to look at the whole, benevolent universe and attain true perspective, and most people, while holding rational beliefs, never attain that global perspective. Such a perspective, while aimed for, is not expected to be reached. While each members of a friendship may both be rational and attempting to live in accordance with nature, as individuals, their viewpoints may not always align as to what is best *for them*. Therefore, a conflict may arise in a good friendship, although less often than a poor one, because the two people involved are distinct individuals whose beliefs will not always align. Thus, we can see in both Aristotle and the Stoics that even a virtuous friendship will still be open to some conflicts depending on the goals or beliefs of the parties involved. This, as we've seen, is in agreement with what is found in positive, high-quality friendships.

With more positive qualities in a friendship, the people involved are happier and healthier, and positive qualities tend to permeate those friendships we consider the “best,” and they are able to gain the title of “best friend” because they are high-quality. These positive qualities can

⁹⁴ White, *Greek Ethics*, 237.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 326.

be portrayed through positive engagement, such as smiling, laughing, and talking, and the friends showcase effective conflict management and work well together with mutual understanding and kindness.⁹⁶ Thus, even if a conflict does arise, which is still rare, the friends have ways to manage the argument and come to a solution. With this evidence, we can see how the quality of a friendship effects and reflects the psychological well-being and characteristics of the friends, and those people who have positive, high quality friendships are well-adjusted and more emotionally stable than those who have negative friendships or have no friends at all. More on this aspect of friendship will be discussed in Chapter 3, where I will cover how people can work at becoming happy, resilient, and emotionally stable in order to create and maintain positive, high-quality friendships. Accordingly, the best way to achieve the aforementioned levels of well-being is to follow the Stoic approach to balancing our emotions.

Because friendships require positive behaviors and interactions, the quality of the relationship partially depends on the characters of the people involved.⁹⁷ It is generally accepted that selfish people cannot be friends because they do not treat other people with the right positive attitudes and therefore cannot bring to a friendship what is necessary – such as sharing, trust, sincerity, and love. Often, if an antisocial or selfish person does have personal relations, the ‘friendship’ is problematic, contentious, full of conflict and deviance, and overall lacks in intimacy.⁹⁸ They generally only create negative, low-quality relations. Because of this, some researchers claim that the ability to create and maintain high-quality friendships is dependent upon how psychologically well-adjusted and socially competent a person is.⁹⁹ In addition, it has been shown that the better the friendship quality, the better the emotional adjustment and

⁹⁶ Hartup, “Friendship and Adaptation,” 77.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 78.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

interpersonal competence. The people in positive friendships, then, have and can share positive behaviors with other people and thereby have these satisfying relationships.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the character of a person, like we've seen in both Aristotelian and Stoic conceptions of friendships, will have a bearing on whether she can have a friend and maintain a high-quality friendship. Some of the necessary components in a high-quality friendships will be a combination of (1) top behaviors: mutual aid, positive affect, and equality, and (2) key psychological states: intimacy, love, and trust.¹⁰¹ With the combination of these behaviors and psychological connections, a high-quality, positive friendship can be cultivated.

In the next section, I will evaluate how well both Aristotle and the Stoics meet these aspects of positive, high-quality friendships. Through such evaluations, it will be shown how and why the Stoic conception of friendship is preferred.

Mutual Liking and Affection

A major aspect of a good friendship is mutual liking, which is portrayed behaviorally through affection and often arises because of similarity. It is reported that "friendships are grounded in the uniquely irreplaceable qualities of partners – their 'true' or 'real' selves, defined and valued independently of their place in public systems of power, utility, and esteem. Friendships so conceived turn on intimacy, the confident revelation of the self to the other, the sharing of expressive and consummatory activities."¹⁰² The grounds for friendship are the unique qualities of the individual which are the source of the affection involved. The friend is not valued because of any external place he has in the world or because of his reputation, but because of

¹⁰⁰ Dorothy Markiewicz, Mara Brendgen, Dorothy Markiewicz, Anna Beth Dorylw, and William M. Bukowski, "The Relations Between Friendship Quality, Ranked-Friendship Preferences, and Adolescents' Behavior With Their Friends," *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (2001): 396-7.

¹⁰¹ Daniel J. Hruschka, *Friendship: Development, Ecology, and Evolution of a Relationship*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), 69.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

their own unique set of characteristics. With such appreciation of the other, the friends pursue joint activities and showcase their affection. Not only then is mutual liking key, but so too is affection, since that is how the friends show they like and are concerned for their friend. As Elizabeth Tefler argues, “affection is a desire for another’s welfare and happiness as a particular individual.”¹⁰³ This feeling of affection is not one of duty to the friend or identical to the benevolence felt for humanity in general. Instead, it is a “special pleasure at their good fortune, pain at their misfortune, anger with those who injure them, and so on.”¹⁰⁴ The affection felt is for a particular individual and the attracting features of this individual are not simply his or her character. Thus, when we like someone and feel affection for them, it is “a reaction to a whole personality seen as a unified whole.”¹⁰⁵ What grounds our liking of a friend is his particular style and overall personality we get to know over a period of time.

When we consider mutual liking in regards to the ancient philosophers, Aristotle claims that the friends are drawn to the good character of the other, and it is the unveiling of their virtuous selves through words and actions which contributes to this mutual liking.¹⁰⁶ The friends contemplate upon the other’s moral excellence and come to understand both himself and the other through their actions and words. Through such contemplation of the friend, Aristotle argues that one works toward one’s own self-actualization of living virtuously. However, contrary to what Aristotle claims, it does not appear to simply be the goodness of the other that is loved or that is the grounds of the friendship. The goodness of a person’s character may be a prerequisite to creating and maintaining a positive, high-quality friendship, but Aristotle may be

¹⁰³ Elizabeth Tefler, “Friendship,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 71 (1970-1): 224.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 226.

¹⁰⁶ Talbot Brewer, “Virtues We Can Share: Friendship and Aristotelian Ethical Theory,” *Ethics* 115 (2005): 724.

conflating the goodness of the friend with the friend himself.¹⁰⁷ Instead of valuing the unique personality of the friend, Aristotle may merely be valuing the goodness of the friend – a quality. While Aristotle does seem to capture intimacy and affection in his discussion of friendship – the friends live together, share time together, and derive pleasure from the association – he may not properly capture the right kind of liking involved in empirical studies on friendships. The empirical studies provide a general and thorough description of how people report their good and best friendships to be; while they are descriptive (as is Aristotle’s account in lesser friendships), they also direct our attention to the normative claim of achievable, ideal friendships that people should aim for and want – which are these positive, high-quality friendships.

Generally, people report that they love their friends because of their unique qualities, and they recognize their friend as an individual in their own right, as an ‘other.’ For Aristotle, on the other hand, moral virtue is the key component of the friend that is loved and this seems to ignore the unique characteristics and otherness of the friend. As Tefler argues, we need not necessarily think of our friends as good in order to like them.¹⁰⁸ We may disapprove of certain attributes or decisions of our friends, but that is not generally a strong reason to stop liking them or to stop being their friend. Moral similarity may be one of the types of liking which can ground a friendship, but it is not the only one, as Aristotle suggests. The consequences of Aristotle’s conception of friendship may lead to merely the moral goodness of the friend being valued and loved, rather than the whole individual, and this does not appear to be either what actually occurs in friendships or what we want in friendships.

This problem of mutual liking and friendship grounded on virtue alone can be brought out by Aristotle’s definition of loving another for his own sake. To remind the reader, to love

¹⁰⁷ Sandra Lynch, *Philosophy and Friendship*, (Edinburgh: University Press, 2005), 227.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

another for his sake is to “identify with him in action by making his acts also one’s own as realizations of choices that one shares with him.”¹⁰⁹ While there is nothing strikingly wrong here, it does minimize, or even completely remove, the unique traits of another. When a person loves another for his sake, he views the other’s actions as mirroring his own and recognizes that he would make the same choices, and through this recognition, he loves the other as another self. Aristotle says to love the friend for his own sake, but the friend is reduced to merely his moral virtues (because that is the identification of his self). While it is correct that there is a recognition of the goodness in the friend, i.e. they must be trustworthy and kind in order for the relationship to even form (since only good people can be friends), liking a friend for that goodness may not actually capture the reason for that relationship. Instead, the liking stems from more personal, unique characteristics of the person involved, many of which may be entirely *different* from you, and if you like the moral goodness of the friend because he is similar to you, then the Aristotelian idea appears to be leaving something out. Certainly there is a moral ideal of the perfect kind of friend – kindly, understanding, sympathetic – and while such ideals are generally not met, they are aimed for. Yet within this ideal and the formation of a friendship, moral virtue does not encompass the friend as an individual, and that is why the Aristotelian account of the ‘friend for his own sake’ falls short; the friend himself cannot be reduced down to his moral virtue, or how well he follows his intellect, and how well these actions *mirror* his friend’s. Moral virtues are universal ideals – courage, wisdom, generosity, kindness, etc. – characteristics which can be captured in any particular instance and can be perfectly identical in each separate instantiation. They are objective, and this is partially why Aristotle places intrinsic value on them because they must be worked for and others can also recognize when you have achieved them. A

¹⁰⁹ A. W. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 130.

friend, then, has become virtuous through his own power and this is why moral virtues have special status as being identified with the person himself.¹¹⁰

Yet to define another person and like him for these universal characteristics ignores that other person as an individual and also does not capture what it is we like about our friends – it may be the way they react to certain humorous situations, it may be the way their eyes twinkle when they laugh, or it may be for the way they walk into a room. The unique characteristics, compounded into one individual, “the whole personality unified into one,” are not able to be encapsulated by the moral virtue Aristotle claims defines the friend, and it is also not the mirroring of our actions and decisions in him that equates to liking him for his own sake. Part of the grounds of the friendship may be his goodness, since he must be good in order to create and maintain good friendships, but liking him for his own sake, i.e. for his moral virtue, does not necessarily ground the friendship, as Aristotle argues.

Some scholars argue that such an objection to Aristotle – that he is conflating goodness with the friend himself – instead confuses the object of love with its ground.¹¹¹ What Aristotle is saying is that the basis for the friendship is the moral excellence and similarity of the other, but it is not *what* is loved. Good character has an intrinsic value because gaining such a character is not due to accidental relations, such as wealth, beauty, or fame might be, but it is only achieved through the individual’s hard work. Therefore, when we like a friend for his goodness, we are liking him for his achievement in gaining virtue. When we cooperate and become friends with another virtuous person, we act together in virtue, we allow others to also gain what is most fine, and we may even sacrifice our own advantage to gain what is most fine. In friendship, the friend is liked for his strong will and continuation for being good.

¹¹⁰ Price, *Love and Friendship*, 109.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

However, this argument seems circular, as the friend, as human, is still identified with his rationality – that is what makes him human and therefore his rationality *is* who he is: what choices he has made, his deliberations, and his actions. That he has chosen to act virtuously is an achievement and may be the ground for the friendship, but he is still only liked *because he has made those decisions*. It is because he is virtuous that he is liked, and because those decisions were made by his intellect, by him, he is still only liked for that reason, i.e. his reason; the uniqueness and personal attributes of the friend are still ignored, for example, his sense of humor, his mannerisms, his speech, etc. While the moral virtues are universal and may be personalized through the actions and decisions of the friend, they are not suddenly made ‘unique.’ Decisions, goodness, and intellect are all universal, objective qualities which anyone can possess, regardless of any other traits about them. If mutual liking, as reported in real, best friendships, is partially grounded in the unique qualities of the other, then these universal qualities grounding a friendship for Aristotle does not capture that uniqueness. What Aristotle has a difficult time showing through his description of good friendship is the personality of the friend, which is not equitable to moral virtue. For Aristotle, we like the friend for his moral virtue, but instead of merely this, there is a plurality of reasons to like a friend, which Aristotle has a difficult time capturing.

When we consider the Stoics in terms of these kinds of mutual liking and affection for individuals, it may be argued that they fall into some similar issues as Aristotle. It has been argued that a Stoic friend only values the moral virtue in another and that friendship is depersonalized because friendships are about duties, friends are interchangeable, and there is no show of affection.¹¹² If this is the case, then it is unclear how a Stoic can like a friend for the

¹¹² Glenn Lesses, “Austere Friends: The Stoics and Friendship,” *Apeiron: A Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science* 26, no. 1 (1993): 62.

right reasons or show the right kind of affection. However, I will argue that the Stoics can be defended against these objections, and, in fact, they capture the kind of mutual liking required in a good friendship and also will create personal friendships.

To begin, I will evaluate whether the Stoics can value a friend as a unique individual, rather than for their moral goodness alone. Reconsider the previous objection raised against Aristotle – that he conflates the good of the friend with the friend himself. I will argue that the Stoics avoid this objection because they are able to properly care for the friend as an individual, regardless of the friend’s moral virtue, and they are able to do so because they put the friend above themselves, valuing caring for all humans as such, and are motivated in their actions by loyalty, kindness, and sincerity.

To begin the discussion on how the Stoics can value friends as whole individuals, I will clarify key points of Stoic thought through responses to key objections. First, there is the claim that the Stoics are distant, unfeeling friends, and this argument mainly arises through a passage in Seneca, wherein he discusses how friends are interchangeable and how we can make a new friend just as soon as we have lost the old.¹¹³ The claim that the Stoics view people as interchangeable, replaceable objects, while understandable to make, is inconsistent with the rest of Stoic ideals and is therefore mistaken. To reiterate from Chapter 1, the Stoics argue that people have a natural inclination toward making attachments with others. These others are not viewed as “objects” but instead as fellow humans, and because they are humans – for that fact *alone* – they are to be valued and treated with respect, goodwill, and care. The notion of care for the self and how it extends to other people, again, is the term *oikeiosis*. When a person is young, they initially only care for themselves, and as they grow older, mature, and gain knowledge, that care extends toward family, then friends, then the local community, and then the entirety of the

¹¹³ Seneca, “On Philosophy and Friendship,” Section 13.

human race. This care does not stem from other people being virtuous, as the Stoics recognize that everyone is often vicious and ignorant, but stems from the simple recognition that all people are the same, are going through the same sufferings, and it is natural to cooperate and care for others because we are an interdependent networks of beings. As Marcus Aurelius, a well-known Roman Stoic, states, we are designed for cooperation as members of a system of rational beings.¹¹⁴ This is because the “primary principle in man’s constitution is the social.”¹¹⁵ Man must first and foremost be a genuine social creature, and in order to do so, he must be benevolent, sincere, and kind to his fellow man, and these actions will extend from his own self-care, as well as be more other people *as such* and not contingent upon any moral goodness.

However, how we come to *have* this care appears confused in some Stoic literature, as well as how this care may change, if at all, in friendships. In what way we value the friend is important because in the right kind of mutual liking, we need to like him for his unique characteristics and also as a unique individual. According to the founder of Stoicism, Zeno claims that friends ought to be treated as “another I.”¹¹⁶ At first glance, this seems Aristotelian in nature and even appears contrary to what was previously argued for the Stoic conception of friendship, since Cicero states that Aristotle is wrong when he equates friends as other selves. Therefore, if Zeno means that we should regard friends as other selves, it is inconsistent with Cicero and also falls into the same issues as Aristotle that we saw previously. However, if we remember that the Stoics view the only true goods as internal, then we may be able to make sense of Zeno’s statement. Margaret Graver, a Stoic scholar, argues that Zeno’s statement on treating friends as “another I” implies that we should extend our own internal goods to other people of whom we approve, i.e. our friends. When our friends share our good intent and

¹¹⁴ Aurelius, Marcus. “Meditations,” in *Marcus Aurelius and His Times* (New York: Classics Club, 1945), 69.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

¹¹⁶ Graver, *Stoicism*, 181.

recognition of what is truly good, i.e. what is in line with nature, we may consider *their* goods as our own, and therefore share in their successes and sympathize with them in failures. If we are living similarly, then we have a sameness of intent with the friend and they are, in a sense of lifestyle and beliefs, “another I.”

Yet this “I” is not another self in that he is regarded as valuable because he is a mirroring of my own values, which is similar in Aristotle. The treatment of “another I” is stated so that we may extend the care we place on ourselves to our friends, and we can again recall the Stoic conception of *oikeiosis*.¹¹⁷ As people, we innately have a sense of self-survival and self-care. We look after ourselves first and foremost, and often times fall short of giving that same level of care to other people. In order to extend that care to others and treat them well, extending our conception of self to others is often a good way to extend the level of care. The Stoic claim of “another I” can be seen as such an extension; if we want to treat other people well and properly care for them, we should consider them as another I, and then we can provide better aid, care, and sympathy. While Aristotle’s statement of the friend as another self may be similar to this, where the two diverge is that the Stoics do not consider the friend, as Aristotle does, as another self. They may *treat* the friend as another “I” in order to extend proper care, but they do not mirror themselves into the other and then value him as such. Thus, we can tie in Cicero’s claim to make sense of this key difference.¹¹⁸ The friend is not another self because we do things for a friend that we would not do for ourselves, i.e. we will defend our friends against unfounded criticisms, we will reprimand those who speak ill against them, we will offer advice on how to achieve his goals, and these actions are those which the Stoics say we should *not* do for ourselves because many of these actions value mistaken goods (others’ opinions, anger, and pursuing

¹¹⁷ Reydams-Schils, “Roman Stoics,” 26.

¹¹⁸ Cicero, “Friendship,” 221.

external goals). However, we *can* do these things for a friend because the motivation does not stem from an irrational emotion, but from a rational emotional, such as loyalty, caring, generosity, and affection. Doing so shows support and care concerning what the friend is pursuing and aiding him in staying rational and good.

The care that we form for friends, then, is an even heightened version of *oikeiosis* for humanity, because with our friends, we directly wish for their good, share in life activities, know them personally, and have formed a close bond through time spent together and intimacy. There must be a distinction between the friend and our self because if not, then there would be an apparent contradiction in Stoic philosophy, and we should *not* do these things for our friends, since that would be valuing mistaken things. But when we do these actions for a friend, we do so on the grounds of our friendship and because we want to protect the friend and care for his well-being – this is in line with nature (following kindly inclinations and protecting others) and is therefore good. Since the friend is not another self, in the way Aristotle describes, we can then better care for them, protect them, aid them, and wish them well, all the while still living in line with nature and following what is good. We think of friends as “another I” *in order to* aid them in the ways aforementioned, and we are aiding them not because of their “goodness” but because of their humanity, our shared intimate bond, and our knowledge that we ought to be kind and good to others. To our friends, we can offer sound advice, share in their successes, sympathize with them in times of trouble, and understand their lives better. The care we have for ourselves, for our own happiness and goodness, is extended to the friend, and this extension is what Zeno means in his statement. Thinking of the friend as another I does not simply mean to view them as another self. Instead, when we extend our own scope of intense care of our own lives to another,

we can be a better friend and make stronger attachments with others, as well as do things for them which we would not do for ourselves.

Still, if we agree on the good, then that may be the basis of our friendship and perhaps the Stoics have not avoided the objection that the friend is being conflating with his goodness. As argued in “Austere Friends,” the Stoic sage may only value the moral virtue in another. However, I will argue that these shared beliefs do not constitute the reasons for our liking him and deciding to be friends with him. For a Stoic, since the only true goods are internal and under my volition, the virtue of another person matters naught to my own happiness; only my choices and attitudes are truly of import if I want to be happy. Yet if the friend is treated as “another I,” and these goods have been extended to encompass *his* internal goods as well, then perhaps his moral goodness does have import for me. While the other’s integral states are likened to my own and I extend the same care for myself toward him, these do not then equate to my own virtues nor do they override them. The most important thing is still my own attitudes and actions. The moral goodness of the other matters insofar that I derive joy from my friend’s successes and sympathize with him when he falls prey to vice. A key point, however, is that the friend is still *separate* from me and treating him as another I is just that – treatment. The friend is considered as an “absolutely self-sufficient other.”¹¹⁹ The friend can be treated and understood as another I in order to properly care for him, but he is not a mirror of myself because we are each distinct, albeit equal, individuals, each with our own self-sufficiency and individual lives. Treating a friend as another I is a guide on how to act and how to be kind to a friend. The virtue in him, while something I like about him, is not what is *valued* since the moral virtue of another does not have value to me in the appropriate sense (recall the dichotomy of control: I am not responsible

¹¹⁹ Reginal Hyatte, *The Arts of Friendship: The Idealization of Friendship in Medieval and Early Renaissance Literature*, (Netherlands: E.J. Brill: 1994): 23.

for their choices as I cannot control them, and if I cannot control them, they do not have value to my happiness). While his well-being, virtue, and character may contribute to why I like him, his virtue does not have the right kind of value to me, i.e. it does not ultimately make me happy or unhappy, and thus the mutual liking of a friend can be founded in a plurality of ways (not just moral virtue), which better captures liking an individual with whom I have formed an intimate relation with over time and whose well-being sincerely matters to me. What is rightly valued in a friendship is that I have acted in line with nature and followed my natural, social impulses.

In this way, the friend can be treated as an individual in his own right under the Stoic conception and have a plurality of grounds for mutual liking. In fact, one's friends are individuals, each very different from one another.¹²⁰ Each friend is seen as unique and while we may be able to make new friends easily, these new friends are not identical to the older ones, as no one person is a carbon copy of another, and shouldn't be. The new friend, while perhaps the same in terms of moral virtue (the Stoics recognize these as universal qualities and not the only thing to be liked in a friend), brings something new to the friendships and creates a unique relationship, with unique ties, experiences, and behaviors.

For the Stoics, then, we have a recognition of the separateness of the friend and also a recognition that their goods are similar to ours and we can share in their successes, since we are similar in those attitudes. We can then wish for their good, feel closer to them because of our sameness, and thus form the proper level of intimacy. If we share such similar attitudes and decisions, spend time together, and showcase prosocial behavior, then we are setting ourselves up to form an intimate relation with another.

However, one important aspect of intimacy is affection. The final two components of positive friendships, intimacy and affection, may seem more difficult for a Stoic to capture. One

¹²⁰ Graver, *Stoicism*, 184.

of the main objections to the Stoic life seems to be that they cannot form intimate relations with other people because of the detachment present in their ideas on friendship. Many scholars see the Stoics as austere and passionless, which makes them distant from their friends, and because of this, their forms of attachment are very different from ordinary conceptions. However, I argue that the Stoics are not as distant as people make them out to be and they can form intimate friendships.

For the Stoics, detachment is not an ethical ideal.¹²¹ Being detached from the world and from others ignores natural inclinations and prevents us from living in line with the good, which is following nature and being virtuous. A Stoic will follow his natural inclinations and form attachments and make friends, and the friendships he makes will not be devoid of emotion. Friendship itself is an affective response. It is important to recall the distinction between irrational and rational emotions. The Stoics proclaim to be devoid of irrational emotions so that they do not overpower a friend and lead him to act improperly. However, rational emotions and affective responses remain as part of being human, and therefore making friendships, as an affective response, is also part of being human. Since what is good is directed inwards – our own attitudes, opinions, and characters, which we control, are the only goods we can lay claim to and which contribute to our happiness – it might be problematic for the Stoics to say that a friend can be involved in the proper affective responses since they are external to us. However, if we recall the previous discussion on friends as another I, we can see how a Stoic can extend internal goods to others and therefore desire to form intimate bonds.

Still, with the banishing of irrational emotion, the question remains how they will achieve the proper levels of affection in friendship. As I will argue, being unfeeling is not compatible with being a Stoic since detachment is not an ethical ideal and they place importance on human

¹²¹ Graver, *Stoicism*, 178.

relations. Both Seneca and Epictetus are often quoted as examples of Stoics being too unfeeling or passionless. However, these “unfeeling” claims can be explained by looking at the texts. Considering the work of Seneca, he describes being “insensible to feeling” as “a soul which rejects any sensation of evil.”¹²² As previously discussed, a Stoic still experiences sensations and feelings, as these are natural, human impulses, but he chooses what to do with them and whether they are in line with nature; he judges as to whether these feelings and responses are appropriate. If these sensations are “evil” (i.e. not in line with nature, or unbeneficial), then he rejects them. For example, if another person cheats during a game, a sensation that may occur is anger, along with the desire to yell or attack this person. However, while this sensation may arise, it is evil because it is not in line with our social, kind nature. In addition, it is not an appropriate reaction as the person who cheated is outside our control. Our anger, in addition, can be seen as unbeneficial because since that is within our control, i.e. the extent to which we feel the anger and whether it becomes overwhelming, and allowing it to become that strong, irrational emotion is inappropriate since it will cloud our judgment and bring us unrest. Often these evil sensations are irrational emotions (excessive impulses arising from a mistaken evaluation), and so they are banished to prevent any evil from debilitating good action or happiness. As one continues to become a sage, these “evil” sensations will occur less and less frequently since we are strengthening our ability to not be overcome by emotions.

Still, some emotions are *not* irrational, and such affective emotions, i.e. the eupathetic responses, are appropriate to feel with others and ourselves.¹²³ As a Stoic progresses down his path to becoming a sage, he will experience overpowering sensations (irrational emotions) less and less, and only experience appropriate feelings and the rational emotions (joy, caution,

¹²² Seneca, “On Philosophy and Friendship,” Section 2.

¹²³ For the complete description and discussion of eupathetic responses and *eupatheia*, see pages 29-32 in Chapter 1.

volition, and wish). These are not negative, irrational emotions which need to be banished because they are beneficial, in line with nature, and will therefore help us reach *eudaimonia*. However, the Stoics recognize that reaching sagehood is rare for most people, they understand that people make mistakes, and they also believe that people who are not perfectly virtuous are still full of vice. For these reasons, very few of them actually called themselves “wise.” That is why they offered schools and practical advice in most of their writings. Because of this, Seneca claims the wise man will “feel his troubles, but overcome them.”¹²⁴ He will feel his *feelings* (his natural human impulses), but will not allow them to overpower him by turning into detrimental, irrational emotions, which have the power to cloud his judgments on the proper course of action. For example, a man may recognize the sadness present in his loved one passing, allow himself to feel the loss, but he makes the judgment that being overcome with grief as an emotion is inappropriate to the circumstances because (1) the death is an external event and (2) he should appreciate and enjoy the time he had with his friend. Feeling excessive grief and wallowing in despair is not the appropriate feeling for the Stoic, and instead, he should feel joy at the time spent together and appreciate his memories so as to allow the friendship to live on. He may still feel sadness as it is a human impulse, but he will not wallow in it and allow it to take over his life. Thus, a Stoic is not “unfeeling” in the proper sense of the word, as they still have feelings, rational emotions, and affective responses, but they must be appropriate.

When considering friendship, the kind of affection present for a Stoic is one which is elicited by the good of another and felt through concern for another.¹²⁵ The wise person showcases an eupathetic eagerness for intimacy and all such eupathetic responses and emotions

¹²⁴ Seneca, “On Philosophy and Friendship,” Section 3.

¹²⁵ Graver, *Stoicism*, 189.

are natural and therefore good, i.e. rational.¹²⁶ A Stoic, while he may not present an overabundance of the range of emotions, will still have affective responses and emotions present in a friendships, wherein he feels kindness, joy, care, and intimacy with another; he feels joy at the friend's successes, he is eager for the intimacy, and will care for his friend's well-being above his own. Since what is good is beneficial, a Stoic will benefit others and aim to do so in the most useful and enduring way possible.¹²⁷ A Stoic, with natural kindly impulses, a virtuous mind, and a generous heart, will provide his friends with the utmost care and actively look after their well-being. Since the friend is treated as a distinct, self-sufficient other and the bond is important to both parties, they will seek time together, show affection, and take care of each other because that is beneficial, good, and natural.

Thus, living as a Stoic will capture all of the necessary positive aspects of a high-quality friendship; the Stoics can do so because they recognize and respond to their natural impulses for making friends and being kind. They are eager and wish for closeness and intimacy with another they view as good; and they have proper affective responses to the friend's decisions and reciprocal respect. The friendship is able to form because (1) we all have a natural inclination toward forming attachments with others (*oikeiosis*), (2) both parties are good people (kind, trustworthy, and sincere), and (3) we build the relationship through spending time, showing affection, laughing, and other prosocial behaviors. In this way, the Stoics capture the proper form of mutual liking and affection present in friendships.

Equality

Not only is mutual liking and affection key to friendships, but also equality. Good friendships are generally equal, and “unlike contractual relations, friendships are based on open-

¹²⁶ Graver, *Stoicism*, 188.

¹²⁷ Seneca, “On Benefits,” *Seneca's Essays, Volume III*, 10 March 2016, http://www.stoics.com/seneca_essays_book_3.html#%E2%80%98benefits1, Book I, section VI-X.

ended commitments and generalized reciprocity.”¹²⁸ There is mutual care and liking in a friendship, and the level of investment and interest in the other is met evenly. Also between good friendships, the power is shared equally and one is not perceived as having more worth than the other. However, the level of giving and aid is not always balanced, as friends generally do not keep track of favors.¹²⁹ Friends do indeed help each other, but the amount of help given is contingent upon the other’s need, rather than whoever has higher status, wealth, or power.¹³⁰ The reciprocity at hand is not one of balanced favors, as Aristotle claims, but is instead one of balanced liking. This liking, again, is not initiated because of the other’s virtues, but stems from the recognition and adoration of the other’s unique characteristics, their similar interests, and the activities they share in order to build and increase their bond.¹³¹ While this is overall similar to both the Aristotelian and Stoic notion of friendship, referencing their emphasis on reciprocity and similarity, in high-quality, positive friendships, there is not always shared goodness, the friend’s don’t usually state their friend’s virtue as the reason for their friendship, and they do not concern themselves with keeping their favors balanced and equal between them.

These discoveries are mainly an issue for Aristotle because he claims that love between unequals is itself *unequal*.¹³² The one who is more virtuous, the one who is more prestigious, should be loved more because of his excellence. Granted, these are the not perfect virtuous friendships, as those only exist between morally excellent people who bring out the best in each other and achieve self-actualization, yet there is evidence that there can be positive, high-quality friendships between unequals. Not everyone is a perfectly virtuous person and even if they are,

¹²⁸ Ray Pahl, “Towards a More Significant Sociology of Friendship,” *European Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 3 (2002): 262.

¹²⁹ Hruschka, *Friendship*, 24.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹³¹ Lynch “philosophy and friendship 27-9

¹³² Brewer, “Virtues,” 725.

they are not always (nor do they have to be) friends with other virtuous people. In all good friendships, there is shared power and they do not keep track of favors given and received. Instead, they simply help each other when there is a need because they love their friend. This will probably be the case in a virtuous friendship, but even in the “lesser” friendships, this should also be the case, and friendships between unequals does not imply that they should balance their favors in order to make the friendship equal.

A Stoic will not face these same issues because when it comes to friendships of “unequals” there is no such thing. Because of their benevolence toward all people, such levels of superiority and inferiority are disregarded. While a man with more power or prestige may befriend a man of lesser rank, such distinctions are not reasons for either to give more or receive more. Instead, all that should be done is treating the other with respect and care, and through recognizing the other as a self-sufficient being whom one cares about, the friend will provide him with what is beneficial through that care. If I am a superior person in my society, I will do what I can to help my friend if he is in need or looking for work; however, I do not expect my friend to then love me more or give me more pleasure because I have helped him with these favors. Instead, these favors are extensions of my love for my friend and I expect nothing in return. This is in line with what is found in positive, high-quality friendships because friends do not keep track of favors but are willing to aide their friend in times of trouble *without expecting a return*. The Stoics are able to do so because they proscribe falsity and prescribe sincerity, and if I give favors and benefits simply because of my kind heart, I will not expect anything in return from my friend. While this will also be the case in Aristotle’s virtuous friendship, such an ideal is not the general case and even in such ideal friendships, the virtue of the other is a prerequisite to the relation and when such virtue is gone, so, too, is the friendship. Thus, even virtuous

friendships hinge on the idea that the parties involved are both virtuous and only equal in their shared virtues; if this is the case, then the friendship, while still kind and beneficial, requires stern equality on both ends, when that is not necessarily the case.

While Aristotle's use of equality in his conception of friendship may not hold accurate in what we desire from our best friendships, he may have aptly capture the fact that we have different *types* of friendships and different degrees of investment in each relationship. In commonplace friendships, each one may have arisen for different reasons and each friend may have a different "use." Perhaps I enjoy going to the movies with one friend because we have similar tastes, while I share my deepest secrets with a different friend. In the former case, this would be a mere friendship of utility and the latter may be closer to a complete friendship. To this extent, Aristotle does properly describe scenarios and reasons for various types of friendships which have varying levels of investment. However, the incomplete friendships, I think, are mishandled in Aristotle because he downplays the level of goodness found even in friendships of utility. Even if I have a friend I only use to go to the movies with, this does not mean that there is any less goodness present in the friendship. The Stoics handle the degrees of investment in a more plausible way because their approach is not working through levels, but is applying their values of life to how we ought to act in friendships – *any* friendships. While we may have varying levels of investment in our many friends, this does not mean that we should act differently in any circumstance or that any friend requires more or less based on how "equal" we are. Since many friendships are "unequal" in the sense of virtue, fame, fortune, beauty, etc., any conception of friendship should address the kind of "unequals" properly, which Aristotle, as I have shown, does not. Thus, the Stoics better capture all types of friendships, even in their discussion between supposed "unequals," and present a stronger account of how friends – *all*

friends –ought to act. Because of this, their conception of friendship should be preferred when pursuing positive, high-quality friendships.

Altruism

Another aspect important to a positive, high-quality friendship is altruism. I will define altruism as genuine concern for an other as an individual in her own right. There are two aspects, then, in order to be considered properly altruistic: 1) genuine care for the friend for his own sake, and 2) recognizing that care as something for another individual. In friendship, there is “reciprocally altruistic behavior [wherein] unrelated individuals help others.”¹³³ This behavior is risky because the receiver of such aid may in give in return. Since gift-giving, need, and sharing are all important aspects of friendships, the feelings of altruism are key in order for people to want to give to their friends. Since this is risky, friends may be less likely to do this if the other has shown miserliness in the past or if they suspect falsehood. Being altruistic will make the friends more likely to give to the others sincerely since they will have the proper feelings and generous mindset.

Aristotle struggles to capture this sense of altruism and self-sacrifice in friendship. Instead, even in his virtuous friendship, it appears to be driven by self-motivation. First, there is the aspect of self-affirmability in Aristotelian friendship. Self-affirmability is the notion of having your own outlooks affirmed through the actions, words, and responses from others. If they too act as you do or approve of what you do, then your viewpoints and decisions are affirmed.¹³⁴ This is in keeping with what we have seen in psychology, as good friendships do increase self-esteem and improve/define a sense of self. Aristotle does, as we’ve seen, discounts base forms of self-love or selfishness as being able to achieve the best form of friendship. If

¹³³ Hruschka, *Friendship*, 7.

¹³⁴ Brewer, “Virtues,” 729.

someone only values others insofar as they are useful or pleasurable, then they are not virtuous or stable people and cannot be good friends. Indeed, Aristotle views friendships based on utility or pleasure as inferior to virtuous friendships because they are base. Instead, a virtuous friendship is best because the friends can affirm their outlooks on life, determine which paths are excellent, and then live the most virtuous life possible; friends are essential to discovering and living the good life. The friends must reach agreement about what is good and valuable, must appreciate the intrinsic good of their moral characters, and have like-mindedness.¹³⁵ Attached to this, then, is the notion that the friend loves the other because he is *another self*. This is possible because the “self” of the other is his intellect, or understanding, and if the other is in agreement with you about what is good (which was discovered through his intellect), then both of the intellects are in accord and the other’s self is therefore the same as yours. Thus, what you are friends with, what you are loving, is the other person’s intellect, or their evaluative outlook on life that says what is virtuous.¹³⁶ Aristotle’s notion of friendship, then, isn’t necessarily egoistical or selfish, but it is not altruistic, either. This is an issue because in positive, high-quality friendships, true altruism is key for the intimacy, trust, and affection involved.

To be altruistic, there must be genuine concern for the other *as an other* and individual in his or her own right. Aristotle’s love of the friend for his own sake does not capture this because the virtuous friendships we create are merely affirmations of ourselves, of our qualities and characteristics of which we approve and can be instantiated in others.¹³⁷ Again, we see this issue of reducing the friend to the universal moral characteristics as well as reducing him to another self. An important altruistic aspect of friendship is appreciating him as an individual and as separate from you; he is not a carbon copy of you and in order to be your friend, he needn’t

¹³⁵ Brewer, “Virtues,” 732.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 737.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 742.

necessarily be. In order to capture the altruism in friendship, the friend must show genuine care for the other unconditionally – such is not the case for Aristotle. The friend is only loved insofar as he and you align in your moral ideals. You love him because his intellect agrees with you on what is good. This is not altruistic, genuine concern for another as another and is therefore not the necessary altruism in friendship.

The Stoics are able to capture the necessary form of altruism in friendships, and part of this is due to their notion of *oikeiosis*. Part of the natural order and therefore also part of how we ought to live as humans is the urge toward self-preservation and also toward social bonding and procreation.¹³⁸ In all of our human natures is the natural orientation toward others; we are naturally both rational and gregarious. This means that while we ought to act in accord with our reason, our reason also dictates to us to follow nature, and that includes being kind and sociable toward others. We must create bonds with others if we wish to follow our natures. All social animals, according to nature, act in the interests of others, and thus when acting, we must consider the interests of other people, and this interest includes every human being *just because* they are humans.¹³⁹ Thus, a wise person will have the disposition to act in another's best interest, to respond affectively, and to experience good intent, friendship, approval, and acceptance of others.¹⁴⁰ These reactions are due to how nature has created us as social creatures, and as such, our friendships are not empty or cold but instead are an affective response to another person which fulfills our natural inclinations to form attachments. In addition, the Stoic is sincere and mainly concerned with his own choices, so he will be able to give and share openly, without reserve or concern over whether his giving will be equally reciprocated. Of course, in any friendship, both parties should experience reciprocal feelings and therefore both sides should try

¹³⁸ Reydams-Schils, *Roman Stoics*, 57.

¹³⁹ Graver, *Stoicism*, 175-6.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 180.

to give as much as possible, when needed. Yet with a Stoic, once a friendship bond has been established, he will not keep track of favors and merely give with a kind heart.

In addition, the Stoic will showcase a willingness to let a friend survive in place of himself.¹⁴¹ He is willing to sacrifice himself if a friend is in dire need, as that is a human impulse to let loved ones live. Thus, the Stoics are able to best capture the levels of altruism present in friendships. They are able to care for the friend for his own sake – as does Aristotle – and they are also able to put the friend, as an individual, above themselves and take their interests truly to heart, something which Aristotle’s conception cannot capture.

For the Stoics, then, the best kinds of friends will be those who recognize that their actions are under their own volition, allowing them to act in accordance with virtue and throwing off vice; they will proceed in their friendships with caution, as not every man will be a good friend or will have interests that align with yours; and they will live life and spend time with friends full of joy, as they have others to care about and other lives to enrich. A Stoic man, with respect to others, will “be without disguise to every like-minded person; toward such as are unlike, he will be patient, mild, gentle, and ready to forgive them, but severe to none.”¹⁴²

In conclusion, a positive, high-quality friendship is one wherein the people care for each other, share their lives and activities, have high level of trust, help each other in times of need, and spend exclusive time together. The friends show genuine care and have altruistic tendencies toward the other as an individual in his own right. In summary, the main issues for Aristotle are his limitations of the grounds of a good friendship to moral excellence alone, and his treatment of friends as other selves. These are issues because as seen in the empirical studies, there are plurality of grounds in friendships, not just goodness or moral excellence, so Aristotle’s virtuous

¹⁴¹ Graver, *Stoicism*, 184.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

friendship seems to be missing important reasons for positive, high-quality friendships. In addition, if accidental traits are not valued in others and if moral characters are accidental traits, then we cannot value a friend for his moral character; it must be grounded in something else, or, we do value friends for accidental traits and thus not just moral character can ground a friendship. Finally, friends should not be treated as other selves, per se, but as other individuals in order to put them above ourselves, treat them with altruism, and be able to sacrifice for our friends.

For the Stoics, their main issue, in this chapter, is their ability to form intimate relations because of the “detachment” present in their philosophy. As has been argued, they will actually not be detached because forming attachments is a natural inclination and we should be eager to form these intimate relations, since this is in accordance with nature and a wise man ought to make friends for this reason. When considering all aspects of high-quality friendships, the Stoics better capture these behaviors in their conception.

However, not all people can create positive, high quality friendships, and there are certain characteristics of the well-adjusted people who maintain these positive friendships. In the next chapter, I will discuss the characteristics of happy people and argue that living as a Stoic will be more likely to have people achieve this state of well-being.

CHAPTER 3: EVIDENCE FOR THE STOIC IDEALS

The final part of my argument for the Stoic conception of friendship is that living as a Stoic will increase one's overall happiness and therefore allow its practitioners to be a better friend. Part of the argument hinges on positive psychology and how positive emotions are used to measure the happiness of a person. While there are both conceptual and empirical concerns with positive psychology, and any empirical studies, in general, my aim is to show how such research thus far can support the Stoic conception of *eudaimonia*, as well as how a Stoic life will enhance what has been discovered thus far in empirical studies on flourishing. To begin, I will present a brief outline of the evidence in positive psychology and what that field of study includes. If a person is happy and is psychologically well-adjusted, they will be a better friend. Stoics will be shown to be well-adjusted, and due to this quality, they will make the better friend because they are more capable of maximizing the positive components in friendship and minimizing the negative ones. In addition, their overall happiness and well-being is more stable than Aristotle's because happiness is entirely under their control since it depends upon their virtuous character, whereas Aristotle's happiness is dependent upon contingent goods. For these reasons, the Stoics will better maintain their good friendships.

Well-Being and Eudaimonia

To begin, I will introduce a newer branch of psychology, positive psychology, which studies the realm of positive emotions and their effects on humans and their well-being. I will use positive psychology to argue that cultivating rational emotions, like the Stoics claim, will better lead to *eudaimonia* and also to the better maintenance of friendships. The Stoic view of emotions as judgments, as well, will aid a person in cultivating these positive feelings,

minimizing negative ones, and therefore make better progress toward the ideal friend – one who is kind, sympathetic, encouraging, trustworthy, and caring. Before I begin the argument, however, more must be said on the research and claims made within positive psychology today.

As an overview, positive psychology purports to show how cultivating positive emotions will enable a person to live a happier life and build up resilience to handle life events. Positive emotions are able to contribute to this because they help to broaden the mind, which helps to generate alternative solutions and therefore not feel so upset by bad circumstances; it helps to build personal resources through better problem solving skills, being open to learning new things, optimism, a sense of identity, and goals.¹⁴³ Having an abundance of positivity enables a person to set attainable goals and feel accomplished when completing them, and being able to do so allows them to better understand what future choices to make, to consider the best options, and feel confident enough to pursue various avenues in life. Being able to reach goals helps to build up a person's identity in a positive way, which helps them to feel happier, more optimistic about the future, and content with their lives since they are pleased with their decisions and skills. Generally there are ten positive emotions associated with furthering human flourishing: joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe, and love.¹⁴⁴ The abundance of these emotions helps to regulate proper and healthy physiological functioning, such as cardiovascular health, provides the brain with goal achievement, drive, and contentment. Negative emotions are characterized by displeasure, tense muscles, dissatisfaction, sadness, or boredom, and create a vicious cycle which can disrupt a person's ability to go about their daily lives.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Kate Hefferon and Ilona Boniwell, *Positive Psychology: Theory, Research, and Applications*, (New York: Open University Press, 2011), 24-5.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

In addition to adopting a positive outlook, happy people generally have certain positive traits, such as courage, curiosity, wisdom, kindness, and patience.¹⁴⁶ Wisdom is sometimes considered to have component parts, such as love of learning, perspective, judgment, and creativity; love also has various aspects, such as intimacy, kindness, and social intelligence.¹⁴⁷ There are certain characteristics of happy people, that include these positive traits, and these also tie into the positive aspects of friendships and what people generally agree upon to be indicative of a great friend – kindness, loyalty, caring, and trust. As we saw in Chapter 1, both Aristotle and the Stoics present these characteristics as what our ideal friendships should have and what virtuous people should look like. Such a list of traits found in happy people can be understood as akin to the virtues discussed in Aristotle and the Stoics. There are current studies which show how Stoic attitudes, such as the virtues, mindfulness, and appropriated emotions, are strongly associated with flourishing and happiness.¹⁴⁸ Being able to cultivate strength and the virtues will enable a person to better cope with suffering that is necessarily a part of human life.¹⁴⁹ Thus, within positive psychology, we see the Stoics' claims coming to light and being supported by modern psychology.

If we wish to have happy lives and have high-quality friendships, then we should be kind, pursue wisdom, show curiosity, and be patient with others. As Aristotle and the Stoics claim, we ought to be these kinds of virtuous people. For Aristotle, however, these virtuous, excellent people are rare; it is a difficult ideal to achieve and only the superior can do so. For the Stoics, though, while the perfect sage is nearly impossible to achieve, this does not dishearten anyone

¹⁴⁶ Jane Henry, "Positive Psychology and the Development of Well-being" in *Well-Being: Individual, Community, and Social Perspectives*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 29.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Lebon, Tim, "Does Stoicism Make You Happier?" *Stoicism Today*, 05 March 2016, <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/stoicismtoday/2016/03/05/does-stoicism-make-you-happier-by-tim-lebon/>.

¹⁴⁹ Massimo, "Stoicism and/vs Positive Psychology?" *How to be a Stoic*, 02 June 2016, <https://howtobeastoxic.wordpress.com/2016/06/02/stoicism-andvs-positive-psychology/>.

from pursuing it and enables people to recognize that though they will make mistakes, there are ways to fix them and do better next time; they cultivate strong resilience to external events and failures which make happiness and well-being more stable than Aristotle, who claims that great misfortunes will disrupt flourishing.

Flourishing, or *eudaimonia*, should not be easily disrupted because it is a concept that is the ultimate human end, and even in modern discussions on flourishing, it is conserved to be a stable state wherein people find content regardless of the circumstances.¹⁵⁰ If *eudaimonia* is unstable and easily lost due to outside circumstances, then it does not appear to be something that any human can reach, but only an elite and lucky few can. This is problematic because the instability and elitist form is no longer a human end, but a *lucky* human end. *Eudaimonia* should not be reserved for only a few humans if it is to be every human's end. In addition, as is evidenced in positive psychology, requiring contingent goods for human happiness does not appear to be the case; it is not necessary to be wealthy, beautiful, or famous in order to be happy. I will argue that all that should be required in *eudaimonia* is what is under a person's control and what choices he makes with what happens in his life, all the while working hard to ensure he is best prepared for what might befall him so he can maintain that happiness and flourish, despite everything. Because the Stoics make *eudaimonia* more accessible and stable, through their claim on only requiring virtue for happiness and only having concern for things within our control, they better capture the ideas in positive psychology and how any human, with the right attitude and reactions, can be happy.

If a person is able to cultivate positive emotions rather than negative ones, they are able to feel more connected to others, which allow us to open up more easily and include others in our

¹⁵⁰ Massimo, "Stoicism."

conception of the self.¹⁵¹ When one has high-levels of positive emotions, there is an inclusion side-effect in their relations with others, wherein they feel more connected and can better understand another's perspective, and this is the broadening effect of positive emotions. When we include others in our conception of the self, we consider the other, whom we are close to, as a part of ourselves. We begin to feel more like one than two.¹⁵² These ideas of including the other in the self are part of self-expansion models, wherein a person begins to consider aspects of the other as part of himself.¹⁵³ With a higher degree of closeness, the bridge between self and other is merged, and through this closeness, the bond is strengthened. The ability to feel this closeness and form connections with others is increased with positive emotions, as it is part of the broadening effect aforementioned. We can be better friends, since we have a broader perspective, are altruistic, provide widespread inclusion, and have higher levels of sympathy and compassion. People who have high levels of positive emotions still feel stress and anxiety but are able to draw on resources quickly in order to maintain their happiness.¹⁵⁴ Living as a Stoic enables one to live this way because cultivating positive emotions, i.e. rational emotions and eupathetic responses, is what they prescribe and doing so creates stable happiness, while also being resilient through times of struggle.

A key aspect to positive psychology is the notion of well-being. Well-being is important to our discussion because it is akin to the Greek conception *eudaimonia* and will be a lens through which to evaluate the ancient conceptions. Well-being is when a person is content and flourishing in life, which is also what *eudaimonia* describes. In addition, it bears weight to the

¹⁵¹ Hefferon, *Positive Psychology*, 31.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Aron, A., and E. N. Aron, "Self and Self-Expansion in Relationships," in *Knowledge Structures in Close Relationships: A Social Psychological Approach*, (New York: Psychology Press, 2014), 325-6.

¹⁵⁴ *Positive Psychology: Exploring the Best in people, Volume 2: Capitalizing on Emotional Experiences*, ed. by Shane J. Lopez, (Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2008), 28.

discussion on friendship because in order for a person to be happy and flourishing, i.e. to have high-levels of well-being, friendships appear to be a necessary component. If friendships are necessary to well-being, then they may also be necessary to *eudaimonia*, which would support Aristotle rather than the Stoics. Before we get to how well-being ties into friendship, however, I will first explicate the different types of well-being and how these studies support the Stoics as the better path to its achievement.

Well-being is assessed via dimensions such as “positive relations with others, self-acceptance, person growth, purpose in life, autonomy, and environmental mastery, i.e. managing one’s life and immediate environment.”¹⁵⁵ The level to which people score highly in these areas determines their overall well-being and flourishing in life. I would like to note here that there are some issues with this approach to well-being, since it can be unclear what contributes to it or who can achieve it, and it is also something which is difficult to measure, since it generally based on people’s own evaluations of their own happiness.¹⁵⁶ In addition, what we choose to research depends upon the discussion at hand, and this can cause narrow research or biased research. However, regardless of these issues, which arise in any science concerning human psychology, what has been discovered thus far strongly correlates with Stoic attitudes. Even though flourishing cannot be read like data (which empirical studies often do), the research done up till now can still shed light on how happy people live and what behaviors they show. Within positive psychology, there are two different levels of well-being measured: hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being. The first measures more material satisfaction with life and the latter measures overall meaning and purpose of high human achievement in life.

¹⁵⁵ Henry, “Positive Psychology,” 27.

¹⁵⁶ Massimo, “Stoicism.”

Hedonic well-being has five subdivisions by which it is measured: career, social, financial, physical, and community.¹⁵⁷ When all five are operating at high levels, then a person is said to be thriving. At first glance, this conception of well-being sounds Aristotelian, since there are contingent goods that are required for our happiness, even though Aristotle's take on *eudaimonia* is not hedonistic. However, we do need these external factors, such as success, wealth, health, friends, and fame, to be at optimal levels in order to truly flourish. When these five categories are further clarified, their similarities to the Stoic conception emerge, rather than the Aristotelian. To begin, career well-being is measured in terms of where you spend your time;¹⁵⁸ it is not about success or the amount of money you make at your job. Instead, it is concerned with how content you are at your place of work and how pleased you are with how you spend your time. The decision of where to work is under your control, and even if conditions at work are not optimal, being a Stoic, one can understand that the state of affairs outside of you are a part of nature and the divine ordinance, making it so you can be content no matter the circumstances. At the same time, if you decide the career is not conducive to your preferences, then you can change jobs. While changing jobs may not be always be easy – a person may have a narrow set of skills or be stuck in a certain city because of family, etc.), even changing jobs within the field to a different company may help to decrease the dissatisfaction. Being able to problem-solve and enhance resilience comes with often experiencing positive emotions, and even if someone finds that he is definitely stuck in a job, he may draw on his resilience, optimism, and hope and use these skills to cope with the situation. The Stoics present the best model to maintain this happiness since they argue for the cultivation of these positive emotions and problem-solving skills.

¹⁵⁷ Hefferon, *Positive Psychology*, 49.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 52. All definitions of types of well-being are also found here.

We can recognize the Stoic ideas and Stoic resilience in the other categories, as well. Financial well-being is not about being wealthy, but about managing your finances well. For social well-being, it's not about having many friends, but having closeness and inclusion with others. For physical well-being, it is not about beauty, but about being healthy. For community well-being, it is not about fame, but about having a role and participating in your community. All of these aspects of hedonic well-being are under our control since they have to do with our choices and how we react to external states of affairs. While these categories concern external things in the world, we decide how to handle them, and hedonic well-being represents that. A Stoic will choose to be healthy because he knows that his body is his and he needs to take care of it should he wish to remain in this life for a long time to be a benefit to society and his loved ones. A Stoic will choose a job that is well-suited to his tastes and that will not be detrimental to his living virtuously. He will choose to make good use of his time with friends because he holds a natural inclination toward attachment and kindness. In this way, a Stoic can aptly capture all these forms of well-being, like Aristotle can, but they can also show how to optimize these aspects and live the best life, regardless of external circumstances upon which one has zero control.

It may be argued that these types of hedonic well-being are too external and that a Stoic may not care at all about his workplace or community, since he is self-sufficient and can be happy no matter what. While this is partially true, it is misleading, since a Stoic does not remove himself from life and become disinterested. William Irvine, a modern philosopher and Stoic, uses Epictetus' dichotomy of control to clarify some points about how a Stoic can maintain interest in external activities. For a quick reminder,¹⁵⁹ the dichotomy of control states that there are some things up to us and some things not up to us. Irvine takes the second half of the dichotomy and

¹⁵⁹ For the full discussion, see page 27.

says that there may be things which are entirely not up to us and some things which we have some but not complete control over.¹⁶⁰ The former would be things like the sun rising, and the latter would be things such as winning a tennis match.¹⁶¹ All of the things we encounter in life will be one of these three things: under our complete control, entirely out of our control, or partially under/out of our control. We should expend the most time and energy on things completely under our control: virtues, opinions, attitudes, reactions, impulses, etc. Since these things are entirely up to us, we should focus our most attention on them as these will make us happy. Things completely out of our control: the sun rising, a meteor crashing, droughts, etc, should not concern us at all, according to the Stoics. Things in the intermediary: winning a tennis match, maintaining a good friendship, eating healthily, etc. should be given focus and attention, since they *partially* concern us and how we act (I will not be healthy if I do not eat healthy food), but when something is upset because of things *not* having to do with us (if another car suddenly rams into mine, resulting in my arm broken and my car totaled, then I should not be distraught at what has befallen me since I had no control over the other car), then we should not be upset.

Understood in this way, we can see how a Stoic will be interested in external states of affairs in so far as they are outcomes of his own attitudes and decisions; I will only win a tennis match if I practice and work hard. However, if I lose the tennis match even while playing my best, I cannot be upset because I tried my best. The goal, then, in these partial-control situations is simply to make good choices, to be virtuous, to maintain your inner peace, and to do your best. The goal is still not an external goal even though it is concerned with external states of affairs; I am not practicing hard in order to *win the match*. Rather, I am practicing hard in order to play my best and enjoy tennis, and therefore, I will be happy no matter the outcome. A Stoic still enters

¹⁶⁰ William Irvine, *A Guide to the Good Life*, (Oxford: University Press: 2009), 88.

¹⁶¹ The tennis match example is courtesy of William Irvine in his book *A Guide to the Good Life*.

the tennis match because he wants to test his own skills and experience joy doing an activity he likes. These are internal goals, but they still take place in the external world. Therefore, a Stoic does not enter the tennis match to win, since that is outside of his control and would be an external goal, and instead decides to play the match and test his skills, which is within his control and is an internal goal, all while requiring an external state of affairs to occur. In this way, we can understand how a Stoic will still be concerned with the external world, insofar as it is part of him accomplishing and living his own internal goals, but his goals shall not be external ones.

When considering the hedonic well-being once more, we can see that it is not quite accurate to say that contingent goods contribute to people's happiness, as found in the Aristotelian stance. Instead, if we adopt more Stoic attitudes, the happiness hinges on a person's outlook and reactions to events and doing so will enhance a person's well-being. As Jane Henry has researched, "life circumstances such as our income, marital status, and environment only account for about 10 percent of the variance in happiness within an individual and there is scope for intentional improvement in the remaining 40 percent; intentional activities [for improvement include] adopting a positive attitude, taking exercise, and being kind to others and pursuing personal meaningful goals."¹⁶² While such research, like aforementioned, has some conceptual issues, we can use it as a starting point to see how adopting a Stoic stance will aid us in our pursuit of human flourishing. Focusing less on things outside of our total control, such as wealth, marital status, and our location, and focusing more on things within our control, such as our outlook, our health (to some extent), and our characters and internal goals, will increase our overall well-being and happiness. Since Aristotle focuses more on these contingent goods and the Stoics focus more on these internal goods, adopting a Stoic standpoint is the better option if we wish to achieve *eudaimonia*.

¹⁶² Henry, "Positive Psychology," 28.

The next type of well-being, eudaimonic, concerns the actualization of human potential, and this is exactly what Aristotle and the Stoics considered themselves to be advocating in ancient Greece and Rome. According to psychologists, eudaimonic well-being is determined by a person's self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relations, environmental mastery, and autonomy.¹⁶³ Most, if not all, of these aspects are contingent upon a person's intrinsic motivation.¹⁶⁴ They can be achieved through self-mastery and mediation, as the Stoics claim. When eudaimonic and hedonic well-being are in sync, then a person has increased satisfaction, growth, development, positive affect, and drive fulfillment.¹⁶⁵ A Stoic is best poised to accomplish this because these aspects are either part of a practicing Stoics life or an immediate byproduct. If a person's goals and concerns are internal, then every category for well-being is up to them, and even if it is only partially up to them, they will have the skills to procure the best outcome or the resiliency to handle a negative outcome. While hedonic well-being is concerned with many externals, we can take an internal stance on them, do our best, and maintain happiness even if something "evil" happens. This is because of self-determination or self-realization.¹⁶⁶ If we pursue a high-paying job because society dictates we need many material goods, we will not be happy because (1) we might not be able to get a high-paying job, (2) we may lose a high-paying job at any moment, or (3) even if we have immense wealth, we may not be happy because we do not like the environment or we have poor social relations or we actually *hate* our job. If we instead pursue our own goals, then we may pursue a job we enjoy, regardless of pay.

While being an Aristotelian may aide one in pursuing one's own happiness regardless of what society dictates, the Stoics take it a step further and proclaim to not even have *external*

¹⁶³ Hefferon, *Positive Psychology*, 78.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹⁶⁶ *Positive Psychology: Volume 2*, 29.

goals and only have *internal* goals. A Stoic would not even think to himself, “I want a job.” However, this does not become “I *do not* desire a job,” and it becomes, “I want things to happen the way they do.” Since we cannot control externals – who hires me, how much money I make, who likes me – I should not make those things *my goals*. If they were my goals, when they do not happen, I will become upset because I have made a mistaken evaluation that those things will make me happy. Instead, if I desire things to happen the way they do, that is, as nature has decided them to happen, then nothing can upset me. However, as previously discussed, this does not mean I will not try for anything or do nothing; I will still have internal goals about living properly. I will search for a job because that is me properly acting in my community, I am providing for my family, or I am providing myself with necessary goods to live. Natural impulses tell me that I must do these things and having a job is the way to get them. However, when a job rejects me or when my pay is not luxurious, I will not complain or be upset; rather, I will continue doing my best, living virtuously, and that is what will keep me happy.

It is also important to note that this external stance is past-oriented. I cannot change the past. However, I should appreciate the present and work toward a happy future. Even in positive psychology, hope, or wish, is considered a future-oriented positive emotion.¹⁶⁷ After all, the Stoics do say to practice joy and wish. Still, that joy and wish should be directed toward appropriate things, only those things which are actually good. Thus, while a job may have rejected me, I can still wish that I will find a nice job wherein I can be a great employee. Yet this wish is still a preferred indifferent because if I *do not* find a nice job, then I should not be upset.

Because of their stance on emotions and appropriation, the Stoics are very resilient and can cope well with negative events, which is a key aspect of being able to maintain a stable level of human flourishing. It is not about denying the negative, but about overcoming it. Bad things

¹⁶⁷ *Positive Psychology: Volume 2*, 24.

do happen, but as a Stoic, they change their outlook so that these things are not actually bad and they work hard toward making a happy future and enjoying the present moment. Positive psychology supports proliferating problem-solving skills and emotional intelligence – both of which the Stoics advocate. They can deal with negative situations and look at them from a different perspective, thereby allowing them to deal with it. In addition, studies have shown that a person is able to train her brain to enhance feeling positive emotions while minimizing disruptive behaviors to well-being.¹⁶⁸ Stoic behaviors, such as working on feeling appropriate emotions, will aide a person best in achieving human happiness because they will learn to feel only those positive emotions more than the negative ones. In addition, Stoic behaviors also capture emotional intelligence: they first perceive the feeling and then they use that feeling properly in order to facilitate thinking, understanding, and managing “emotion.”¹⁶⁹ They feel their affective responses and then decide whether it’s appropriate and how to use it in that situation. These feelings are elicited by external stimuli, or the external state of affairs which comes from nature and is outside of our control, but what we do with the stimuli, and then our impulses, determines our actions.

There is also evidence that links a happy disposition and a positive outlook on life with a person’s overall health. According to psychological studies on emotions, a person’s overall “optimism and the capacity to view difficulties or even trauma as an opportunity for growth, generally offers a helpful attitude to life; optimists view bad things that happen to them as specific and transitory events caused by the circumstances.”¹⁷⁰ As we’ve seen with the Stoics, they take traumas and misfortunes as transitory events, out of our control, which are not cause for grief, but are instead viewed as opportunities to grow in our own affective responses and

¹⁶⁸ Massimo, “Stoicism.”

¹⁶⁹ Hefferon, *Positive Psychology*, 35.

¹⁷⁰ Henry, “Positive Psychology,” 30.

retain our optimism and hope about life. Recall that for the Stoics, hope is a key positive emotion, and that is also a key element to happy people who have an overall healthy psychological well-being. Aristotle, on the other hand, views some misfortunes as completely overturning hopes for happiness,¹⁷¹ and this is one of the reasons his views on *eudaimonia* are more unstable than the Stoics. Also, if our happiness does depend on our outlook, then it may be prudent for us to focus more on maintaining optimism even in light of terrible situations.

Coupled with these notions of evaluations is the Stoic's handling of emotions. In psychology, it is noted how emotions arise from appraisals of information.¹⁷² People observe states of affairs and assign to them judgment values based on past experiences and how they understand certain events to affect them.¹⁷³ As previously discussed, the Stoics describe emotions as evaluative judgments – assignments of value to states of affairs. Making sense of events and appraising their emotional value is a key aspect for giving meaning to a person's life. When a person makes “sense of experience and regulates emotion in a desired direction, changes in belief are motivated.”¹⁷⁴ Often, changes in emotion arise from specific appraisals of a situation; changing and adapting one's emotions to a situation and thereby changing beliefs is important in maintaining happiness and coping with negative situations. The beliefs that a person holds will affect the appraisals they make of a certain situation. Being able to change these beliefs, then, will result in different appraisals, and making more *positive* appraisals will ultimately result in human flourishing. By adopting the Stoic stance on emotions as evaluative judgments, we can better regulate these emotions because we have adapted our beliefs to properly appraise certain events, whether internal or external. These appraisals, as well, will be positive in nature, since

¹⁷¹ Refer to page 9 for Aristotle's claims on misfortune in *Nicomachean Ethics*.

¹⁷² *Mindfulness, Acceptance, and Positive Psychology: The Seven Foundations of Well-Being*, ed. Todd B Kashdan and Joseph Ciarrochi, (Oakland: Context Press, 2013),. 39.

¹⁷³ *Positive Psychology: Volume 2*, 26.

¹⁷⁴ *Mindfulness*, 40.

those types of feelings are the only good ones. Having more appropriate appraisals and more positive emotions will aid someone in cultivating a happy and fulfilling life because they can properly understand a situation, feel the proper emotion, and therefore act accordingly.

Correcting our evaluations will have positive outcomes on our daily lives, as well. If we believe that our mistakes are evil and begin to feel angry with ourselves for not living well, then we develop tunnel vision on those issues and that's all we can see; this perspective is harmful to happiness and well-being. If, however, we can adopt a stance of self-compassion and broaden our perspective to thinking that making mistakes and having hardship is part of being human, we can live better.¹⁷⁵ Taking this stance is a changed evaluation on our own life and the lives of those around us, as all being valuable and full of hardship, because that is simply *how nature made life*. Thus, adopting the Stoic stance on emotions will aid us in being happier, feeling more connected to others, and being more compassionate, all which is necessary in living well and making friends.

Still, psychologists¹⁷⁶ do note a downside to those who maintain positive attitudes consistently. Often, they underestimate risk and do not treat bad situations with the proper care. However, the Stoics have an answer to this issue. First, they call for caution in most things – in the people one chooses to have as friends, in the decisions you make, and other choices – so they will not underestimate risk since they value caution as a positive emotion to cultivate. Secondly, they have a psychological technique of negative visualization. On a daily basis, the Stoics advise for people to practice negative visualization, which is imagining the bad things that could happen to them so that when they do occur, they will not be surprised and they will not allow their

¹⁷⁵ *Mindfulness*, 80.

¹⁷⁶ Henry, "Positive Psychology," 31.

emotions to get out of control.¹⁷⁷ If they are prepared for the bad things to happen, then they will not be upset when they do. When applying this to risk, a Stoic will recognize, understand, and appreciate the bad things that could happen and therefore only undertake endeavors if they are prepared for those bad things to happen. They exercise *caution*, one of the appropriate emotions, in order to decide on the best course of action and whether doing action *x* is the appropriate thing to do. They will not be careless nor underestimate risk because they proceed through life with caution and therefore treat negative situations appropriately. When a new situation arises, they will evaluate it, visualize the bad things that may occur, consider whether this action is appropriate, and then either proceed with caution or not undertake the proposed endeavor. In this way, a Stoic can maintain their positive outlooks and optimism without underestimating risk.

Overall, we can see how practicing Stoic principles will enable one to achieve happiness, well-being, or *eudaimonia*. Adopting a positive outlook, problem solving skills, coping strategies, and emotional intelligence will allow one to flourish. While it may be possible to pose a similar argument for Aristotle – and be quite successful – the Stoics present a more accessible, practical, and stable form of living in order to achieve happiness. Most of their views are supported by what is found in positive psychology and methods one can practice in order to live well. I hope I have shown that being a Stoic places one in a position for optimal success in coping with stress, pursuing proper goals, upholding positivity, and achieve high-levels of well-being. In the next section, I will discuss these ideas in relation to friendship and show how a person who has achieved these levels of well-being will make the best kind of friend.

Well-Being and Friendship

Friendship plays an important role in well-being; in studies on people's happiness, those with strong relationships and social circles were overall happy, and these relationships are more

¹⁷⁷ Irvine, "Guide to the Good Life," 68.

critical to well-being than material goods, such as income.¹⁷⁸ Psychologists note the necessity of friends in the lives of well-adjusted, happy people.¹⁷⁹ Friends help each other to cope with stressful life events, and when there is an absence of friendship, there is an increase in loneliness, depression, and psychosomatic illness.¹⁸⁰ When people are isolated, it is generally noted that their overall happiness is decreased because they are lacking the support system to handle misfortunes. With these reports, however, there is the problem of causal direction – are they feeling unhappy because they don't have friends, or do they not have friends because they are unhappy? This is the classic *Euthyphro* problem brought out in Plato's dialogue, wherein the character, Euthphryo, defines piety as being loved by the gods. Socrates raises the issue, however, of whether something is loved by the gods because it is pious or whether it is pious because it is loved by the gods. The definition is therefore flawed because the direction of the correlation is confused and uncertain. In the case of friendship and unhappiness, there is the same issue of direction on whether a person's isolation and lack of friends is causing their unhappiness or whether they were unhappy and therefore lost their friends; the answer, just as in the *Euthyphro* problem is unknown. Still, it is important to note that happy people generally have friends and close relations, and in these friendships, it is the quality, not the quantity, of friendships which matter for true happiness and well-being.¹⁸¹

In addition, adopting a positive outlook and cultivating positive emotions will “enhance intimacy and mutual support” among friends.¹⁸² This is an extension of the self-compassion discussed in the previous section, where people recognize everyone as experiencing the same suffering and therefore have a broadened perspective on life. With such a perspective, people are

¹⁷⁸ Henry, “Positive Psychology,” 30.

¹⁷⁹ Hefferon, *Positive Psychology*, 56-7.

¹⁸⁰ Ray Pahl, “Friendship, Trust, and Mutuality,” in *Well-Being*, 259.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 261.

¹⁸² *Mindfulness*, 88.

better able to deal with life circumstances and show compassion to others. When we show compassions to others, our network of friends is enhanced because we are showing them kindness, care, concern, attention, and sympathy. Doing so will necessarily strengthen bonds. Therefore, adopting these positive perspectives, most accessible through a Stoic lens, will enable one to cultivate many positive, high-quality friendships.

Still, it seems that there are aspects present in all friendships, regardless of how ideal it is, how long the relationship has lasted, or how close the two people are. In empirical research on surveying people about their types of friendships, people do not “consider their more light-hearted or short-lived friendships to be any less valuable or worthwhile” than long-term, intimate relationships, and these light-hearted friendships are “a kind of vital counter-balance to other more serious or committed relationships.”¹⁸³ People appear to have varying levels of high-quality friendships that may not all require the levels of intimacy and longevity as may have been presumed. Instead of merely having two close friends in order to fulfill their needs, people create “friend-like, friend-enveloped, and family-like personal communities [which] have a range of people to whom they can turn for a whole range of emotional and material support.”¹⁸⁴ In addition, this diversity of ties indicates a better physical and mental health of the person creating these communities. This might seem more Aristotelian, as perhaps the virtuous friendships are those fewer ones which have higher intimacy and closeness, whereas these light-hearted friendships are the ones of utility and pleasure. However, it is important to note that the light-hearted friendships, unlike the ones of utility or pleasure, are not lower-ranked by the people involved and still appear to have positive, high-quality aspects that may not turn out to be merely friendships of utility.

¹⁸³ Pahl, “Friendship, Trust, and Mutuality,” 264.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 266.

What does support Aristotle's conception of friendship is that it is necessary to happiness. Friendship is a contingent good which is required for *eudaimonia*, while for the Stoics, it is not. If the Stoics only view friendship as a preferred indifferent, then they may be ignoring the evidence that those who lack friends are generally depressed and lonely, and if this is the case, such a person cannot achieve *eudaimonia*, like Aristotle claims. However, we must take care not to ignore the *Euthyphro* problem from earlier and evaluate how well the Stoics can handle this concern. If we take the correlation to be that they do not have friends because they are unhappy, then there is a way for the Stoics to answer this issue. The lonely person must be mistaken about what is important, and once he gains true knowledge and see that only being virtuous is good and that is all you need for happiness, then he can work toward becoming happy. Once he solves his own issues, then he can maintain this happiness and then make friends. He will make his friends not because he recognizes their necessity to his own happiness, but because he is kind and has a friendly disposition that he regained through his quest for knowledge, and such a disposition is natural, even for the Stoics. Friends, then, will be a byproduct of happiness and not a goal sought in order to achieve happiness.

This presents an issue to Aristotle because if friends are necessary to happiness, they may be sought in order to bring about happiness, including one's own self-actualization and excellence, rather than sought for the friend himself. An excellent man will recognize that he cannot be happy unless he has friends, and he will also recognize it as a misfortune if he loses all his friends. Without his friends, a virtuous man cannot achieve *eudaimonia*, and while such a man may have moral excellence, not having friends and desiring happiness may have a negative effect on either his morality or his happiness. He may turn to making poor decisions in order to make or keep friends. While he ought not do so since he is moral, he knows that if he cannot

maintain friends, he cannot be happy, since friends are a necessary contingent good in Aristotle's conception of *eudaimonia*. Again, here we see the instability of Aristotelian happiness.

A Stoic, as aforementioned, will not have this concern. A friendship will occur more naturally and more ethically since they will not be sought for any other reason besides a natural, kindly motivation to be friendly towards others. A friendship is not necessary to a Stoic's happiness because all he needs is his virtuous character; whether he has friends or not will not affect his success in *eudaimonia*. While this initially seems strange, as friendships seem necessary to happiness, they are only necessary insofar as they naturally occur to people who are happy – who are good people. Yet since their goodness and their happiness are not founded on having friends, when they lose friends or go through periods where they may have no friends, they will be able to deal with it better than an Aristotelian. Accordingly, by maintaining their happiness, the Stoics can make new friends easily and not grieve over having lost friends. An Aristotelian, on the other hand, needs his friends and losing them would be a misfortune, and if such friends were never regained, *eudaimonia* would be impossible to achieve. Having such circumstances which depend on other people and require outside, uncontrollable sources is not, I think, a sustainable or advisable approach to *eudaimonia*. Instead, as the Stoics said, depending on the self and building up resilience to misfortunes in order to maintain happiness will be the better course of action to live a happy, good life. Because friends are other people, who are not controllable, who are impermanent, and prone to risk, they, too, should not be a requirement for our happiness. Rather, when we are happy, friends will come naturally, and just as they go naturally, a Stoic can maintain their happiness in such loss and continue making friends without making a fuss.

However, it may be argued that friendships require a certain level of vulnerability and the Stoics, through having such stable and unmoved happiness, may be missing this aspect. Indeed, the Stoic doctrine as a whole seems to have the objective of decreasing vulnerability, which is defined as being subject to harm, whether it be from other people or from external circumstances. When it comes to social interactions, there is a sense of vulnerability always present because closeness involves sharing personal stories, opening oneself up to the criticism of others, and doing so involves the possibility of being hurt. In addition, we are at the mercy of any event befalling us, whether it be losing a friend, getting injured, or being tortured, and if the Stoics are ignoring this key aspect of life as a social creature, then they may also be missing an important aspect of friendship. In regards to vulnerability to circumstances, I think this notion is a key reason for the Stoic principles in the first place. We cannot control what befalls us, and this implies that we are vulnerable to circumstances. However, the Stoics argue to counteract this vulnerability by not allowing those external circumstances to affect us. Even if something bad happens to be, like I lose a friend, I can continue to be virtuous and therefore be happy. BY acting thus, I can make new friends and continuing living my life without considering what happened to me to be a misfortune.

Considering vulnerability in friendships, I do agree that the Stoics leave out the possibility of harm in personal relationships. Since the words coming from another person are externals and outside of one's control, they should not have the power to make one angry or sad. As the Stoics claim, a good friend should offer advice and be truthful to the friend, even if those words may not be kind. The friend, though, if he is a practicing Stoic, should not get angry or mad at the advice or words, but should instead contemplate upon them and decide to change his actions or not.

While vulnerability may be missing from the Stoic conception, I do not think this is necessarily a bad thing. Partially, this is simply because of how we define “vulnerability.” Automatically, people attach being open and honest with being vulnerable – a person may emotionally hurt you if you show your feelings (for example, making a confession of love makes you vulnerable to rejection). While the Stoics may not capture this vulnerability so defined, a Stoic friend will still be open, caring, mindful, giving, and honest, and all that he loses is the emotional risk. If a person is still open in consideration to topics that most would consider as vulnerable (admitting to a problem, making a confession, etc.), but they are not going to be harmed emotionally by a rejection, then losing this “vulnerability” is perhaps not a bad thing. The person will still be open about all these things, but he will not be torn apart if he is rejected or laughed at. In addition, while the Stoic may not be putting himself at emotional risk when being open, he may still feel sad or anxious as an impulse when a friend says something negative. Instead of being hurt, though, he will take it appreciatively and make an appropriate decision about what to do. For a person’s well-being, being open and sharing with others and building that connection is more important than “vulnerability,” or rather, being emotionally hurt when others say negative things, and the Stoics capture this.

Still, to claim that when a man loses everything – including friends and loved ones – he can still retain all his happiness, since new friends can be cultivated, sounds cold and unfeeling. Yet man is naturally inclined to value himself and love himself (we all have instincts for survival), and this self-love, even to the Stoics, is natural and we are all born with an innate sense of self-love.¹⁸⁵ If this is the case, when disasters do befall man, he cannot simply wallow and then kill himself; if he wants to go on living, and living happily, he must recognize that external goods are only transient and that he must not place his happiness in them. If he does so, he is

¹⁸⁵ Cicero, “Friendship,” 216.

going against nature – going against his self-love – and that is, for the Stoics, irrational. As seen in previous sections, Aristotle firmly believes that a man cannot be happy without his contingent goods and therefore friends. While this seems to better capture the importance of friends in our life, rarely do friendships last forever, and certainly no human lasts forever; thus, our happiness is fragile. However, the Stoic wise man seems to be more stable in his happiness than the excellent man in Aristotelian theory, as all he needs for his happiness is himself. Yet if the Stoic man truly turns out to be cold because of his “excessive” self-sufficiency, then the stability of his happiness may not be worth the loss of emotion.

The Self-Sufficient Stoic

The issue concerning whether the Stoics are too self-sufficient to make good friends is the strongest objection to their claims. In order to help smooth out the worries, I will turn to the Stoic literature and offer evidence for the claim that while they may be self-sufficient, it is not of the kind which makes them distant or unfeeling toward others. To begin, I will turn to what Seneca and Cicero have to say on the matter. For the Stoics, to say man is self-sufficient is to say that nothing may be taken from him. It is ordained by nature that man love himself and these feelings are therefore inborn. As we have seen, anything natural is good, so self-love is good. When we make friends, we unite with another like the self (who is also self-sufficient and kind, following his natural impulses), and these others will also be worthy of love; just as they love themselves, we will love them, too.¹⁸⁶

In response to self-sufficiency, Seneca says that the wise man “can do without friends, [but does not] desire to do without them.”¹⁸⁷ A Stoic man may come to acquire friends and doing so is entirely within his control. When a man loses a friend, whether to an accident, illness, war,

¹⁸⁶ Cicero, “Friendship,” 224-6

¹⁸⁷ Seneca, “On Philosophy and Friendship,” Section 5.

or even quarrel, he has the control to go out and make new friends, and will not sit around and mourn his loss. While some claim the Stoics treat friends as replaceable, like inanimate objects, as we have seen with Cicero, friends are near and dear, and our relations with them are full of affection. When we seek new friends and replace old ones this is not because we view these old friends as worthless or replaceable, but that it is the right thing to do in order to avoid being overcome by sadness. A Stoic, one must remember though, is not impervious to any kind of pain, but instead cultivates the abilities necessary to handle them in a manner which is conducive to maintaining inner peace, cultivating happiness, and living in harmony with nature.

Part of achieving such balance includes the proper treatment and understanding of friendship. It is natural to have friends and if we lose old ones, naturally, we will make new ones. Recognizing that we have the power to make new friends will help us cope with the loss of old ones. Echoing this, Cicero says that we should recognize the transience of all mortal things, so we should always be looking for people to love and to love in return, but while doing this, we ought to still cherish our old friends in memory.¹⁸⁸ By doing this, we can continue to give love and receive love and therefore not only improve the quality of our own lives, but of others. Because of this, we find pleasure in not only “maintaining old and established friendships, but also in beginning and acquiring new ones.”¹⁸⁹

In addition, in order for friendship to be sought for its own sake, being self-sufficient seems to be necessary.¹⁹⁰ If we are sad, dispirited, grieving, desiring wealth or profit, or desiring power or stature – then we are not self-sufficient and we will seek friends in order to fill these voids instead of seeking them for the friendship itself. If we are being false or hypocritical in making our friends for reasons other than the man himself – i.e. “the whole personality unified in

¹⁸⁸ Cicero, “Friendship,” 226.

¹⁸⁹ Seneca, “On Philosophy and Friendship,” Section 7.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., Section 12.

one” – we are not pursuing friendship but something else (as seen in friendships of utility). Thus, in order for friendships to be authentic and pursued for its own sake, the man must be self-sufficient. Cicero also supports claims of self-sufficiency being necessary to properly valuing the other, since we will not *need* our friends, we instead value their qualities and appreciate the joy they bring to our lives; if they are not *needed*, then when we do make friends out of the pure affection for that other person, it is more meaningful since we are not trying to get anything – not even happiness – from them.¹⁹¹ Thus, being self-sufficient strengthens our capacity for making friends, since we will not require anything from them other than just sharing our lives, and that seems to be what authentic friendship is.

Many of these aspects come to light in our friendships with others and how the Stoics present their sage’s lifestyle. The positive aspects of a high-quality friendship will best be maximized by living a Stoic lifestyle. While being a Stoic is not easy, and even ancient Stoics never called themselves “wise men” or perfect Stoics, it is a way of life which can be achieved through balancing emotions and recognizing that we have control in personal aspects of our lives, including our emotions, reactions, and opinions. Granted, some people will naturally be more disposed to take on such a lifestyle than others, but it is something which can be taught and adapted to through dedication and practice. Such a venture may be worthwhile if it will lead to happiness, well-being, and strong personal relationships.

The Stoics enable a person to attain these positive, high-quality friendships in areas such as prosocial behavior, intimacy, shared activities, and affection. First, let us see how the Stoics will attain prosocial behaviors, such as helping, sharing, giving, and friendliness. For a Stoic, friendship is based on a natural inclination toward the interest of others, and such innate

¹⁹¹ Cicero, “Friendship,” 193.

tendencies are the basis of virtue.¹⁹² While not being necessary, friendship naturally arises from virtue, and when a person recognizes that being virtuous is the only true good which will contribute to her happiness, then making friendships will simply be a natural step to take. Because of its base in such a natural impulse, friendliness and the kindness involved in treating others properly will necessarily be part of the Stoic life. As such, prosocial behavior will also be an innate impulse and naturally be found in any friendships formed. When someone is friendly, they smile often and are good-natured, showcasing care for another. They will want to help their friends because they take an active interest in others and their well-being, and being good-natured, they will look out for their friends and aide them in whatever way they can. Recall Cicero's discussion of friendship wherein he discusses how a friend will aide in successes, offer advice and assistance, and put the friend's needs above his own. In psychologists' discussions on friendship, friends feel closer to each other and are therefore more likely to help the friend and also sacrifice their own desires for the gain of another.¹⁹³ Such sacrifice, as discussed in Chapter 2, is not found in Aristotle's discussion of friendship, but it is found in the Stoic's conception. Because the friend is not merely another self, the Stoics can do things for them that they would not do for their selves, and this includes sacrifice, as they are willing to let a friend survive in place of himself.¹⁹⁴ We can therefore see prosocial behavior arises naturally from being a Stoic, and such prosocial behavior will be a part of a wise person's dispositions; they will be disposed to experience good intent, friendship, approval, and acceptance of one another.¹⁹⁵ Thus, because of their natural impulse toward friendship and their disposition to be kind, the Stoic will showcase all the prosocial behaviors necessary to being a good friend.

¹⁹² Graver, *Stoicism*, 175.

¹⁹³ Hruschka, *Friendship*, 31.

¹⁹⁴ Graver, *Stoicism*, 184.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 180.

In addition, a Stoic will engage in shared activities with his friends. As seen above, a Stoic naturally has the prosocial behaviors involved in friendship and tied in with these is the wish to spend time with the friend. In order to be able to help, talk, and laugh together, a Stoic will naturally and effortlessly find time to spend with his friend as well as partake in activities together which they both enjoy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, one can better understand how being a Stoic optimizes one's success for living well and happily, as well as maintain and cultivate positive-high-quality friendships. Because Stoics banish negative emotions, they will not be prone to quarrels, unhappiness, anger, jealousy, or hypocrisy. Through such a view on emotion, they are better able to be friends with their affective responses and natural inclinations toward kindness, altruistic behavior, unguarded giving, and dedicated care and attention.

While some have argued that the Stoics are unfeeling and detached in their friendships, this is not the case, as shown through a deeper understanding of the Stoics' primary texts and secondary literature. Instead, the Stoics are kind-hearted, generous, attentive, intimate, and desire to form attachments because doing so, being social, is ultimately natural and good. Through this, they capture all of the characteristics in positive, high-quality friendships, and because they offer proven ways of coping, resilience, positivity, and motivation, they are able to be the types of people to maintain these friendships. When one applies Stoic attitudes and behaviors to the realm of friendship, the results will be a happier person and more high-quality friendships.

On the other hand, while Aristotle does certainly capture many of these same aspects, too, and can overall offer a strong conception of friendship that fits with modern psychology, he falls short mainly on two counts: grounding friendship in moral excellence alone and limiting

happiness to superior, fortunate people. As we have seen, there are numerous grounds for friendship, although not all were able to be covered here, but ones which are certainly not limited to virtue. In addition, well-being and happiness are achievable by a high number of people, granted they adopt the right perspectives and properly handle their emotions. Misfortune, luck, and contingent goods have less to do with ultimate human flourishing than Aristotle presumes. While Aristotle may be defended against such claims, that is not my purpose here, as I wish to argue for a more positive, applicable Stoic account, one which is often overlooked or underdeveloped in contemporary literature on friendship.

What we can take away from this discussion on friendship is that the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers got many ideas right and offered sound advice on how one ought to conduct themselves in friendships. In order to have a positive, high-quality friendship and have meaningful relations with others, one must be kind, honest, generous, trustworthy, sincere, and happy. If one is not psychologically well-adjusted, then one cannot maintain good friendships and neither can they maintain a happy life. If we wish to optimize our well-being and achieve human flourishing, adopting many of the Stoic ideals may prove helpful. As seen in Positive Psychology and other studies on Stoicism, adopting their attitudes may enhance human flourishing and happiness. While there are empirical and conceptual concerns with psychology and the way in which they conduct research, what has come to light thus far seems promising; in addition, the Stoic view, like any other, is amenable to new input. Regardless, the Stoics are not as unfeeling or emotionally distant as numerous scholars have interpreted them, and such readings have unfortunately led to the overall underrepresentation of positive Stoic contributions to our understanding of good friendships. As I have argued, the Stoics ideas on

friendship can offer insight into how we should live our lives and form meaningful, intimate, and affectionate bonds with others.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Annas, Julia. "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism," *Mind* 86, no. 344 (1977): 544.
- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1985.
- Aron, A., and E. N. Aron. "Self and Self-Expansion in Relationships." In *Knowledge Structures in Close Relationships: A Social Psychological Approach*, edited by G. J. O. Fletcher and J. Fitness. New York: Psychology Press, 2014. 325-344.
- Aurelius, Marcus. "Meditations." In *Marcus Aurelius and His Times*, edited by Walter J. Black. New York: Classics Club, 1945. 11-133.
- Berndt, Thomas J. "Friendship Quality and Social Development," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 11, no. 1 (2002): 7.
- Brendgen, Mara, and William M. Bukowski, Anna Beth Dorylw, and Dorothy Markiewicz. "The Relations Between Friendship Quality, Ranked-Friendship Preferences, and Adolescents' Behavior With Their Friends." *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (2001): 396-7.
- Boniwell, Ilona, and Kate Hefferon. *Positive Psychology: Theory, Research, and Applications*. New York: Open University Press, 2011.
- Brennan, Tad. *The Stoic Life*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Brewer, Talbot. "Virtues We Can Share: Friendship and Aristotelian Ethical Theory." *Ethics* 115 (2005): 724.
- Cicero. "On Friendship." In *On the Good Life*. London: Penguin Books, 1971.
- Epictetus. "Of Friendship," in *Discourses and Enchiridion*. New York: Walter J. Black, 1944.
- Graver, Margaret. *Stoicism and Emotion*. Chicago: University Press, 2007.
- Hartup, Willard W., and Nan Stevens. "Friendships and Adaptation across the Life Span." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 8, no. 3 (1999): 76.
- Henry, Jane. "Positive Psychology and the Development of Well-being." In *Well-Being: Individual, Community, and Social Perspectives*, edited by John Haworth and Graham Hart. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

- Hruschka, Daniel J. *Friendship: Development, Ecology, and Evolution of a Relationship*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010.
- Hyatte, Reginald. *The Arts of Friendship: The Idealization of Friendship in Medieval and Early Renaissance Literature*. Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1994.
- Irvine, William. *A Guide to the Good Life*. Oxford: University Press: 2009.
- Konstan, David. *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature*. Toronto: University Press, 2006.
- Lebon, Tim. "Does Stoicism Make You Happier?" *Stoicism Today*. 05 March 2016.
<http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/stoicismtoday/2016/03/05/does-stoicism-make-you-happier-by-tim-lebon/>.
- Lesses, Glenn. "Austere Friends: The Stoics and Friendship." *Apeiron: A Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science* 26, no. 1 (1993): 62.
- Lynch, Sandra. *Philosophy and Friendship*. Edinburgh: University Press, 2005.
- Massimo. "Stoicism and/vs Positive Psychology?" *How to be a Stoic*. 02 June 2016.
<https://howtobeastoxic.wordpress.com/2016/06/02/stoicism-andvs-positive-psychology/>.
- Mindfulness, Acceptance, and Positive Psychology: The Seven Foundations of Well-Being*, edited by Todd B Kashdan and Joseph Ciarrochi. Oakland: Context Press, 2013.
- Pahl, Ray. "Towards a More Significant Sociology of Friendship." *European Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 3 (2002): 262.
- Positive Psychology: Exploring the Best in people, Volume 2: Capitalizing on Emotional Experiences*, edited by Shane J. Lopez. Connecticut, Praeger Publishers, 2008.
- Price, A.W. *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Reydams-Schils, Gretchen. *Roman Stoics*. Chicago: University Press, 2005.
- Seneca. "On Benefits." *Seneca's Essays, Volume III*. 10 March 2016.
http://www.stoics.com/seneca_essays_book_3.html#%E2%80%98benefits1.

Seneca. "On Philosophy and Friendship." *Wikisource*. March 04, 2016.

https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Moral_letters_to_Lucilius/Letter_9.

Tefler, Elizabeth. "Friendship." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 71 (1970-1): 2.

Vlastos, Gregory. "Happiness and Virtue in Socrates' Moral Theory." In *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher*. Cambridge Univ. Press: 1991.

White, Nicholas. *Individual and Conflict in Greek Ethics*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002.