

## Are Stoics Happy? Stoic Week 2016 Report part 2 (of 4) Tim LeBon

### Introduction

“For what prevents us from saying that the happy life is to have a mind that is independent, elevated, fearless, and unshakeable, a mind that exists beyond the reach of fear and of desire, that regards honour as the only good and infamy as the only evil, and everything else as a trivial collection of things, which come and go, neither subtracting anything from the happy life nor adding anything to it, and do not increase or diminish the highest good? It is inevitable that a man with such a grounding, whether he wills it or not, will be accompanied by continuous cheerfulness and a profound happiness that comes from deep inside him, since he is one who takes pleasure in his own resources and wishes for no joys greater than those of his own heart.”

Seneca, *On the Happy Life* 4. (translated J. Davie)

“I wonder if I might draw your attention to an observation of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius? [Jeeves] said. “Does anything befall you? It is good. It is part of the destiny of the universe ordained for you from the beginning. All that befalls you is part of the great web.”

I breathed a bit stertorously. ‘He said that, did he?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Well, you can tell him from me he’s an ass.’”

P.G. Wodehouse *The Mating Season*

### **Introduction**

Are Stoics happy? When reading Seneca, you may become convinced that a profound happiness must accompany anyone who has developed the independent, elevated and fearless mind of a Stoic. The novelist P.G Wodehouse provides a different perspective. Who is right? Armchair philosophising cannot provide the answer. It is an empirical matter and in the twenty-first century we have access to methods of investigation that were not available to the Roman Stoics. For several years the Stoicism Today project has been working on this question – this article provides an update on some of the latest findings.

The focus in this article is what we can learn from the results of the questionnaires given to participants at the start of the [Stoic Week](#) that took place between Oct 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016. Stoic Week has become an annual event in which anyone with access to the internet is invited to “live like a Stoic” for a week. To do this participants download and read a free booklet and audio materials carry out Stoic exercises daily and, if they are kind, help us with our research by filling in questionnaires at the start and end of the week. This year participants completed the SABS scale (the Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours scale v3.0), a measure designed by the Stoicism Today team to measure someone’s level of Stoicism and three validated well-being scales which measure Satisfaction with Life, Flourishing and Positive and Negative emotions respectively. In this way it is possible, by using the statistical method of correlation, to ascertain whether Stoic attitudes and

behaviours go with happiness, as Seneca would have us believe – or perhaps not, as P.G. Wodehouse implies.

### Your questions answered

This year the main findings are being presented as answers to questions people have asked in past years. Detailed facts and figures can be found in the appendices at the end.

Q: Are Stoics happy?

A: Our analysis suggests that in general the more Stoic one is the happier one is too.

Taking an average of the 3 well-being scales, there is a correlation coefficient of .4 between Stoicism and well-being. Given the size of the sample (nearly two thousand), the chances of this association being accidental is less than one in a million.

Of course, correlation does not necessarily imply causation. It could be that the association exists because the happier one is, the more Stoic one is, or possibly something else (such as income) could be driving both higher levels of happiness and Stoicism. However, once this strong correlation between well-being and Stoicism *at the start of Stoic Week* and a significant increase in well-being during Stoic Week (which has been found to be the case in previous years, this year's findings will be reported in part 3 of this report), it would not be unreasonable to infer some causation going in the direction of practising Stoicism and being somewhat happier. This seems to be true however we define happiness, though we should also note that the association is stronger for flourishing (happiness in the round) than for life satisfaction.

Seneca 1 P.G Wodehouse 0?

Q: Hold on, Isn't Stoicism all about being virtuous and not about happiness? Don't Stoics go so far as to say that happiness is a "preferred indifferent". So why are you bothering to do this research?

A: It's true, the convinced Stoic would say that this finding itself is a preferred indifferent. They would doubtless be pleased that Stoicism goes with happiness, but would argue that this isn't the main reason you should be Stoic.

However this is not the whole story. We have the testament of Seneca (quoted above) as well as Epictetus who often pointed out that Stoicism leads to greater happiness and more tranquillity. They realised that many of their audience were *not* convinced Stoics. Practical wisdom necessitated pointing to Stoicism's positive side-effects (happiness and tranquillity) to win over converts. I would argue that today we are in much the same situation as the Roman Stoics. Most of our audience are not convinced Stoics either. But their interest may be piqued when by learning that Stoicism may make you happier. Certainly they will also be reassured by learning that Stoicism is unlikely to make you miserable or emotionless. If we would like Stoicism to be promoted in companies, government and within the NHS, these findings about the relationship between Stoicism and well-being become all the more important.

Q: I can believe that Stoics are less unhappy, but you're not claiming that Stoicism actually goes with positive emotions too, are you?

A: Actually our analysis suggests that Stoicism does go with positive emotions as much as with the reduction of negative emotions.

The SPANE scale allows us to measure the relationship of Stoicism with various emotions, positive and negative. Table 1 shows the correlation coefficient<sup>1</sup> between emotions and Stoicism.

Emotion	Correlation with Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours
Contented	0.35
Good	0.32
Positive	0.31
Pleasant	0.30
Negative	-0.29
Bad	-0.28
Happy	0.28
Sad	-0.26
Joyful	0.26
Afraid	-0.26
Unpleasant	-0.24
Angry	-0.24

**Table 1 : Correlation of SABS 3.0 scores and SPANE items**

So perhaps Seneca is exaggerating only a little when he says that Stoicism leads to “continuous cheerfulness and a profound happiness”

Seneca 2 P.G Wodehouse 0?

Q: Are those who know a lot about Stoicism (without practising it) happier?

A: No. There is only a weak association between stated knowledge of Stoicism and average well-being (a correlation co-efficient of about .1) , whereas it’s nearly four times higher for people who practise Stoicism.

Q: Which has more impact on happiness, Stoic behaviours or attitudes?

A: Behaviours are significantly more impactful – a coefficient of .38 as opposed to .29 for attitudes.

Q: You previously published a report on the [demographics of Stoic Week 2016](#). Can you now tell us anything about which groups are most and least Stoic?

A; Yes, absolutely, what would you like to know?

Q: Do you get more or less Stoic as you get older?

A: Interestingly, there seems to be quite a strong relationship between age and Stoicism. The under 18s (admittedly a very small group) were by far the least Stoic. The over 55s were the most Stoic and in general the older people are, the more Stoic they are. The average SABS scores for each age group are as follows:

Age	Average SABS score
over 55	168.6
46-55	165.3
36-45	165.3
26-35	162.10
18-25	159.00
Under 18	148.50

**Table 2: Relationship between Age and degree of Stoicism**

Q: Which area of the world is most Stoic?

A: The Americas win . The UK (stiff upper lip notwithstanding) trails the field.

Region	Average SABS score
USA	165.9
South America	165.4
Canada	163.7
Europe	162.1
Australia	161.5
Africa	161.2
Asia	160.1
UK	158.7

**Table 3: Relationship between geographic region and degree of Stoicism**

Q: Are men or women more Stoic?

A: Our data suggests that men are marginally more Stoic, averaging 164.5 on the SABS scale as opposed to 161.5 for women.

Q: In what ways are people most Stoic?

A: The items which score highest are given in table 4 below.

No.	SABS Item	Average score (0-7)
5	Peace of mind comes from abandoning fears and desires about things outside our control.	5.97
8	The only things truly under our control in life are our judgements and voluntary actions	5.78
2	It doesn't really matter what other people think about me as long as I do the right thing	5.65
10	Virtue (or human excellence) consists in perfecting our rational nature, through cultivating wisdom	5.59

**Table 4: The ways in which participants are most Stoic**

Q: If you had to ask one question to find out if someone was Stoic that didn't mention the word "Stoic" what should it be?

Surprisingly, I should ask them whether they believe that "Recognising that only virtue matters enables me to face life's transience and my approaching death" (item 26). This has a correlation coefficient of .6 with the SABS scale as a whole, higher than any other SABS item.

Q: Surely PG. Wodehouse was right about something? You have to agree that there are some parts of Stoicism which seem pretty implausible these days - like destiny and "the great web". Does your research shed any light on this?

A: It is indeed possible to dig deeper and find the associations between specific elements of Stoicism and well-being. Table 5 below shows the items most associated with well-being.

No	SABS Item (non-Stoic items in italics, these are reverse scored)	Theme	Correlation with average well-being
22	I spend quite a lot of time dwelling on what's gone wrong the past or worrying about the future	Non-Stoic Ruminaton and worry (reverse scored)	0.47
27	I do the right thing even when I feel afraid	Stoic Courage	0.31
24	When an upsetting thought enters my mind the first thing I do is remind myself it's just an impression in my mind and not the thing it claims to represent	Cognitive Distancing	0.29
31	When making a significant decision I ask myself "What really matters here?" and then look for the option that a good and wise person would choose	Stoic Practical Wisdom	0.26
19	I try to contemplate what the ideal wise and good person would do when faced with various misfortunes in life	Ideal Stoic Advisor	0.24
13	I consider myself to be a part of the human race, in the same way that a limb is a part of the human body. It is my duty to contribute to its welfare	Stoic Humanity Connected	0.24
25	Viewing other people as fellow-members of the	Stoic	0.24

	brotherhood of humankind helps me to avoid feeling anger and resentment	Brotherhood on Humankind	
11	I think about my life as an ongoing project in ethical development	Stoic Ethical Development	0.23
28	I care about the suffering of others and take active steps to reduce this (	Stoic Compassion	0.23
23	I make an effort to pay continual attention to the nature of my judgments and actions	Stoic Mindfulness	0.22
17	<i>If I was honest I'd have to admit that I often do what is enjoyable and comfortable rather than doing what I believe to be the right thing</i>	Non-Stoic Short-term hedonism (reverse scored)	0.22
26	Recognising that only virtue matters enables me to face life's transience and my approaching death	Stoic coping with death	0.21
32	I sometimes have thoughts or urges it would be unwise to act on, but I usually realise this and do not act on them	Stoic Self Control	0.20
6	<i>If bad things happen to you, you are bound to feel upset</i>	Non-Stoic Upset is Inevitable (reverse scored)	0.20
21	I treat everybody fairly even those I don't like or don't know very well	Stoic Fairness	0.20

**Table 5: SABS 3.0 Items most associated with well-being**

As in previous years, the SABS with by far the strongest association with well-being (however it is measured) item 22, asking about ruminating and worrying. Stoic virtues also do very well, with courage, practical wisdom, compassion, self-control and fairness all scoring highly. Cognitive distancing (item 24) scores well, as does using the Stoic Ideal Advisor and items to do with seeing humanity as connected and Stoic Cosmopolitanism.

No	SABS Item (non-Stoic items in italics, these are reverse scored)	Theme	Correlation with average well-being
16	I often contemplate the smallness and transience of human life in relation to the totality of space and time	View from Above	0.09
10	Virtue (or human excellence) consists in perfecting our rational nature, through cultivating wisdom	Virtue is Wisdom	0.10
8	The only things truly under our control in life are our judgements and voluntary actions	What we can control	0.11
5	Peace of mind comes from abandoning fears and desires about things outside our control	Focussing on what we can control	0.13

14	The cosmos is a single, wise, living thing	Wise Cosmos	0.13
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**Table 6: SABS 3.0 Items least associated with well-being**

The above 5 items all have a positive association with well-being, but it is fairly weak relationship. Contemplating the smallness and transience of human life in relation to the totality of space and time (item 16) as in the View from Above is not especially associated with well-being, despite the popularity of the View from Above meditation. Item 14, “The Cosmos is a single, wise living thing” most closely resembles the Stoic idea satirised by PG. Wodehouse. To be fair to Wodehouse it is one of the least strong predictors of well-being, although it is still a positive association. Perhaps on this one point, we should concede a tie.

The final score - Seneca 3 PG. Wodehouse 1

## Appendices

### Appendix A The Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours Scale SABS 3.0

The SABS 3.0 scale is a 37 item scale using a 7 point Likert scale. The SABS scale used in 2015 is a development of the 31 item scale used for SABS 2.0 in 2015 which itself was an expansion from the original 19 item scale created by the Stoicism Today project team in 2013.

Below is an explanation of each SABS item and the average score in the surveys at the start of Stoic Week 2016. Items are reverse-scored where appropriate i.e. high score always means more Stoic. *Items in italics are non-Stoic and are reverse-scored.* The average score in 2016 is given in brackets.

**1. As long as you have the right attitude, you can lead a good life even in the worst of conditions, such as being tortured or being held prisoner (average score: 5.2 where 1 is least Stoic and 7 is most Stoic and 4 is neutral)**

Since for the Stoics being virtuous is all that really matters it follows that you can lead a good life in the worst of conditions

**2. It doesn't really matter what other people think about me as long as I do the right thing (5.6)**

What matters to the Stoics is not what other people think but whether you actually are or aren't virtuous

***3. It can sometimes be a good thing to get angry when people are really rude, selfish or inconsiderate (3.9)***

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics don't think that anger can ever be a good thing; they would say that indignation leading to virtuous action is far preferable to angry feelings which can have enormous costs both to oneself and others

**4. It's more important to feel good than to do good. (5.3)**

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics believe that doing good is always

more important than feeling good. Feeling good is a "nice to have" (the technical term is "preferred indifferent")

**5. Peace of mind comes from abandoning fears and desires about things outside our control. (6)**

The Stoics believe that if we stop concerning ourselves with what is outside our control, which we should do because all we should really care about is being virtuous, then we will achieve peace of mind.

**6. If bad things happen to you, you are bound to feel upset (3.8)**

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics believe that you will not get upset if remind yourself that the bad thing is outside your control and doesn't mean you can't be virtuous.

**7. What is called "morally right" and "morally wrong" is in reality just a matter of personal or cultural opinion (3.9)**

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics are not relativists, they believe that actions are objectively good and bad and not just a matter of personal opinion.

**8. The only things truly under our control in life are our judgements and voluntary actions (5.8)**

The Stoics believe that there are lots of things we can't really control, like the past, other people and the environment. However we can control our judgements and actions and therein lies our freedom.

**9. You should go wherever your emotions lead you (5.5)**

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics are not Romanticists, the Stoics believe that going where your emotions tell you can go can get you into serious trouble. You should go where reason tells you to go.

**10. Virtue (or human excellence) consists in perfecting our rational nature, through cultivating wisdom (5.6)**

The Stoics believe that wisdom and rationality are the foundations of virtue.

**11. I think about my life as an ongoing project in ethical development (5.4)**

The Stoics view their lives as an ongoing process of developing themselves morally. Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations* were undoubtedly written for this purpose.

**12. To flourish as a human being all you need is rationality and a good character; things like money, status, health and good luck are not essential (4.8)**

The Stoics believe that rationality and good character are all you need to flourish; everything else is a "nice to have" or "preferred indifferent"

**13. I consider myself to be a part of the human race, in the same way that a limb is a part of the human body. It is my duty to contribute to its welfare. (5.4)**

The Stoics' belief that we are all connected brothers and sisters informs their view that we have a duty to help others.

**14. The cosmos is a single, wise, living thing (4)**

The idea that the cosmos is a single wise, living thing was a part of Stoic metaphysics.

**15. I try to anticipate future misfortunes and rehearse rising above them (4.8)**

The Stoics practice rehearsing what might go wrong - "Negative Visualisations" - as they believed this inoculated us from being so distressed when bad things actually do happen.

**16. I often contemplate the smallness and transience of human life in relation to the totality of space and time. (5.3)**

Some Stoics practiced meditations like the "View from Above" to get a better perspective on the insignificant and shortness of their life. This can help one see one's troubles as relatively insignificant.

**17. If I was honest I'd have to admit that I often do what is enjoyable and comfortable rather than**

***doing what I believe to be the right thing (3.2)***

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics were not short-term hedonist -they believed in doing the right thing, not the merely pleasurable thing or the easy option.

**18. I am good at controlling my urges and impulses when that's better for me in the long run (4.2)**

This is classified as a neutral item, as the Stoic notion of self-control is better measured by *item 32. I sometimes have thoughts or urges it would be unwise to act on, but I usually realise this and do not act on them.*

**19. I try to contemplate what the ideal wise and good person would do when faced with various misfortunes in life (4.7)**

Many Stoics suggested we imagine the Stoic "Sage on our shoulder", or an ideal Stoic advisor to guide us at difficult moments.

**20. It is possible to control how other people behave towards you (4.8)**

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics had no such expectation; how other people behave is outside one's control.

**21. I treat everybody fairly even those I don't like or don't know very well (5.1)**

Fairness and justice was one of the main Stoic virtues - treating other people fairly regardless of how one feels.

**22. I spend quite a lot of time dwelling on what's gone wrong the past or worrying about the future (3.4)**

This is a non-Stoic behaviour and so is reverse-scored. The past and the future are outside one's control and we should focus instead on the present moment and what is in one's control.

**23. I make an effort to pay continual attention to the nature of my judgments and actions. (5.2)**

Stoic Mindfulness is an important Stoic habit, to enable one to challenge irrational judgements and replace them with rational judgements and then virtuous behaviour.

**24. When an upsetting thought enters my mind the first thing I do is remind myself it's just an impression in my mind and not the thing it claims to represent (4.1)**

Cognitive distancing, the ability to notice an upsetting thought and then treat it as just a thought and not an objective fact, is an important Stoic technique.

**25. Viewing other people as fellow-members of the brotherhood of humankind helps me to avoid feeling anger and resentment (4.7)**

One of the ways to reduce anger and irritation, mentioned by Marcus Aurelius amongst others, is to view other people as our fellow fallible human beings, like a brother or a sister.

**26. Recognising that only virtue matters enables me to face life's transience and my approaching death (4.4)**

One of the ways to reduce death anxiety, mentioned by Marcus Aurelius amongst others, is to realise that virtue is the only thing that matters, since death cannot stop us being virtuous. Indeed death provides us with the opportunity to behave well in the face of death.

**27. I do the right thing even when I feel afraid. (4.7)**

Courage was an important Stoic virtue. Courage is not about not feeling afraid, courage is feeling afraid and still doing the right thing.

**28. I care about the suffering of others and take active steps to reduce this (5.2)**

Compassion is an important virtue relating to the Stoics' caring for others as brothers and sisters - notice though that for Stoics, compassion is about caring about others and taking action rather than getting upset by suffering which might be considered a part of other definitions of compassion.

**29. Happiness depends on things going well for me and my family and friends (3.6)**

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics believed that happiness (or flourishing) depended on one being virtuous, not on circumstances.

**30. *We have to accept that some things that matter a lot for our happiness are outside our control (2.8)***

This is a non-Stoic attitude and so is reverse-scored. The Stoics believed that happiness (or flourishing) depends only on one being virtuous, which is under our control.

**31. *When making a significant decision I ask myself "What really matters here?" and then look for the option that a good and wise person would choose. (5)***

This is a Stoic version of the virtue of practical wisdom. For the Stoics, wisdom was not purely theoretical, it was about doing the thing that the Stoic sage, the good and wise person, would choose to do.

**32. *I sometimes have thoughts or urges it would be unwise to act on, but I usually realise this and do not act on them (5.1)***

This is the Stoic version of the virtue of self-control. The Stoic sage would get few of these and would never act on them; those progressing in Stoicism (the prokoptin) would get less and resist more as they progressed.

**33. *My beliefs about what is best determine my wishes and motives (5.1)***

This is a corollary to item 32 (Stoic self-control). The Stoic sage or one who has progressed a lot in Stoicism has wishes and motives in line with wisdom and virtue, so they don't really need self-control. If you genuinely score highly on this item you have made good progress.

**34. *When making an important decision I try to predict the consequences of my actions and aim to balance the long-term happiness of myself and others (5.3)***

This the utilitarian rather than Stoic version of practical wisdom and so is reverse-scored. For the Stoic, you act according to the virtues (item 31) rather than balance happiness

**35. *My good name and what other people think about me matters a lot. (2.7)***

For the Stoic, reputation matters a lot less than doing the right thing, so this item is reverse-scored.

**36. *I am upset when I hear of the suffering of others (3.5)***

Whilst the Stoic would rather others do not suffer it is outside their control and so they would avoid being upset. The Stoic would be concerned and try to alleviate the suffering but would not add to the suffering by getting upset. Consequently this item is reverse scored. For the Stoic idea of compassion, see item 28.

**37. *There's no overall plan to the universe. (3.2)***

The Stoics believed there was a plan to the universe (even though they did not believe in a God in the Christian sense) - universe behaves according to a rational and providential order. Consequently this item is reverse-scored.

## **Appendix B The Satisfaction with Life scale**

The SWLS is a short 5-item instrument designed to measure global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life. This scale is widely used as part of the measure of Subjective Well-being (also known as happiness).

Question	Theme
Q1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal	Life is ideal
Q2. The conditions of my life are excellent	Externals met
Q3. So far I have got the important things I want in life.	Needs met
Q4. I am satisfied with my life	Satisfaction
Q5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing	Acceptance

Using a 1-7 scale, users score between 35 (extremely satisfied) and 5 (extremely dissatisfied)

The SWL scale was developed by Ed Diener, Robert A. Emmons, Randy J. Larsen and Sharon Griffin as noted in the 1985 article in the *Journal of Personality Assessment*. See <http://internal.psychology.illinois.edu/~ediener/SWLS.html>

## Appendix C The Flourishing Scale

The Flourishing Scale is a brief 8-item summary measure of the respondent's self-perceived success in important areas such as relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism. The scale provides a single psychological well-being score. This scale was developed by Ed Diener and associates to measure a broader conception of well-being than purely subjective life satisfaction and presence of positive and absence of negative emotions.

Flourishing Scale Item	Theme
1. I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.	Purpose and meaning
2. My social relationships are supportive and rewarding.	Relationships
3. I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.	Flow & interested
4. I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others.	Benevolent
5. I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me.	Competent
6. I am a good person and live a good life.	Ethically Good
7. I am optimistic about my future.	Optimism
8. People respect me.	Respected

Reference: Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2009). New measures of well-being: Flourishing and positive and negative feelings. *Social Indicators Research*, 39, 247-266. <http://internal.psychology.illinois.edu/~ediener/FS.html>

## Appendix D The Scale of Positive and Negative Emotions (SPANE)

The SPANE is a 12-item questionnaire includes six items to assess positive feelings and six items to assess negative feelings. For both the positive and negative items, three of the items are general (e.g., positive, negative) and three per subscale are more specific (e.g., joyful, sad). Along with the Life Satisfaction scale, presence of positive and absence of negative emotions forms the other part

of Subjective Well-being. Users are asked to select a number between 1 (very rarely or never ) and 5 (very often or always) to indicate how often they have experienced the emotion in the last 4 weeks.

**Positive Emotions**

Contented  
 Joyful  
 Positive  
 Good  
 Pleasant  
 Happy

**Negative Emotions**

Unpleasant  
 Bad  
 Negative  
 Angry  
 Afraid  
 Sad

**Three scores are derived: SPANE-P – some of positive emotions SPANE-P – sum of negative emotions – SPANE –B Balance of positive and negative.**

- Participants in Stoic Week's average overall SPANE score was 3.7 at the start and 8.2 after Stoic Week.
- Participants in Stoic Week's average SPANE-P score was 20.1 at the start and 22.2 after Stoic Week.
- Participants in Stoic Week's average SPANE-N score was -16.3 at the start and -14 after Stoic Week.

Reference: Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi. D., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2009). New measures of well-being: Flourishing and positive and negative feelings. *Social Indicators Research*, 39, 247-266. <http://internal.psychology.illinois.edu/~ediener/SPANE.html>

**Appendix E: Association of Stoicism with well-being: Overall Findings**

	<b>Flourishing</b>	<b>Emotions (SPANE)</b>	<b>Life Satisfaction (SWL)</b>	<b>Average well-being</b>
STOIC ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS	0.46 (.47)	0.42 (.41)	0.37 (.33)	0.42 (.4)
STOIC ATTITUDES	0.35 (.3)	0.35 (.3)	0.29(.22)	0.33(.27)
STOIC BEHAVIOURS	0.51 (.55)	0.42(.44)	0.38 (.37)	0.44(.45)

**Table 7: Overall association of Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours with the 3 measures of well-being** (2015 results are in brackets – note the SABS scale has changed since 2015 so care should be taken with the comparisons with 2015)

Table 7 above gives the overall correlations between total SABS scores and the various well-being scales. A high correlation means the two items are strongly associated. As can be seen, there is a high positive correlation between having Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours and well-being. This is true however you measure well-being, though the association is strongest for flourishing and weakest for life satisfaction. There is a stronger relationship between well-being and Stoic *behaviours* than Stoic *attitudes*. The results are similar to the findings from 2015 and 2014. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/stoicismtoday/files/2016/02/Stoic-Week-Report-Part-3.pdf> for report from Stoic Week 2015 and <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/stoicismtoday/2015/02/09/stoic-week-2014-the-results/> for the report from Stoic Week 2014.

## Appendix F: Association of Specific Stoic Attitudes and Behaviours with Average of well-being scales

Appendix E suggests that there is a positive association between Stoicism and well-being. It is possible to analyse in more detail *which* Stoic attitudes and behaviours are *most* associated with well-being, thereby potentially discovering the most “active ingredients” in Stoicism.

No	SABS Item	Correlation with Average well-being	Flourishing correlation	SPANE- correlation	SPANE+ correlation	SPANE correlation	SWL correlation
1	As long as you have the right attitude, you can lead a good life even in the worst of conditions, such as being tortured or being held prisoner	0.17	0.20	0.13	0.15	0.16	0.17
2	It doesn't really matter what other people think about me as long as I do the right thing	0.17	0.20	0.18	0.16	0.19	0.14
3	<i>It can sometimes be a good thing to get angry when people are really rude, selfish or inconsiderate</i>	0.11	0.09	0.18	0.10	0.16	0.09
4	<i>It's more important to feel good than to do good.</i>	0.08	0.13	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.06
5	Peace of mind comes from abandoning fears and desires about things outside our control.	0.13	0.15	0.09	0.12	0.12	0.11
6	<i>If bad things happen to you, you are bound to feel upset</i>	0.20	0.16	0.26	0.21	0.26	0.17
7	<i>What is called “morally right” and “morally wrong” is in reality just a matter of personal or cultural</i>	0.09	0.10	0.08	0.05	0.07	0.11
8	The only things truly under our control in life are our judgements and voluntary actions	0.11	0.14	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.10

9	<i>You should go wherever your emotions leads you</i>	0.01	0.03	0.05	-0.06	0.00	0.01
10	<b>Virtue (or human excellence) consists in perfecting our rational nature, through cultivating wisdom</b>	0.10	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.11	0.09
11	<b>I think about my life as an ongoing project in ethical development</b>	0.23	0.28	0.15	0.25	0.22	0.21
12	<b>To flourish as a human being all you need is rationality and a good character; things like money, status, health and good luck are not essential</b>	0.19	0.20	0.16	0.16	0.18	0.19
13	<b>I consider myself to be a part of the human race, in the same way that a limb is a part of the human body. It is my duty to contribute to its welfare.</b>	0.24	0.32	0.15	0.23	0.21	0.18
14	<b>The cosmos is a single, wise, living thing</b>	0.13	0.17	0.07	0.17	0.13	0.11
15	<b>I try to anticipate future misfortunes and rehearse rising above them</b>	0.16	0.20	0.08	0.14	0.12	0.15
16	<b>I often contemplate the smallness and transience of human life in relation to the totality of space and time.</b>	0.09	0.11	0.04	0.09	0.07	0.08
17	<i>If I was honest I'd have to admit that I often do what is enjoyable and comfortable rather than doing what I believe to be the right thing</i>	0.22	0.29	0.18	0.18	0.20	0.18
18	<b>I am good at controlling my urges and impulses when that's better for me in the long run</b>	0.32	0.37	0.27	0.25	0.29	0.30
19	<b>I try to contemplate what the ideal wise and good person would do when faced with various misfortunes in life.</b>	0.24	0.29	0.13	0.25	0.21	0.22
20	<i>It is possible to control how other people behave towards you</i>	0.08	0.10	0.07	0.06	0.07	0.07
21	<b>I treat everybody fairly even those I don't like or don't know very well</b>	0.20	0.24	0.17	0.16	0.19	0.17
22	<i>I spend quite a lot of time dwelling on what's gone wrong the past or worrying about the future</i>	0.47	0.43	0.55	0.45	0.56	0.43

23	I make an effort to pay continual attention to the nature of my judgments and actions.	0.22	0.30	0.12	0.20	0.18	0.19
24	When an upsetting thought enters my mind the first thing I do is remind myself it's just an impression in my mind and not the thing it claims to represent	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.29	0.32	0.26
25	Viewing other people as fellow-members of the brotherhood of humankind helps me to avoid feeling anger and resentment	0.24	0.24	0.21	0.25	0.26	0.21
26	Recognising that only virtue matters enables me to face life's transience and my approaching death	0.21	0.22	0.18	0.21	0.22	0.18
27	I do the right thing even when I feel afraid.	0.31	0.37	0.24	0.26	0.27	0.27
28	I care about the suffering of others and take active steps to reduce this	0.23	0.34	0.08	0.20	0.15	0.19
29	<i>Happiness depends on things going well for me and my family</i>	0.17	0.15	0.20	0.16	0.20	0.15
30	<i>We have to accept that some things that matter a lot for our happiness are outside our control</i>	0.06	0.03	0.10	0.06	0.09	0.05
31	When making a significant decision I ask myself "What really matters here?" and then look for the option that a good and wise person would choose.	0.26	0.33	0.18	0.25	0.24	0.22
32	I sometimes have thoughts or urges it would be unwise to act on, but I usually realise this and do not act on them	0.20	0.25	0.17	0.15	0.18	0.18
33	My beliefs about what is best determine my wishes and motives	0.18	0.23	0.10	0.16	0.15	0.15
34	<i>When making an important decision I try to predict the consequences of my actions and aim to balance the long-term happiness of myself and others</i>	-0.24	-0.33	-0.15	-0.19	-0.19	-0.21
35	<i>My good name and what other people think about</i>	0.11	0.07	0.17	0.11	0.16	0.10

	<i>me matters a lot.</i>						
36	<i>I am upset when I hear of the suffering of others</i>	-0.01	-0.07	0.11	-0.01	0.06	0.00
37	<i>There's no overall plan to the universe.</i>	0.11	0.15	0.03	0.14	0.09	0.09

**Table 8: SABS items and their correlations with the different measures of well-being**

Table 8 gives each SABS items degree of correlation with various measures of well-being. These are, respectively, an average score of SPANE overall, SWL and Flourishing, Flourishing, SPANE negative items, SPANE positive items, SPANE overall and Flourish (see appendices A-D for a details of each scale).

For example. SABS item 1” As long as you have the right attitude, you can lead a good life even in the worst of conditions, such as being tortured or being held prisoner” has a .17 correlation with average well-being and a .2 correlation with Flourishing.

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<sup>i</sup> A correlation coefficient of 1 would indicate a perfect relationship, 0 no relationship at all – a negative number indicates an inverse relationship