

## Stoicism and practicality are not emotionless, and still relevant

**KSHITIJ GROVER**  
Contributing Writer

Google the definition of “stoic,” and you’ll see that a stoic is simply “a person who can endure pain or hardship without showing their feelings or complaining.”

Indeed, this is how being a stoic is usually thought of, at least in popular culture — a way to live without emotion. It’s a way to insulate oneself and live sternly. Perhaps this sentiment is why stoicism is regarded as impractical, overly simplistic and easy to dismiss. Isn’t having emotion what it means to be human? Should we not be vulnerable — afraid, sad and joyful?

Of course, and in reality, stoicism is not a call to abandon who we are. It is a call for mindfulness.

What does that mean, anyway?

Stoicism originated in Greece, founded in the early third century.

In all ways, it is a normative and practical philosophy: stoics such as Seneca, Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus were very much concerned with how we should live our lives and spend our time.

A stoic is one who introspects carefully and thoughtfully about emotions. Though it may not be easy to rid ourselves of negative thoughts like jealousy, greed and anger, a stoic is able to separate oneself from these passions. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that a stoic is one who is apathetic. This is not the case — stoicism urges you to be in control of how these thoughts influence you and having the command to “withdraw your assent.” A stoic realizes the difference between what is under one’s control and what stems from external influences.

In the stoic philosophy, what is most treasured is one’s “virtue,” a kind of moral standard that we can

abstractly identify with a state of the soul that corresponds to “perfect reason.” In some sense, “virtue” consists of wisdom, justice, courage and moderation, but these are not components that one can possess separately. A virtuous person simultaneously holds all “virtuous” qualities by holding one. With some context on “virtue,” stoics do not hesitate to make extreme statements. Happiness is implied by only virtue, and so things like money, sex, work and even life (our own and those of our loved ones) are simply “preferred.” The only detriments to our happiness are special forms of vices that break down our “virtue.”

I claimed before that stoicism was practical — so where does this line of thought get us? One of the more well-known modern day stoic scholars is Massimo Pigliucci, who sheds some light on this. We should spend time thinking

about how our virtue might be tested over the course of the day. For example, what experiences will test our courage or compel us out of moderation? We should consistently reflect on how we plan to deal with unfavorable outcomes — the loss of the “preferred” entities. Here, Massimo mentions that it is not wrong to think of or visualize death itself.

I want to leave off with one of my personal favorite sayings from Seneca’s letters, in which he is concerned about the shortness of life. His argument here is once

again about mindfulness about how we spend our time:

“It is no use pouring any amount of liquid into a container without a bottom to catch and hold it, so it does not matter how much time we are given if there is nowhere for it to settle; it escapes through the cracks and holes of the mind.”

By all means, being a stoic is not easy or this simple. Stoicism is a subtle and complex philosophy, with branches extending outside of morals and meditation. Yet, one thing is certain: stoicism is as relevant as it was thousands of years ago.

## Caltech welcomes women’s soccer team to its roster

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The Caltech Athletics program is adding a women’s soccer team to its roster, beginning in fall 2017. The move is both in response to direct requests from the community and a desire to further enhance the programming and services provided to an ever-more diverse community.

“The addition of this team offers current and prospective students more choice, making Caltech more appealing as a destination of choice for scholar-athletes,” says Joe Shepherd, the vice president for student affairs and C. L. Kelly Johnson Professor of Aeronautics and Mechanical Engineering.

Caltech currently fields 19 varsity teams, including men’s and women’s basketball, cross-country, fencing, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, and water polo, as well as women’s volleyball and men’s baseball and soccer. The teams, which draw players from approximately 20 percent of the student body, compete as members of the NCAA Division III and Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SCIAC). Caltech is the only institution in the SCIAC that does not currently sponsor women’s soccer. Over 97 percent of all schools in Division III sponsor women’s soccer, with over 10,000 women competing across the country—the highest female participation rate of any sport in Division III.

“I am thrilled to be able to provide this opportunity for the

young women who are already enrolled at Caltech and who will be looking to join the campus in future years,” says Betsy Mitchell, Caltech’s director of athletics, physical education, and recreation. “Women’s soccer is one of the fastest growing sports, both nationally and internationally.”

At Caltech, female undergraduates are currently eligible to play on the men’s soccer team, and, as Mitchell notes, women have played on the team every season since she arrived on campus in 2011. Additionally, Caltech Athletics has previously sponsored women’s soccer at the club level.

The decision to create an independent team for these and other female scholar-athletes and to provide them with an opportunity to compete at a collegiate level on a par with many of their colleagues was carefully considered, she said. Factoring into the administration’s final decision was the strong interest in the sport both on campus and in the world at large, as well as the availability of field space and a convenient season of competition, among other things. Women’s soccer will be the first new addition of a varsity team to the department since women’s water polo was added in 2003.

The first step in establishing the women’s soccer team will take place this spring, when Athletics plans to hire a coach to build the program while also teaching physical education classes (as does each coach at Caltech). In the fall of 2017, the team will begin play, but with a reduced schedule—likely eight games, one with each team in the conference.

## News briefs from around the globe

*A brief list of events from the past week, compiled by the editors*

### US economic growth revised upward

4th quarter GDP revised to upward from initial estimate of 0.7 percent [BBC]

### Batman v Superman does well despite poor reviews

\$170M earned in US, setting record for March debut [BBC]

### NASA releases new photo of frozen “lake” on Pluto

20 miles wide at one point; feature appears to be frozen lake of liquid nitrogen [TIME]

### Sanders pushes forward in Democratic race for nomination

619 delegates at stake in upcoming April contests in New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland, where Sanders will face toughest competition against Clinton [CNN]

### Nazi salutes and anti-immigrant chants disrupt Brussels memorial

2 tactical vehicles with water cannons aided police in shutting down demonstrations in the midst of the memorial [CNN]

### Three female suicide bombers stopped in Nigeria

2 of the three are suspected of being part of the 276 teenage girls kidnapped by Boko Haram in April 2014 [CNN]

### Yellow fever vaccine shortage amidst outbreak in Angola

1,100+ cases have been reported since December, and 178 have died [CNN]

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## C | a | R | e | D

Caltech Alliance for Reflecting on Eating Disorders

Meets every other THURSDAY 12:00 - 1:00 PM  
<https://healthpromotion.caltech.edu>

## REMINDER FROM COUNSELING CENTER: Meditation Mob

(drop-in mindfulness meditation group)

Meets every Tuesday,  
12:00-12:50 p.m.  
Bottom floor of Winnett

## VICE PROVOST'S OFFICE HOURS

Vice Provost, Chief Diversity Officer and Professor of English, Cindy Weinstein, holds regular office hours. This is an opportunity for undergraduate, graduate students and postdocs to meet and discuss what they'd like pertaining to the Council on Undergraduate Education, Caltech accreditation, the Staff and Faculty Consultation Center, Student-Faculty Programs, the Center for Teaching, Learning and Outreach, the Caltech Diversity Center and the libraries.

There are four appointments per hour, 15 min. each. Sign up the morning of the office hour in 104 Parsons Gates, Vice Provosts' Offices (x6339).

**Spring Term Office Hours: 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.**  
 Wednesday, March 30                      Friday, May 6  
 Monday, April 4                              Thursday, May 12  
 Tuesday, April 12                            Wednesday, May 18  
 Wednesday, April 20                        Tuesday, May 24  
 Tuesday, April 26                            Friday, June 3

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## Women's tennis team sweeps LeTourneau, win streak at five

GOCALTECH.COM  
Actual Sports Content Editor

LONGVIEW, Texas (Mar. 25, 2016) – Freshman Julia Reisler won her 10th singles match of the season and did not drop a single game in either doubles or singles to lead Caltech women's tennis to a 9-0 sweep of LeTourneau University.

The Beavers improve to 6-4 on the season and are now 6-1 against unranked NCAA opponents.

Reisler and freshman Cecelia Andrews won their fifth doubles match as a pairing at #3, 8-0, and



"15 percent concentrated power of will..."

-http://gocaltech.com

were soon followed by 8-2 victories at the other two courts. With only three courts available at once, Reisler brought the Beavers to 4-0 and freshman Kana Moriyama clinched the match with a 6-1, 6-0 victory at #3. Junior Sophia Chen joined Reisler and Andrews in recording unblemished 6-0, 6-0 singles wins, while sophomore Vinci Chen won her second match of the season at #1 after a hard-fought first set (7-5, 6-2) and freshman Yeorgia Kafkoulis won her second straight match at #6 (6-0, 6-1).

## Kirk spins quality start, baseball picks up win on Arizona trip

GOCALTECH.COM  
Actual Sports Content Editor

TUCSON, Ariz. (Mar. 19, 2016) – Junior Kai Kirk tossed a quality start in a 5-4 victory over Augsburg College and a trio of hitters batted .500 or above during Caltech baseball's four-game Spring recess trip to Arizona.

### Caltech 5, Augsburg 4

The Beavers opened their trip with a come-from-behind victory thanks to a five-run fifth inning. Kirk struck out three batters in the top of the first inning and went on to punch out a career-high 10, although Augsburg pushed across a pair of runs in the top of the second to take the early lead.

Both pitchers retired the next six batters they faced before Caltech put runners on first and second base with a pair of two-out singles, but a deep fly out to centerfield erased the danger. Kirk ran his streak of retired batters to nine through the fifth inning, when the Beavers had runners on the corners with none out but once again were unable to score thanks to a strikeout and double play. Augsburg picked up a third run in the top of the sixth on a two-out RBI double.

The Beavers' bats finally clicked in the bottom of the sixth, which quickly saw the bases loaded with no outs via two singles and an error. Freshman Tucker Reese and sophomore Garrett Levine each

point Head Coach Matt Mark called on Levine, who last year became the first Beaver since 2000 to record a save, to put out the fire. Levine brought the tension to a maximum as he walked the bases loaded, but then coaxed a groundout to second base to seal the victory. Kirk turned in his first career quality start, allowing three earned runs on seven hits and two walks over the 6 2/3 innings pitched.

### Caltech 1, Augsburg 6

Caltech began the nightcap with back-to-back fly outs followed by a triple from freshman Connor Moffatt, but a third fly out ended the frame. Drawing the start in Game Two, Levine gave up a leadoff single but came up with a double play groundout and got some help from junior Tim Menninger after a hit-by-pitch, with the catcher gunning down the runner at second on a steal attempt.

Augsburg came up with two RBI singles in the bottom of the second to take the lead, but Menninger led off the top of the third with his first career home run, joining Levine and Watson as the only active Beavers to have recorded a round-tripper. Junior Harrison Jacobs followed immediately with a double and advanced to third on a groundout, but a strikeout and lineout ended the inning.

## Cutts helps women's water polo tie program record for wins

GOCALTECH.COM  
Actual Sports Content Editor

PASADENA, Calif. (Mar. 19, 2016) – Freshman Elise Cutts made 26 saves while allowing just 18 goals and freshman Brittany Percin fired home nine goals as Caltech women's water polo tied the program record for wins in a season with a 10-7 victory over Macalester College and a narrow 11-10 overtime loss to Connecticut College on Saturday.

### Caltech 10, Macalester 7

Head Coach Jon Bonafede's squad started out better than he could ever have hoped, amassing a 3-0 lead over the first five-and-a-half minutes. The Scots' Lucille Moran went off for a pair of goals to pull Macalester back into the game, but Percin completed her first quarter hat trick on Caltech's final possession to carry a 4-2 lead into the first break.

After another two scoreless minutes in the second quarter, senior Soumya Kannan took the Beavers out to a three-goal lead again. The Scots rallied immediately, however, with back-to-back scores making it a one-goal game with 3:05 left in the first half. This time, it was senior Stephanie Wong's turn to take control, firing in two long-range efforts to regain the three-goal edge at halftime, 7-4.

A tough defensive battle ensued in the third quarter, with three exclusions in the first five minutes and only one goal scored, which junior Mary Boyajian notched for the 8-4 lead. Cutts was integral in building the four-goal margin as she made several incredible saves and five total over the quarter.

Kannan converted on Caltech's first possession of the fourth quarter and, although Macalester threatened to claw back into the game, the Beavers held on for the decisive 10-7 victory.

### Caltech 10, Conn. College 11

Both teams took some time to test each other's defenses over a scoreless opening five minutes in the final game of the day. Conn. College got on the board at the 3:04 mark, but Percin responded with her sixth goal of the day just a minute later. The Camels retook the lead as the clock ticked under a minute and Caltech was unable to capitalize on an extraman opportunity, leaving the score 2-1 after the first quarter.

Conn. College had better luck after a Beavers exclusion, taking a two-goal lead within the first minute of the second quarter. Percin took over at that point, scoring the final three goals of the quarter to hand Caltech the 4-3 lead at halftime.

Conn. College benefitted from another extraman goal with 6:15 on the clock in the third quarter, but Caltech answered with strikes from Boyajian and freshman Katie Johnston to move ahead by two goals. The Camels were awarded a penalty just 12 seconds later and converted, but Caltech retained the lead heading to the fourth quarter.

Boyajian atoned for the penalty call with her second goal of the game early in the fourth quarter, but three straight Camels goals on as many possessions, including two quick counters, flipped the score line to 8-7 in Conn. College's favor. Percin stepped up when needed with 2:03 left to play, tying the game at 8-8 and following a handful of fruitless possessions for each team, the foes headed to overtime.

Caltech took the lead on the first possession as Kannan blasted a deep shot into the net, but the Camels tied it up two possessions later and the second overtime period soon followed.

Once again, the Beavers went ahead on a deep score by Wong with 1:52 remaining, but Conn. College's Kelsey Millward went unmarked and scored with 1:18 and just 28 seconds left to steal the game for the Camels.



Elise, you are fortunate enough to get a large photo of yourself in the Tech, and yet, your eyes are closed. So sad.

-http://gocaltech.com



I don't know what they did, but that other team is gettin' some serious side-eye...  
Photo Courtesy of Bob Pallermini

slapped two-RBI singles to clear the bases and give Caltech the one-run lead, after which sophomore David Watson brought Levine home on a sacrifice fly. The Beavers would go on to put runners back at the corners before another fly out to centerfield ended the inning.

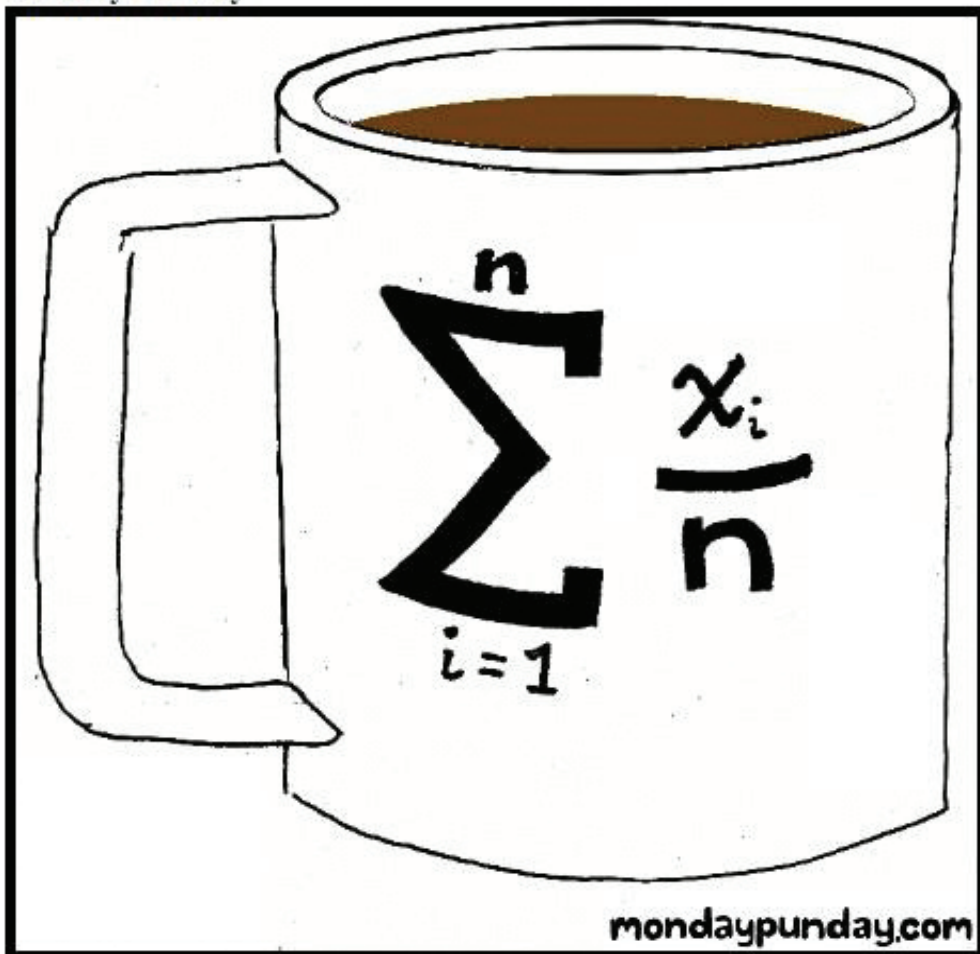
Looking to finish what he started, Kirk put away the first two batters of the seventh inning on a pair of fortunate lineouts. A two-out double and single put runners on the corners and a passed ball made it a one-run game, at which

Augsburg bounced back with an unearned run thanks to a passed ball in the bottom of the frame. Each team was able to get only one runner into scoring position over the next two-and-a-half innings, both with two outs, and neither scored again until Augsburg's bats blew the game open with three runs in the bottom of the sixth. The bottom of Caltech's lineup then was sat down in order to end the game.

J



### Monday Punday



This picture represents a common phrase, title, or person.

Think you know the answer? Take a guess at [mondaypunday.com/181](http://mondaypunday.com/181)

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