

Sunday Zoom - August 3, 2025 - 12:30 PM ET - Topic: "There Is No Necessity To Live Under the Control of Necessity"

Post by "Bryan" of July 31, 2025 at 10:23 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

You could quit. But are you ready to face the consequences of quitting your job?

On this topic, I wanted to share Seneca (fl. 35 CE), Letters to Lucilius, Letter 22, sections 1-5:

"You now understand that you must be led out of those flashy and harmful occupations, but you ask how you might achieve that. Some things can only be shown by someone present... What generally happens, and what ought to be done, can be passed on and written down in universal terms: such counsel can be given not only to those who are absent, but even to future generations. but that other kind - when something ought to happen, or in what way - no one will advise from afar, since it must be deliberated with the circumstances themselves.

It is necessary not only for someone who is present, but for one who is alert, to notice the opportunity as it rushes by. So look around for this - if you see this, grab it with full force and all your strength: strive to strip yourself from those duties. And now, pay attention to the opinion I am about to give: I believe it is necessary for you to either depart from that life, or from life [*itself*]. but I think this as well: it is necessary to go by the gentle path - so that what you've badly entangled, you may untie rather than tear apart - however, if there is no other method of untying it: then do tear it apart. No one is so timid that he prefers hanging forever to falling once!

In the meantime - and this is the first thing - do not entangle yourself further: Be content with the business in which you have entered (or, as you'd rather have it seem, '[*in which*] you stumbled').

There is no reason for you to strive for greater things - otherwise, you will lose the excuse - and it will become apparent that you did not just stumble into it. Yes, those things that are usually said are false: 'I couldn't do otherwise' 'what if I hadn't wanted to?' 'It was necessary'

For no one is it is necessary to chase after happiness at a run: there is something of value - *even if not in resisting* - in stopping, and not pressing forward with fortune as she drives. Surely you would not be offended, if I not only join in counsel, but also call in men indeed wiser than I am- to whom I usually refer, when I am deciding something:

Read the letter of Epicurus that pertains to this very issue, the one addressed to Idomeneus, whom [*Epicurus*] urges to flee as much as he can and to hurry – before some greater force intervenes → and takes away the freedom to withdraw.

He nevertheless adds that nothing should be attempted unless it can be done suitably and at the right time. But when that long-awaited time finally comes: he says one must leap out.

He forbids the one thinking about this flight to fall asleep – and he hopes for a saving exit even from the most difficult things: if only we do not rush before the right time → nor delay in the right time."

ADMIN EDIT: WIKISOURCE LINK: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Moral_let...ilius/Letter_22