

The importance of teaching stoicism in basic education



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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the importance of teaching Stoicism in basic education. In view of this, it will be showing the need for the teaching of philosophy in basic education, in a deeper way, such as, for example, the Stoic themes of Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius and their relevance to the present day. The main objective of this work is to investigate whether, in fact, Stoicism is so important, why it is not deepened and often even ignored in schools and how to make schools and teachers give due attention to the Stoic school. The Stoics seek to keep away from a life guided by carnal pleasures and feelings, focusing only on moral good and reason. The Stoics have a very unified view of the world, a formal logic, non-dualistic physics, their ethics are naturalistic, and they advocate a virtuous life. Stoic philosophy considers that individuals possess an inner divinity capable of guiding them, since reason originates in the divine reason ordering nature. Nowadays, Stoicism is in evidence and has become a desired lifestyle.

Keywords: Stoicism, Basic education, Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius.

1 INTRODUCTION

This research begins with the Rise of Stoicism. This is due to the need to present from the beginning to the present day a school that has remained immutable, but with current thoughts at the same time. Although it was initially represented by the philosophers Zeno of Citium, Chrysippus of Soli, Cleantes of Assos, it took roots that permeate the present day with Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, who are the Stoics highlighted in this work. The choice of these three authors, and not others, is justified by the objective of bringing to the reader the advantages of delving into a stoicism that remains alive and effective (Menezes, 2019).



With Epictetus, in addition to the contrast between freedom and slavery, between poverty and wealth, it is possible to learn great and eternal Stoic lessons (Ramos, 2020). In the course of the work, Seneca, a great and rich politician, who defended equality and had his values according to Stoicism (Oliveira, 2021) will also be addressed. Already with Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher emperor, it is possible to learn that it does not matter how great it is, because Stoicism still makes it greater. After talking about these three philosophers and defending the importance of Stoic philosophy, this work will follow a different direction: Stoicism (Bittar, 2018).

In the second chapter, the work is purely theoretical and referential, presenting with the greatest possible rigor about the teaching of philosophy in schools in contemporary times, since the main contribution of philosophy in classes is to be able to stimulate students to think for themselves, since this skill is essential for them to develop autonomy and protagonism in their own lives. Philosophy is always transformative, because it is part of the learning process that, in the future, will help in the transformation of the world and society. The chapter will focus on what is currently taught in classrooms about philosophy, what is the relevance of everything that is taught, and how the whole subject is approached for students.

In the third and last chapter of the dissertation it is pointed out the reason that should teach Stoicism in a deeper way. The chapter is undoubtedly the most difficult of the dissertation, since it tests the feasibility of deepening the knowledge of Stoicism in basic education. One can mention, for example, the importance of deepening Stoicism, how Stoicism can give relevance and applicability to philosophy. These are items that will prove the need for Stoic teaching in basic education.

Stoicism teaches to maintain a rational and calm mind, regardless of what may happen, being a philosophy of peace and inner strength. It teaches that this helps the human being to recognize and focus on what he can control and not to worry and accept what cannot be controlled. In view of this, this research has as its main objective the reflection of the way that Stoicism is taught in the school environment, especially in basic education, because the theme still has real meaning with the present day, especially when it comes to schools that have their practices in the daily life with unique teachings.

Therefore, in concluding with the resolution of the questions raised, it is intended with all theoretical framework to answer the questions: If Stoicism is in fact so important, why is it not deepened and often even ignored in schools? How can schools and teachers give due attention to the Stoic school?

2 THE STOICISM

Stoicism, based on strict ethics according to the laws of nature, held that the universe was governed by a divine universal reason. Thus, for the Stoics, happiness was found in man's domination over his passions to the detriment of reason (Pereira and Feitosa, 2018). The Stoics, in their origins,



spoke of the usefulness of temperance in being able to cope with the misfortunes and pains of life. They were convinced that the world was made up of a naturalistic ethic, a formal perspective, and a non-dualistic physics. The Stoics considered ethics to be the primary focus of knowledge (Berraondo, 1992).

The meaning of stoicism has to do with firmness and self-control to be able to deal with thoughts that are self-destructive. In other words, it has to do with ethics and the moral well-being of human beings. In addition, the Stoics believe that reason is the right way to achieve maximum knowledge (Novak, 1999). Another teaching is that human beings must always live in unity with nature. In view of this, man enters into communion with himself and with the universe, in addition to being able to feel a greater peace within himself (Russell, 2014).

The main representatives of Stoicism were: Cleantes of Assos (330 B.C.-230 B.C.); Chrysippus of Solis (280 BC-208 BC); Panaetius of Rhodes (185 BC-109 BC); Posidonius of Apama (135 BC-51 BC); Epictetus (55-135); Seneca (4 B.C.-65) and Marcus Aurelius (121-180), as shown in the table below, which shows the representatives of each phase of Stoicism.

<i>Ancient Stoah</i>	<i>Stoa Medium</i>	<i>Stoa Nova</i>
<u>It focused on ethical issues:</u>	<u>It was of more eclectic themes:</u>	<u>More Religious Themes:</u>
Cítion Zen	Panécio de Rodes	Seneca
Chrysippus of Solis	Posidonius of Apamea	Epicteto
Cleantes of Assos	Cicero	Marco Aurélio

2.1 RISE OF STOICISM

Stoicism was founded in the third century B.C. by Zeno of Citium or Zeno, who was a wealthy Phoenician merchant from the city of Citium, located in Cyprus, who worked transporting goods by sea. After surviving a shipwreck in which he lost everything he had, Zeno went to Athens, in Ancient Greece, where he began to frequent bookstores and learned about the philosophies of Plato, Socrates, Aristotle and all their followers (Ramos, 2020).

In one of the bookstores he frequented, Zeno became acquainted with the writings of "Diogenes of Sinope". He immersed himself in philosophy, becoming a philosopher as well. In Athens, Zeno managed to found his school, which unlike all the others of the time, could be attended by any type of person, regardless of their social class. Meetings were always held in open spaces, called *Stoa Poikile* or painted balconies. Because of this, the philosophy became quite popular throughout history and its doctrines were possible to be practiced by nobles, poor, rich and slaves (BBC News Brasil, 2018).



Zeno realized that there was a non-material world that was far more controllable and predictable than the world he had as a merchant. As a result, he agreed with the ideas of those philosophers and began to lead a simpler life, founding his own philosophical school (Menezes, 2019).

The early Stoics were able to create a philosophy that offered a single view of the place and world that man occupied. This thought was composed of three parts: physics, logic, and ethics (Oliveira 2021). Stoicism had the purpose of making men live in harmony with nature - which, for them, meant living in harmony with themselves, with the universe, and with humanity (Menezes, 2019).

For the Stoics, the universe was governed by reason, which was a divine principle that could permeate everything. Therefore, being in harmony with the universe meant living in harmony with God (Bittar, 2018). In addition, according to Robertson (2020), Stoic philosophy also aimed to make men live with virtue, a concept that, for them, was closely associated with reason.

In addition to Zeno, Chrysippus was also a great diffuser of Stoicism in Ancient Greece. The philosopher went on to write about 700 books on the doctrine. But unfortunately, none of the works of Greek authors have been found, due to the Roman Empire adhering to some elements of Greek culture, Stoicism ended up surviving in this way. Some very important authors have managed to develop and it is the works written by them that are mainly responsible for continuing the work started in Ancient Greece.

Therefore, Stoicism is divided into three moments: ancient Stoicism (*ancient stoah*) – represented by the philosophers Zeno of Citium, Chrysippus of Soli, Cleantes of Assos, who focused the doctrine on ethical issues; Roman Hellenistic Stoicism, represented by the philosophers Panaetius of Rhodes, Posidonius of Apamea, and Cicero. The *Middle Stoah*, as it is also called, was already more eclectic; Roman imperial Stoicism, which was developed by philosophers such as Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. The *New Stoah* had a character based on religion (Ramos, 2020).

2.2 EPICTETO

Epictetus was born in the year 55 in the Hellenistic city of Hierapolis, in what is now Turkey, and died at the age of 80, in the Greek city of Nicopolis. Epictetus was an ancient Greek philosopher, who belonged to the Stoic philosophical school. He has been regarded as one of the main representatives of Stoicism (Menezes, 2019). The philosopher lived part of his life as a slave in Rome. His works did not spread, however, his teachings, thoughts and ideas are very present in two works that were edited by his disciple Flavio Arriano, the well-known *Manual and Discourses of Epictetus* (Ramos, 2020).

Every element of the cosmos, including the human being, has its own function. Human beings can be happy when they perform their function in harmony with the functioning of the universe. For the philosopher, desire is one of the main causes of human unhappiness (Ramos, 2020). The main



works written by this philosopher were: Epictetus' manual and Epictetus' speeches (Ramos, 2020). His main thoughts, ideas, and teachings are: the pursuit of happiness; To be realized man must try to change only that which can be changed, that which cannot be changed must be accepted as it really is. In the face of this, reality must be accepted; It is important to differentiate between what is useful to always be followed, and what is useless, to be always discarded; valuing knowledge and reason; Man needs to know social representations, which is one of the main purposes of philosophy, in order to be able to make good choices in life; vision of the organized, harmonious, and rational universe (Oliveira, 2021).

2.3 SENECA

Lucius Anaeus Seneca, better known as Seneca, was an orator, philosopher, politician and poet, born in the city of Córdoba, currently called Spain, was and continues to be considered one of the most important intellectuals of the Roman Empire (Russell, 2014). The philosopher was an important representative of the Stoic third phase (*stoah nova*), focusing on the concepts of physics, logic, and ethics for the development of Stoicism. In addition, he had the Roman emperor, Nero, as his pupil and became the main advisor to the Roman Empire (BBC News Brasil, 2018). Of his works, the Dialogues, the Tragedies and the Letters (Berraondo, 1999) stand out.

In his writings he emphasizes the falsity of the emotional response to everyday facts. Understanding the mind as a rational unit, the philosopher proposed that these answers would be failures of reasoning. Many of his writings have been preserved, among the most relevant are: on anger; about the brevity of life; about the tranquility of the soul, and about providence (Berraondo, 1999).

2.4 MARCO AURÉLIO

Marcus Aurelius was born in Rome in the year 121 A.D. to a noble family. He had many difficulties because of the position he held and because he always wanted to live a more moral life. His main field of activity was the city of Rome, where it was necessary to learn how to deal with the diversity of religions, languages, pestilences, invasions and betrayals. He was able to exercise his morals according to these difficulties that presented themselves (Oliveira, 2021). He gained recognition as a ruler and philosopher during his lifetime. His contact with Stoic philosophy originated through his tutor, Junius Rusticus.

His Meditations, a text whose compilation and title are posthumous, can be understood as a personal record that was intended for his moral development and not only as a work aimed at publication, explaining the asymmetric character of these reflections (Bittar, 2018). From an early age, Marcus Aurelius was dedicated to the search for wisdom through philosophy. He was integrated into the current of Stoicism, having as his main objective the development of a human morality, helping to



differentiate what is fleeting from what is eternal; the unrighteous, of what is just; that which departs from the good, from what is good. And it was from these distinctions that he was able to make better choices and have a safer and more serene life (Oliveira, 2021).

2.5 STOICISM IN THE PRESENT DAY

Stoicism is founded on the desire to progress towards the good and morals, regardless of the difficulties to be crossed. Even if man had in himself an inclination towards the good, since he came into the world to be virtuous and happy, he needed his will for the realization of such a decision (Vito, 2011). Through Stoicism, a Stoic manifestation that adapted to the Roman reality, man, suffering, frightened, submitted, enslaved by passions and vices, would be led to regeneration. Philosophical reflection and the Stoic principles of duty, self-discipline and subjection to the natural order of things are the basis for the formation of the Roman man, that is, endowed with ethical and moral qualities, this man could regenerate and achieve happiness (Alves and Nardi, 2017).

In their origins, the Stoics talked about using temperance to deal with life's pain and misfortunes. They believed that the world was composed of a formal perspective, a naturalistic ethic, and a non-dualistic physics (Ramos, 2020). Ethics was the main focus of knowledge. The meaning of stoicism is related to self-control and firmness in dealing with self-destructive thoughts. In other words, it involves a person's ethics and moral well-being (Menezes, 2019). Furthermore, the Stoics believe that reason is the way to attain maximum knowledge. Another teaching is that man must live in unity with nature. From this, man enters into communion with the universe and with himself. Thus, he feels a greater peace within himself (Bittar, 2018).

The Greeks saw the world in a very particular way. They were truly aficionados of nature and its exuberances: the waves and the seas, the setting of the stars, the development and growth of plants, planting, the birth of life and death, and so on (Pereira and Feitosa, 2018). It was from this admiration for nature that the Stoics began to identify a certain inherent harmony, believing that there is a force, called the Cosmos, that is responsible for bringing order and harmony to the world. It is a little complicated to be able to imagine this thought nowadays, due to the fact that human beings are living in large metropolises, far from nature, since the Greeks were always in direct contact with it (Menezes, 2019).

In this day and age, Stoicism can help in controlling feelings. Thus, in the same way that psychoanalysis can help to better understand who each human being really is, the Stoic teachings help to improve the quality of life, such as, for example, controlling anxiety, knowing oneself, staying calm in certain situations, dealing with insecurity, processing negative thoughts and feelings, and reducing stress (Bittar, 2018). The proposal of the Stoic teachings is quite appropriate nowadays as a way to



help keep calm. Therefore, it is important to learn to deal with uncertainties within limits, better managing what seems to be out of control (Bbc News Brasil, 2018).

Since the Stoic school deals with reason to achieve knowledge, its main characteristics are: virtue is the only good and the way to happiness; people should deny external feelings; pleasure makes no difference to the wise; The universe is governed by a natural reason; value to indifference; cosmopolitanism: the end of geographical boundaries; put into practice what has been learned; focus on what can really be controlled and accept what cannot; take responsibility for what can be controlled and turn obstacles into opportunities. After all, there are always possibilities to extract something positive from bad situations (Pereira and Feitosa, 2018).

A person who is considered a stoic is one who acts indifferent to pain, sadness, pleasure, or joy. That is, it is a person who represses his feelings. But this doesn't have to be bad: it means that you are an individual who can stay calm in a situation of chaos (Oliveira, 2021). That said, the Stoic is the one who doesn't get carried away by their emotions or their beliefs. That is, he is more rational with how he deals with life. He is a person open to acquiring new knowledge (Bbc News Brasil, 2018). A stoic person is mistaken for a cold person because of the way they handle situations. But that doesn't mean she doesn't have feelings or doesn't know how to deal with people. After all, she just knows how to control her emotions better (Russell, 2014).

Through reflective exercises it can be noted that, in the same way that the Stoic philosophers found ways to excel in the midst of their difficulties faced in the period of their existence, nowadays it is also possible to strengthen and recognize that what depends on the will of each one cannot be taken away or forced by anyone. For it is remarkable that what causes most concern and fear in people is not the facts that are affected, but the misinterpretations that people make. In addition, it is noticeable that many of the efforts that people make are misused in relation to what everyone tries to find throughout life, which is the search for things that can make them happy, and many are carried away by external factors, such as addictions, and ephemeral things that do not complete man's search for him to feel happy (Alves and Nardi, 2017).

It is worth mentioning that the demands of today's society, such as competitiveness, aptitude, consumption and the pursuit of happiness desired by most men since ancient times, are a challenge. For this reason, Seneca's thoughts have permeated his time, and can become references for contemporary education, whose purpose is to form a man capable of facing the challenges imposed by social demands (Vito, 2011). The Stoic school has a profound influence on civilization and, consequently, on thought as a whole. It is present in Christianity, Buddhism and in the thought of several modern philosophers, in addition to influencing the contemporary technique of psychotherapy known as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (BBC News Brasil, 2018).



In the year 2022, a literary phenomenon has been seen in Brazilian bookstores: many of the best-selling books deal with Stoicism. "The Life of the Stoics", "Little Stoic Manual", "Diary of the Stoic" and "Being Stoic" are some of the works that make up the list of the most prolonged. According to scholars, this movement has resurfaced in the country because it brings several lessons to individuals today, even though it was created so many centuries ago. What defines the phenomenon of Stoicism today is the interest in this ethic acting as a therapy for contemporary problems. Philosophy has been seen as a "way of life" in recent decades and, during the twentieth century, therapies began to focus on self-criticism, as is the case with psychoanalysis. With the COVID-19 pandemic, new questions and pains have arisen among humans in various parts of the planet, making books become important tools for relief and the search for answers (Sponchiato, 2022). Stoicism is a therapy of the mind and spirit, or the soul if you prefer. This school is seen as a hospital, where anxieties and suffering can receive treatment and care, which resonates a lot these days (Robertson, 2020).

Through all this, resilience has become one of the most used words in the contemporary vocabulary, as if it were one of the main qualities of human beings in the midst of a period of turmoil. This indicates the reinterpretation of Stoic philosophy. Usually, when someone is called a stoic, they are characterized as someone who is able to endure suffering without showing what they are feeling. However, Stoic philosophy today is interpreted as a practical operating system for everyday life, which seeks to put an end to the bad judgments that each one makes and that lead to negative emotions, such as envy and anger, generating suffering. However, nowadays, resilience has come to mean the ability to adapt to change, regardless of how the person experiences this suffering (Sponchiato, 2022).

Stoicism begins by focusing on those things that are truly within our control: thoughts, emotions, choices, refusals, and decisions that are up to us. This helps to focus on what can be improved and to understand how we ourselves contribute to our suffering (Alves and Nardi, 2017). Nowadays, Stoicism provides a number of tools to improve mental health: keeping a journal to deposit responsibilities; premeditate evils so that you can temper expectations and dispel toxic emotions such as anger, fury, envy and everything that gives rise to suffering and anxiety (Menezes, 2019).

3 TEACHING PHILOSOPHY IN CONTEMPORARY SCHOOLS

What is the main purpose of philosophy? The important role of philosophy in schools, in the first place, is the development, and at the same time, the impulse of the students towards knowledge. The philosophical meaning concerns wisdom, that is, the pursuit of knowledge. It is necessary for the educational environment to have a very active philosophy within the teaching-learning process of students, and this has been observed during educational processes, especially in high school, where the teaching of the subject is mandatory (Cotrim and Fernandes, 2016). Philosophical teaching is



transformative, because it is part of the learning process that will later help in the transformation of a better world (Bittencourt, 2015).

Educational philosophy is a branch of knowledge that, for many, is considered difficult and abstract, but the truth is that it is not a seven-headed beast. The basic objects of the study of this discipline are very fundamental and common themes in the existence of the history of humanity, such as, for example, good and evil, life and death, happiness and pain, truth and falsehood, power, love and many others that elucidate the coexistence and mutual learning among all people in a society (Silva, 2011).

Philosophical teaching in the educational environment is a liberating instrument that has several effects that are transformative, belonging to a society that comes in search of ways to solidify itself in full ascensions, in order to be subjects who have a voice and a turn (Davidov, 1988). In this context, the teaching of this discipline in the school environment is a great opportunity to place as provocative students all those people who have received instruction to have a critical, transformative and liberating identity in general (Cotrim and Fernandes, 2016). The insertion of the philosophical discipline in educational teaching has demonstrated the gap that exists in the construction of a critical being who is categorically prepared for complex interaction with society. In view of this, the transformative power it has in the process of learning development is remarkable.

Thus, it is a total challenge in learning, but a valuable priesthood (Silva, 2011). It is important to report that the coexistence with Philosophy in the classrooms contributes to the students being able to acquire their own security and begin to enjoy learning, due to the fact that, when it is practiced in an integrated and dialogical way, it manages to develop in the students a very balanced self-esteem and, with this, they begin to recognize the value and importance of their own ideas for the enrichment of the groups in which they belong. in addition to the enrichment of society as a whole (Cotrim and Fernandes, 2016).

3.1 WHAT IS TAUGHT ABOUT PHILOSOPHY

In classrooms, philosophy goes far beyond teaching students the thoughts of philosophers by showing ready-made ideas, but rather teaching them how to think. Philosophical thoughts are based on doubt and invite students to reflect on everything around them, in addition to thinking, rethinking, seeking new ideas, questioning, understanding, understanding and interpreting. Based on language and reason, the practice of philosophizing is a reflexive activity always in search of the meanings of all things and, based on the formation of ideas, manages to establish a philosophical discourse. The philosophical proposal is to make the student capable of reading and understanding this discourse, analyzing the ideas, discovering the logic of thought, arguing and interpreting the entire line of reasoning (Silva, 2011).



The learning of this area of study aims at the development of skills of analysis, identification, interpretation and comparison of ideas, phenomena, thoughts and geographical, historical, economic, social, cultural and political processes. For both High School and Fundamental, these competencies allow students to develop the skills for the elaboration of hypotheses, construction of arguments and action in society, always based on the fundamentals and concepts of the components of the area. Thus, the philosophical discipline within the classrooms has been proposing the systematization of reasoning and the construction of argumentation, broadening and deepening its conceptual basis based on interpretation and analysis. In High School, Philosophy has allowed the stimulation of a more critical and contextualized view with reality, in the application and elaboration of interpretations about relationships and in the conceptual domain, the multiple dimensions and processes of humanity's existence (Pereira, 2019).

Philosophical thinking is essential in the experience of all human beings, because it provides the practices of analysis, reflection and criticism, benefiting the encounter of knowledge of man and the world. In the teaching of this discipline, it is recommended to prioritize practices that can favor the formation of students who are able to develop their own criticism and their own thinking, forming citizens who have the ability to face the various situations that may arise in the course of their lives (Silva *et al.*, 2020).

What can be expected from this teaching? In view of all that is taught in the discipline, it is expected that students may be able to: know the stories of the various philosophers and all the contents of their time; understand the main ideas of philosophers throughout history; be able to relate all the philosophical ideas that have been studied with their own daily lives; carry out the elaboration of reflections, arguments and questions about attitudes, values or situations that have been lived based on Philosophy; recognize the right to freedom of thought of all people, in an attitude of tolerance and respect for all of them, and be able to develop philosophical reflections that can lead to the construction of critical thinking that generates ethical and conscious attitudes (Pereira, 2019).

How is the teaching of the discipline seen in Brazil? In the country, Philosophy as a subject in schools has always been a target of several controversies, either in its absence or presence in the curriculum or in relation to the pedagogy of Philosophy and the didactic-methodological issues of how philosophical education should happen in High School and Elementary School. The issue of the presence of the discipline in school curricula was marked in the Brazilian country by comings and goings that have always hindered the creation of an identity about its objectives at these levels of education, which are still not properly clarified (Alves, 2002).

Philosophy as a teaching subject at the basic levels of school education is characterized, in terms of didactic-methodological issues, by the lack of a specific model that is unique. It is more accurate to say that philosophical teaching is defined by a plurality of models, which can be close to



the French model, the Italian model, or a mixture of the two, among other influences. This fact can be verified with relative clarity in books or philosophical textbooks for teaching in high school, such as the textual elements that approach history and philosophical thought through the study of the themes, authors and classic problems of philosophy, this being a proposal that is closer to the Italian model than to the French one in general (Alves, 2009).

Currently, the perspectives for the study of the discipline in Brazil are progressively expanding, although there is still a professional devaluation of professors and researchers in this area by obscurantist nuclei of our own society that, limited to their common sense, tends to consider philosophical thought as difficult, obscure, vague and of little practical use in an immediatist and technocratic sociopolitical order in its relations of production (Bittencourt, 2015).

The situation of philosophical teaching in Brazil, in certain circumstances, can suffer from the same problem when it is based on the transmission of closed contents, leading the student to the impossibility of questioning and to the act of "dialoguing" with the author's thought, but simply making him a repeater of ready-made knowledge, which does not establish the process of formation of new concepts. In several institutions, the non-problematized reading of the approached author is adopted, a method of study that is characterized by not stimulating the creation of new interpretations, a tendency that can harm consistent teaching, since quality philosophical didactics should propose questioning, the intellectual autonomy of the student and the organized debate of ideas between teachers and students.

Philosophy teachers, due to the short time allotted to them in the course plan at their educational institution, are hardly able to develop a satisfactory work with their students, motivating frustration due to the feeling of being coerced to adopt a teaching methodology that demeans their abilities as educators (Alves e Silva, 2021).

3.2 WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF WHAT IS TAUGHT?

What is the main contribution of Philosophy in the classroom? It is the stimulation for students to be able to think for themselves, since this is an essential skill for them to develop protagonism and autonomy in their own lives. The discipline is able to put systematic doubts into practice, through questioning and self-questioning, enabling the construction of dialogues and scientific investigation, due to stimulating the discovery of new ideas and curiosity, in addition to stimulating future skills, such as critical thinking (which through doubts allows arguing and questioning based on logic and reason). originality and creativity, because thinking for oneself already allows the conception of new ideas, the solution of problems through the elaboration of hypotheses and among other positive points (Dantas *et al.*, 2014).



Philosophy presents situations and concepts that make students feel motivated to develop critical thinking, reasoning and a taste for the pursuit of knowledge and knowledge that are elaborated by various philosophers in different places and periods. In this way, students are invited to reflect on everything they learn, developing critical thinking and interest in scientific research (Cotrim and Fernandes, 2016). It is important to address that the experience with the discipline in the classrooms contributes a lot for students to acquire more self-confidence and a taste for learning. In addition, it also encourages students to freely express their opinions without being afraid of making mistakes and being ridiculed by others or being misunderstood by their own teachers, making classes much more dynamic and teaching much more creative for both parties who are involved in the construction of knowledge (Cristine, 2018).

Philosophy is not limited only to the scientific field, although it can be a great reflection on everything about science. The philosophical discipline is a set of understandings that always understand and give meaning to the world and to all existence. Thus, it is important to know how philosophy is constituted and how this whole set of understandings is constructed (Borges and Souza, 2016).

Philosophy has been questioned a lot as a discipline, because of this, it is essential that teachers are able to become aware that teaching should not always be considered as just another discipline to be taught. What is certain is that teachers who have the responsibility of applying this discipline keep in mind how important it is to ensure that students do not become totally dependent on textbooks, not in an undeserving way, but in the sense of not dedicating themselves to the famous "memorizations" of authors and ideas (Dantas *et al.*, 2014).

The teacher's conscience dictates to him that his task is always to teach philosophy, and that is his main goal. However, in a didactic way, the discipline should be used as a means in the act of philosophizing, so that, in an indirect and oblique way, the teacher can accomplish the ends of his role: teaching philosophy. The phrase written by Kant "Philosophy is not taught, but philosophizing" is always introduced in the teaching and learning processes, in addition to revealing a truth of philosophy as a body of understandings, however, it has become distant from an absolute truth in the limits of generic terminalities, which require apprehensions of contents that are expressed in the main currents of thought and philosophical ideas. allowing students to say that they have learned philosophy (Borges and Souza, 2016).

In a society with a technocratic and morally conservative ideological orientation such as the Brazilian one, the presence of philosophical activity, when exercised with professional dignity and intellectual commitment, always causes discomfort in the reactionary layers of the social organization. This is the caustic philosophical role, to dissolve the unthinking foundations of our way of life and its social, cultural and political manifestations. However, philosophizing is often swimming against the



tide, because where philosophical activity exercises its radical reflection, the degrading massification of human obtuseness, present in various social segments, spares no effort in demeaning against the dignity of Philosophy (Alves and Silva, 2021).

The philistines embedded in journalism make philosophy a package of aphorisms that are easy to assimilate, and when they summon philosophers for media interventions, they usually simplify their discourses to the delight of consumers of information. In many educational institutions, the discipline is only present because of the pedagogical demands of the curriculum, and many of their bureaucrats and intellectually dull students do not recognize in the philosophical discourse a possibility of opening consciousness to critical reflections on human life in its interaction with the concrete world. However, despite the adversities, philosophical activity in Brazil finds reasonable editorial support, so that the reading public of philosophical texts is gradually expanding, regardless of whether or not there is a study orientation, because autonomy is one of the philosophical sieves, and it is up to the subject himself to develop this capacity in his intellectual reflections. Another circumstance worthy of note lies in the virtualization of communication: despite the large number of imbecilities disseminated every minute on the Internet, there is also a significant presence of intellectuals expressing their ideas on the networks, thus making public use of reason in a new management of the human agora. Philosophizing is a constant agonizing experience, and those who have entered this field cannot expect it to be easy. There is an even greater stimulus for philosophy to always manifest itself as the bad conscience of the prevailing time (Morin, 2011).

Philosophical activity, therefore, is a means that can provide a life experience that will help the human being in the process of developing self-knowledge, of his existential limits, of his perception of the political dynamics of the social order, of his creative potentials, thus helping in the process of self-discovery, that is, so that a set of forces that come together in the core of the individual is transformed into creation and that They manifest externally when man discovers and conquers himself through autonomous interaction with the concrete world. It is possible to glimpse the possibility of changes in the present situation. It is possible to verify the increase in interest shown by the students in entering the undergraduate courses of Philosophy, proof of the desire of an increasing number of young people to take a critical stance on the issues concerning the existence and the situation of the human being in the face of the contradictions of the contemporary world. The teaching of Philosophy to young people is of paramount importance and pertinence for the progress of Brazilian Education, and the law that determines the teaching of Philosophy must be applied effectively, in the name of improving the quality of teaching in Brazil, with a view to creating new values and the spirit of transformation that our culture needs to live (Bittencourt, 2015).

It is possible to note that in the current conditions in which school educational processes are carried out in Brazil, it is totally necessary to introduce the discipline in the curriculum of High School



and Elementary School in the form of a subject, as a way to ensure its specificity and the fulfillment of all the objectives that are proposed, so that they can really contribute throughout this process and be able to assist students in the development of basic skills and abilities that are required for the area. The explicit need for Philosophy to be included in the curriculum in the form of a discipline is based, among other reasons, on the history of its presence at the levels of education, due to the fact that all the times it had its space reduced in the curriculum, it was precisely at the moments when the federal legislation made the discipline optional for students or when it pronounced itself in a contradictory and ambiguous way about this issue (Alves, 2009).

3.3 HOW IS IT TAUGHT?

For teachers who are concerned about knowing the best way to apply Philosophy in the classroom, there is still no ready-made recipe. As already mentioned, it is recommended to prioritize practices that favor the formation of people who are capable of developing their criticism and thinking, creating human beings who have the ability to face all the varied situations that may appear in the future (Cristine, 2018). Philosophy professors who do not care about the good education of their students will certainly be doing more harm than good for all of them. An excellent education is one that is based on true knowledge, that leads students to seek wisdom and that contributes to the good of students and society as a whole, leading students to reflect on everything that surrounds them and not only on the things that will be useful to do and know. In view of all this, it can be said that only true Philosophy contains all these qualities (Silva, 2011).

In order to contribute to the education of high school and elementary school students in Brazil, the teaching of the discipline must be taught by teachers who are really trained and licensed in it, due to the fact that it is believed that these educators are better prepared to know how to work with the variety of questions and philosophical issues that need to be presented to students (Cristine, 2018). Only the teacher truly trained in the Philosophy course has the preparation to be able to develop critical thinking in students, providing them with the opportunity to debate ideas, elaborate reasoning and develop a more autonomous thinking about the problems and theories that are proposed to them, and in addition, also build their own textual elements (Dantas *et al.*, 2014).

Teachers should be concerned with transmitting totally true knowledge during philosophical teaching, and as already said, not only what can be useful to students, but only enlightened by the truth, they will be equipped with the faculty of evaluating, discerning, deciding, choosing and pondering, which will help them to acquire intellectual autonomy (Pereira, 2019).

In the act of educating, Philosophy teachers may even use some resources and methods to improve teaching-learning, but these uses should only serve as a way to achieve the main objective, which is to be able to help students to have knowledge that will serve them to improve as human beings



(Silva, 2011). Dialogues can open paths to friendships and these are also what ensure an opening for teaching. Educational dialogue should not be used as a tool for the transmission of ideologies. Teachers who use classes to propagate social, religious, and political ideas, in addition to their particular conceptions of life, should be considered unethical, manipulative, and disloyal (Silva *et al.*, 2020).

Philosophy can never be comfortable, even when its basic purpose is to make palatable or justifiable the way of being of a given epoch, presenting it as the most rational or inevitable. It's a double nuisance. First, for the philosopher himself, who, both in criticism and in apology, has to carry out a movement in which the concrete is taken conceptually and is posited as a set of theoretical determinations, which must, of course, express what is philosophically exposed. Secondly, it is for sociability as a whole (Pereira, 2019).

Society must either face the theoretical and critical presentation of its most deleterious aspects, or it must at least tolerate the expression of its so-called essential harmony in a register that is beyond that of common sense. The transformation of what is actually given into a concept is an operation that, whether in the case of conservative conceptions or in those that advocate a critical movement, moves human understanding away from its immediate comfort zone, despite the fact that the former end up proposing a return to it. The categorical examination of the existent – entities, processes and relations – entails exactly this movement that aims at the explicitness of the determinations under which a particular and concrete mode of social life – and of the relationship with the world formatted by it – is what it is and presents the forms of appearance that correspond to it (Alves and Silva, 2021).

Kant's statement "One does not teach philosophy, but how to philosophize" addresses a series of questions related to the teaching of philosophy. The phrase rallies an important question where the following question is generated: since philosophy is not taught, but how to philosophize, how do one teach to philosophize? In this context, there is an important starting point that, by analogy, manages to guide reasoning through the idea that in the educational environment one only learns by practicing. The act of learning is linked to the act of doing and practicing, that is, the act of inserting the theoretical contents together with the practical ones, addressing what is desired to know. In an analogical way, reasoning can be transferred to the teaching of philosophy, at least provisionally, to the conclusion that philosophy is taught by "philosophizing". With this, it can be inferred, by extension of the reasoning, that, in fact, "philosophy is not taught, but philosophizing" (Borges and Souza, 2016).

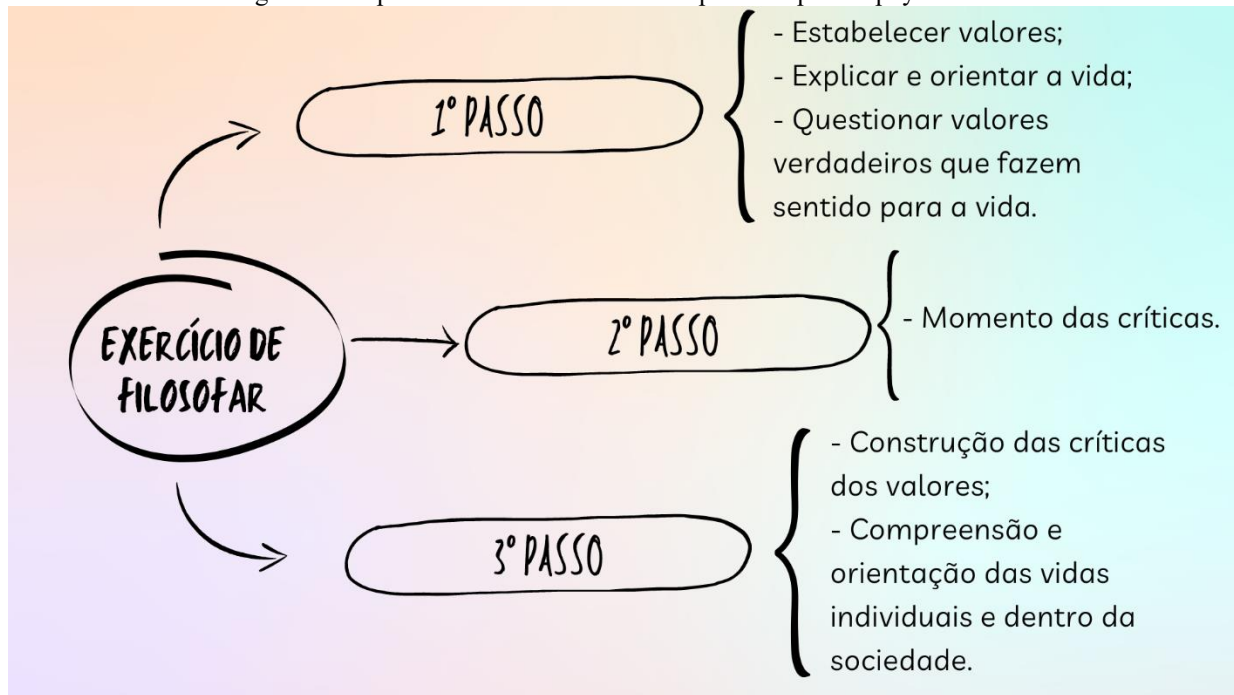
The act of philosophizing has the action of pointing out the requirements of a method in the form of exercises, as well as an attitude that must be philosophical. Philosophical attitudes require the removal of various prejudices, especially the one that induces people to think that the art of philosophizing is difficult, useless, and complicated, as if it were only for ultra-specialized people. However, philosophical attitudes require a very different stance, even in the face of the findings of the high level of knowledge of several philosophers, and it must be understood that the act of



philosophizing is not limited only to philosophers who are consecrated or who have a relevant academic background (Alves and Silva, 2021).

The philosophical exercise that was proposed by Luckesi (1992), in the chapter called "the exercise of philosophizing", requires the execution of three steps that are didactically sequential, during a very dialectical process, schematized in the image below (figure 1).

Figure 1: Graphic scheme with the three steps of the philosophy exercise.



Source: Personal archive.

The purpose of questions of this nature is to make people aware of their own actions, of the place where they are and of the directions they take in life, which are the directions that are born both from popular consciences and from the sedimentation of philosophical and political thoughts that are formulated and disseminated in society over the years (Alves e Silva, 2021).

The exercises of the act of philosophizing require the inventory of values and concepts; the study of values and criticisms; and the study and reconstruction of values and concepts, and for all this to happen, it is necessary to look not only at the day-to-day, but to study and read what all other philosophers and all other thinkers have already said (Dantas *et al.*, 2014). They can help everyone reach higher levels of understanding and other categories of understanding as well. The exercises of the act of philosophizing can be a guiding thread for learning philosophy, without philosophy being taught itself (Bittencourt, 2015). Its comprehension should result from more than one relationship that has in the student the starting point of the infinite questions that philosophy can provide, mediated by the teacher, aided by philosophers, thinkers and their ideas, by the main currents of thought from a very distant past in time, but very close in history. They have a great contribution to offer. It is the aid



for all the work of building philosophical understanding, of the world, and of actions (Alves and Silva, 2021).

4 WHY SHOULD STOICISM BE TAUGHT?

Stoicism is a practical philosophy that has its teachings based on ways to live a good life, focusing only on what can be controlled. Stoic ideals can help reduce stress and anxiety and help you cope with insecurities and other negative feelings (Câmara, 2014). Practitioners of Stoicism seek to keep their minds rational and calm, regardless of what may happen. Stoicism is quite influential because it is one of the most popular schools of philosophy in Rome and Athens, which are important foundations from which Western civilization began to be built (Dinucci, 2018).

One of the main reasons why Stoicism is studied today is that it is not just an armchair philosophy. From the times of Zeno of Citium to the times of Ryan Holiday, all those involved in this philosophical current are individuals who know how to value actions over words (Fontoura, 2021). Stoicism never makes a distinction about who each individual is or where they came from. Another important reason is that the Stoics deal with timeless issues, such as ways to deal with adversity, know oneself, invest energy only in what matters, and abstract negative emotions (Costa *et al.*, 2019).

For practitioners of Stoicism, acting in a virtuous manner is the only way to achieve a good and light life. For this reason, they guide their actions always based on the four Greek cardinal virtues defined by Plato, which managed to influence not only the Stoics, but also other Hellenistic philosophers and even Christian thinkers. These four virtues are character traits that must always act in accordance with and be able to value in others: wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice (Dinucci and Julien, 2017).

A person who practices Stoicism is one who does not let himself be carried away by passions, beliefs or any feeling that is capable of taking away his rationality when acting, such as, for example, pain, desires, pleasure and fear. Stoicism looks for ways to act rationally, even with the presence of any of these feelings. The Stoic is not an individual without feelings, but he does not make himself a prisoner of them. To become a Stoic person, it is important to study, exercise, and strengthen rationality (Grimal, 2018).

Stoic philosophy focuses on practical life, on everyday events and actions, and on how the individual can deal with these events in a rational way. For the Stoics there are things that are possible to be controlled, but there are also things that are not under people's control. In the face of what cannot be controlled, such as the climate, there is nothing that can be done to change its state (Lima, 2021). In addition, for the Stoics, things that are out of control cannot bring any happiness, as this feeling depends only on events that can be controlled (Luz, 2018).



The simplicity of Stoicism's concepts is purposeful, for when a philosophy is too complex, human beings spend more time trying to understand it than practicing it. Due to the fact that the Stoics value actions always above words, this philosophy is not about abstract and complex concepts (Grimal, 2018).

Stoicism is a simple answer to the problems of modern life. And its philosophers already knew it. For modern life, like life in antiquity, is made up of people with the same fears and anxieties. And with the same desires and dreams. However, what is learned from Stoicism is that perceiving and feeling situations as they are, without judgment, and in order to fully live in the present is a skill (Fontoura, 2021).

4.1 IMPORTANCE OF DEEPENING STOICISM

The first Stoic school was invented by Zeno of Citium around 300 B.C. in Athens. However, this doctrine only became effectively known when he arrived in Rome. His main theme was the defense that the whole world would be governed by a rational and divine natural law. Therefore, in order for individuals to achieve true happiness, they should depend only on their "virtues", that is, their values and knowledge, giving up "vices", considered by Stoicism as an absolute evil (Gazolla, 1999).

Stoicism is one of the most essential classical philosophical schools of all time, always conceiving of nature as a balanced and harmonious cosmos. The Stoics always rely on rationality as a way to adapt their behaviors to the natural and divine laws that are common to all individuals. This philosophy teaches that reasons should always prevail over passions in the pursuit of happiness (Husserl, 2014). Therefore, in order to be happy, it is necessary to act with resilience in the face of everyday events, since everything is part of the total harmony of the cosmos and it is up to individuals to adapt to the right measure (Fontoura, 2021).

The name "Stoicism" originates from the Greek term "*stoa poikilé*", which designated the meeting place where Zeno's disciples met, which was a portico of the public space for political meetings in the city of Athens (Marcondes, 2007). Their doctrine is often represented by the image of a tree, where the stem symbolizes the physical part, the branches represent logic and the leaves indicate morality or ethics (Moura, 2012). Stoicism is highlighted by the emotional balances of those who practice it. Happiness is not attained through external aspects, nor through reacting or repressing events. In fact, it is about resilience and self-control in the face of the events of the cosmos, even if everything is part of a perfect and natural order (Marcondes, 2007).

Stoicism, by teaching the individual to maintain a calm and rational mind, regardless of what may happen, shows that this helps him to recognize and also to focus only on what can be controlled and not to worry and always accept what he has no control over (Lima, 2021).



The principles of Stoicism that guide individuals who follow this doctrine are: people should always give priority to knowledge and always act according to reason; Virtue is the only good and way to find happiness; pleasures are the enemies of the wise; Attitudes have more value when compared to words, that is, the things that are done have more importance than those that are said; A universal, natural, and divine reason governs the universe; One should not question the reason that led something to happen, but accept it without complaints, focusing only on what can be changed and/or controlled in the face of the situations; external feelings make human beings unbiased and irrational; act prudently and take responsibility for one's actions; Life and circumstances are not idealized; Things happen according to a law of cause and effect. Individuals need to accept and live with their lives the way they are (Santos, 2021).

Stoicism is divided into three main periods: ancient (ethical), middle (eclectic), and early (religious). The first phase was lived by the founder of this doctrine, Zeno of Cicium (333 to 262 B.C.), and was completed by Chrysippus of Solent (280 to 206 B.C.), who developed the Stoic doctrine and managed to transform it into the model that is known today. In the second phase of Stoicism, the movement began to spread among the Romans, with Panaetius of Rhodes (185 to 110 BC) as the main motivator for the introduction of this doctrine into Roman society. The characteristic that most marked this period was the eclecticism that this doctrine suffered in the face of the absorption of the thoughts of Aristotle and Plato. Posidonius of Apamea (135 B.C. to 50 A.D.) was largely responsible for this fact. In the third phase of Stoicism, members saw this philosophical doctrine not as part of a science, but as a priestly and religious practice (Santos, 2018). The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius was one of the great representatives of this phase and was one of the few known philosopher-kings in all of history. He wrote diaries of personal improvement that today, compiled under the title of *Meditations*, are one of the most widely read and well-known texts in the philosophical tradition (Marcus Aurelius, 1977).

Notwithstanding the differences in the characteristics that marked the three phases of Stoic development, it is possible to note the effort of this doctrine to thematize happiness as a philosophical problem. In view of this, it can be emphasized that what all practitioners of Stoicism have in common is the perception that happiness is not achieved through adaptations to external events. The search for happiness, in fact, refers to accepting the determinations of nature in the face of the cosmos, which is always balanced and harmonious. To be happy, it is necessary to welcome everything that is good unconditionally (Stock, 2020).

Stoic philosophy is linked to the relationship between laws and nature. Practitioners of Stoicism believe that nature is responsible for determining how people act and how they are. Therefore, deepening and studying this philosophy involves the need to associate it with reflections on the law, the cosmos, forms and all their relations. The foundations of Stoicism are related to the idealizations



that the constitutive principles and conduct of human beings are based on a natural, divine and common law for all of them (Câmara, 2014). The relevance of the theme "nature" to Stoicism is quite highlighted. The natural elements are balanced and perfect, besides being endowed with divine elements in their constitution and ordering. As such, individuals insert themselves within this cosmos – the balanced Stoic nature. Thus, it is necessary to seek natural balance, both in personal and political life (Gazolla, 1999).

For practitioners of Stoicism, happiness is always an act of will. Individuals achieve happiness when they are able to live according to nature, in a rational way, accepting things as they really are – since the cosmos is considered perfect. All those who control their passions are able to harmonize with the cosmos, since the importance that is given to things is nothing more than judgments and conceptions that come not from reason, but from passion (Verges, 1982).

One of the most important characteristics of Stoicism, as it is an ethical vision linked to indifference, is ataraxia, which must be understood in a practical way, going beyond mere intellectual reflections. If the cosmos is balanced and harmonious, virtue lies in the way of living according to its design. In ataraxia, human elements such as friendships, health, illness or enmity cannot be rejected or desired because they go against the natural unfolding of the cosmos (Stockdale, 2017).

What is bad or good, in turn, if it comes from unconditional elements, such as, for example, an enmity is dependent on the actions of individuals. Thus, the existence or non- existence of an enemy does not cause happiness or sadness. Virtuous attitudes consist in the way of accepting external causes, which are not dependent on willing. The founder of Stoicism, Zeno, pointed out that in order to achieve happiness, it is necessary to have such acceptance, which agrees with the will to do good, moving away from directing actions to an external end. The models of philosophy proposed by Zeno do not contain the completeness of Stoic thoughts (Luz, 2018).

For the Stoics, only vice is part of evil and only virtue is part of good. Among them, there are an extensive amount of things, such as fame, diseases, wealth, and health, which are named indifferently and, therefore, do not deserve to be valued so as not to be able to influence the sadness or happiness of the human being. People who tend to appreciate things indifferently have a deficient understanding of the natural order and cannot understand that things that are used for both evil and good can be considered neither bad nor good (Moura, 2012). In this reasoning, Costa *et al.* (2019) reported that health and wealth cannot be considered more beneficial than harmful, and are not considered as goods. Moreover, anything that can be used for good or evil is not considered a good thing.

According to what was taught by Stockdale (2017), Stoicism considers physical pain less important compared to the agony that good men experience when they are failed while performing some task before God or their companions. The fact that the Stoics went in search of the formation of



men with courage, good will and sanity, made many families send their young children to learn from these thinkers about everything that a good life is and how they should act. Epictetus made it clear that his thoughts are about unhappiness and happiness, failure and success, freedom and slavery, and not about income and earnings or war and peace. For him, each person is responsible for all his or her own judgments and the error of one individual cannot cause suffering to another.

Happiness has been a recurring theme in the history of mankind. The search for a happy life" is a fact that has always been sought by women and men of all places and times, from classical philosophers such as Epictetus to the employees of any large company. It is clear that this idea of responsibility present in Epictetus manages to bring power to people in anguish. Practicing virtue is quite common for all people. This practice, when based on reason, plays a very important role in achieving happiness (Lima, 2021). The way to live well and achieve happiness are considered practical exercises. Thus, the practices that lead to the materialization of virtue need to be understood as habits that need to be consolidated. In Stoicism, according to Epictetus (2006), Epictetus' thought stands out in relation to the habit of doing good practices:

Every habit or ability is maintained and developed by its corresponding activities: the habit of walking makes us walk better, regular running makes us better runners. The same is true of our soul. Whenever you get angry or angry, the more your anger and rage increases. You intensify a habit and add fuel to the fire [...]. If you don't want to have a bad temper, don't feed the habit [...]. (EPICTETO, 2006, p. 86-87).

In the course of her study, Luz (2018) spoke well about habits as philosophical exercises. In this sense, he pointed out that, for Epictetus, habitual dispositions are the result of the repetition of certain actions, which can generate more direct responses to future situations. The activities of habituating to good practices strengthen those who follow the philosophical paths advocated by Epictetus. For this philosopher, it is necessary to put into practice what is learned in philosophy and to have the habit of acting like a philosopher and not just talking like one. The habits and actions of habituation are related to the mental aspects of each individual.

Faced with the self-understanding of each individual's place in nature, the use of reason and philosophical exercises as a habit, possibly the individual will be able to achieve a resilience that will allow him to deal with everyday problems, whether existential or not, with a greater lightness, being able to understand that there are several situations that can get out of control, since they are situations of manifestations of a nature that is considered perfect and balanced. It is up to individuals, then, through reason, to adapt to this natural justice and, consequently, live a better life (Grimal, 2018).

4.2 HOW STOICISM CAN GIVE RELEVANCE TO THE APPLICABILITY OF PHILOSOPHY

Stoicism is a philosophical tradition that seeks to preach an ethic in the pursuit of happiness and a good life. In this way, its practitioners are able to define what this life means. The Stoics



encompass the entire philosophical current that corresponds to the context of lived history (Dinucci, 2018).

Stoicism seeks happiness through ways of mastering one's passions, as well as aligning oneself with nature's desires. In the face of what Stoicism believes, happy and wise is the individual who has the gift of being in tune with the flows of events without being discouraged by any adversity that may arise (Costa *et al.* 2019). Therefore, he should not need anything more – that way, nothing will bring him any dissatisfaction. Because of this fact, this philosophy manages to value the practical connections of ideas, without focusing on issues that are strictly intellectual. Nowadays, stoicism is related to attitudes that emphasize discipline, which persists above difficulties and controls passions (Câmara, 2014).

In the pursuit of a happy and peaceful life, the Stoics advocate the fact that the external factors that compromise intellectual and moral perfections should always be ignored. Even in the face of adversity, in difficult or problematic situations, individuals must always react with rationality, calmness and tranquility, without letting the external compromise the capacity for action and judgment (Costa *et al.* 2019).

The Stoics consider that all external feelings, such as lust, passion and so many others, are harmful to the human being, as they cause the individual to become irrational and stop being impartial. These feelings are considered as vices and cause absolute evils that can compromise the organization of thoughts, decision-making in an intelligent and logical way (Dinucci and Julien, 2017).

People seek to follow the teachings of Stoicism to find inner peace, tranquility, and better cope with all the chaos around them. In short, we can say that Stoicism teaches you to maintain a calm and rational mind, regardless of what happens, and this helps you to understand and focus on what you can control and not worry and accept what you cannot control (Husserl, 2014).

Stoicism can be followed by any individual. This philosophy of life teaches that what is truly worthwhile is the integrity of actions and the strength of character. Practitioners of Stoicism make no distinction about who the individual is and where he or she came from. The important thing for them is how much control they are of themselves; how they deal with situations that are not favorable; how they manage their own emotions; how they make decisions; how much they know about themselves; and what they do when they have time (Costa *et al.*, 2019).

Quintessentially, Stoicism is a practical philosophy. For the Stoics, just thinking and studying was not enough to learn how to live life and, therefore, it was necessary to put these teachings into practice (Grimal, 2018). Adopting Stoicism as a philosophy of life causes its practitioners to become less emotionally reactive, more resilient, and more aware of the present. Stoicism can be understood as a system to help individuals thrive in places of stress (Marcondes, 2007).



The Stoic philosopher teaches people to look at life from a new perspective. The strong point of Stoicism is precisely the fact that it is a set of universal and timeless lessons, which can be very useful and used in a practical way by any practicing person, regardless of whether or not they consider themselves a philosopher (Moura, 2012).

Unlike other existing philosophies, Stoicism seeks practicality and direction for actions. The simplicity of the principles of this philosophy is deliberate, since the more complex the subject, the more time people waste trying to understand it – meaning less time to practice it (Santos, 2021). The Stoics do not dwell on abstract and complex concepts. After all, most of the Stoic teachings were passed down "by word of mouth" from generation to generation. The small records they have today were taken from diaries and excerpts of philosophers and also from the notes of their pupils and students (Luz, 2018).

In view of the basic precepts of Stoicism, the four cardinal virtues stand out: courage, wisdom, justice and temperance, which preach acting wisely and making decisions based on reasons (Câmara, 2014). For this philosophy of life, men need to avoid excesses and seek self-control in the face of all their desires. Those who follow this model of discipline are always on the move, in addition to having an appetite for more movements, always prepared to be able to face uncertainties in a calm way (Dinucci, 2018). For practitioners of Stoicism, men's freedom lies in the way of relinquishing control in the face of situations and things that are beyond their reach (Fontoura, 2021).

This maxim of Stoicism, about not trying to control the uncontrollable, has been translated and incorporated by several doctrines, including Christianity and Buddhism, and has even influenced some behavioral therapy techniques (Santos, 2021). The principles of Stoicism are marked by practical and relevant ideas and have everything to do with our time, after all, who doesn't want this self-improvement and lead a lighter life? (Stock, 2020).

Acting in the same way that a Stoic acts is very simple, however, it is not easy or intuitive. The simple way the concepts involved with Stoicism are purposeful. When a philosophy is very complex, people spend more time trying to understand it than practicing it, but when the Stoics come to value actions over words, philosophy is no longer about complex concepts (Dinucci, 2018). Practitioners of Stoicism always rise above their emotional reactions and choose to apply reason to be able to observe everyday situations. If some emotion, such as fear, fails to improve a situation, it is probably considered a useless emotion by the Stoics. Feeling fear is inevitable, but engaging with fear can be a good option to become better (Câmara, 2014).

Stoicism, by itself, is not concerned with complicated theories about the workings of society and/or human behavior, but rather with exercises and teachings that can help overcome destructive emotions and focus on what really matters, valuing action, not the endless debate about aspects that are out of control. It differs from other schools of philosophy for a very simple reason: its application



is extremely practical, and does not leave many "gaps" for intellectual debates (Moura, 2012). In it, philosophy is understood not simply as an intellectual activity, but as an exercise. Thinkers believed that everything that existed was before the determination of a harmonic cosmic force and that virtue would be before living according to the designs of this force (Dinuucci and Julien, 2017).

The goods to which human beings may aspire, such as friendship, health, and contentment, are considered secondary, not essential and good. Similarly, notions that are typically rejected such as enmity and illness should always be avoided (Moura, 2012). The refusal to let oneself be carried away by desires and feelings is intended to prevent superfluous ends from being valued and excesses from being committed. Only that which is unconditional should be considered essentially evil or good (Dinuucci and Julien, 2017). The preservation of a good reputation is beneficial, but its loss should not be bitterly regretted, just as enmities should be avoided, even if its presence cannot diminish happiness (Grimal, 2018).

The partisans of Stoicism were involved in several clashes with different philosophies experienced in the same period, such as, for example, the Epicureans, the remnants and the skeptics of Plato's academy (Santos, 2021). In direct opposition to Epicureanism, the Stoics rejected pleasures and passions as forms of happiness and considered these feelings to be forms of agitation that could disturb the soul. Attempts to conform to external events to try to satisfy a desire would not be a correct way to go in pursuit of happiness. As a result, happiness came to be related to the acceptance of the designs of the harmonious determinations of events and decisions for the choices of what they are good unconditionally (Stock, 2020).

The results of these decisions would not need to be reflected in external achievements. In light of this, many thinkers were regarded as steadfast-minded and serene people. It is not only a matter of repressing or inhibiting reactions to events, but of having self-control and always knowing how to choose what is morally good, regardless of the proper circumstances – peace in the midst of misfortunes. Today, there are still philosophers who follow the principles of Stoicism, such as Lawrence Becker, John Sellars, and William Irvine, who continue to develop the thoughts of ancient philosophers (Santos, 2021).

5 FINAL THOUGHTS

The Stoics seek to keep away from a life guided by carnal pleasures and feelings, focusing only on moral good and reason. Stoicism is considered a philosophical current linked to Hellenism, and is among the most influential philosophies of antiquity. It's a practice-oriented philosophy. In this sense, philosophy is also a meditation on death, because it meditates on the finitude of existence. On the face of it, the Stoics don't represent the figures of depressed people, they just don't want to be fooled by the promises.



The Stoics have a very unified view of the world, a formal logic, non-dualistic physics, their ethics are naturalistic, and they advocate a virtuous life. For them, philosophies should be able to guide the way of living and not just be theoretical knowledge. Ways of living must conform to destinies, that is, to nature, as the Stoics believe. Most Stoic content is timeless because it teaches people how to deal with adversity and negative feelings. On top of all that, this philosophy can lead individuals to a better knowledge of themselves. Because of its timelessness and because it manages to address themes that are present in the lives of all human beings, Stoicism continues to be widely explored and studied.

Although it is difficult to attain tranquility in the face of life's journey, the Stoics insist that much of the suffering is caused by the individuals themselves, as they occupy themselves with matters that do not concern them and try to control things that cannot be controlled. Stoic philosophy considers that individuals possess an inner divinity capable of guiding them, since reason originates in the divine reason ordering nature. However, because they do not cultivate this inner relationship, they become constant victims of mistaken judgments.

Nowadays, Stoicism is in evidence and has become a desired lifestyle. There are still thinkers who seek to keep this tradition alive, such as William Irvine, Ryan Holiday, Lawrence Becker, and John Sellars. Stoicism has been used to reduce and control stress, anxiety, insecurity, and negative thoughts. Stoics are usually able to keep their minds rational and calm no matter what is going on. People who have never heard anything about Stoicism probably already have some contact with this philosophy of life.

Stoicism is a philosophy that remains known even after more than 2300 years. Several philosophical schools after Stoicism failed to survive and did not become as well-known when compared to Stoic philosophy. Much of the reason for this is related to practical direction, which is always focused on actions and not only on conceptual learning that does not translate into the life of each individual. Another major feature of Stoicism that contributed to its popularity was the simple manner of things being taught. The principles of this philosophy of life are intuitive, they can be easily assimilated from everyday life. It is not without reason that Stoicism is known as the philosophy of good living.

Stoicism—and philosophy—are not the domain of idle professors. They are the rescuer of the successful and the men and women of action. To be a philosopher is not only to be able to have subtle thoughts, or even to found a school, it goes far beyond that. To be a philosopher is to know how to solve some of life's problems not only theoretically, but also practically.

In the face of all this, today's schools and teachers need to teach more about Stoicism in classrooms, showing students the importance of this philosophy and how it can improve the day-to-day lives of people who can practice it.



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