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Description:

One of the world's most famous and influential books, *Meditations*, by the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 121–180), incorporates the stoic precepts he used to cope with his life as a warrior and administrator of an empire. Ascending to the imperial throne in A.D. 161, Aurelius found his reign beset by natural disasters and war. In the wake of these challenges, he set down a series of private reflections, outlining a philosophy of commitment to virtue above pleasure and tranquility above happiness.

Reflecting the emperor's own noble and self-sacrificing code of conduct, this eloquent and moving work draws and enriches the tradition of Stoicism, which stressed the search for inner peace and ethical certainty in an apparently chaotic world. Serenity was to be achieved by emulating in one's personal conduct the underlying orderliness and lawfulness of nature. And in the face of inevitable pain, loss, and death — the suffering at the core of life — Aurelius counsels stoic detachment from the things that are beyond one's control and a focus on one's own will and perception. Presented here in a specially modernized version of the classic George Long translation, this updated and revised edition is easily accessible to contemporary readers. It not only provides a fascinating glimpse into the mind and personality of a highly principled Roman of the second century but also offers today's readers a practical and inspirational guide to the challenges of everyday life.

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