

Collaborate More

By *Sgt. Steve*

This article is about something you should be doing more of: collaborating. Whether you want to call it teaming up, joining forces, or calling for backup, you should try to do it as often as possible.

When you boil it all down and really look at what philosophy, religion, and the social sciences are teaching us, you'll find a common thread of wisdom. One truth pops up again and again: We are here for each other. We do not live this life alone; we live with and for other people. This is essentially the virtue of justice.

Other humans, people in general, can be a great source of happiness and joy in life. However, they can also be the biggest threat to our happiness and peace of mind. Learning to manage that dichotomy is one of the greatest benefits of practicing Stoicism.

“Nor can I feel angry at my relative, or hate him. We were born to work together like feet, hands, and eyes, like the two rows of teeth, upper and lower. To obstruct each other is unnatural.”

— **Marcus Aurelius**

“Have I done something for the common good? Then I share in the benefits.”

— **Marcus Aurelius**

Why collaborate? Why bring other people into your projects and missions? Why introduce another opinion or way of doing things? Why take the risk of frustration or possible conflict? Because, usually, the benefits far outweigh the risks.

1. Collaboration produces unexpected results. Sometimes partnerships lead to outcomes that no one would have figured out alone—things you never would have come up with had you stuck to your standard way of doing things.
2. You gain experience working together and solving problems. The more time you spend engaged in collaborative problem-solving, the better prepared you are for the next issue you face. You're essentially building a strong team and a circle of people who can work with you toward common goals.
3. It is good for your mental health. As someone who spends a lot of time grinding alone, I know how easy it is to slip into a "Me against the world" mentality. While it's fine to be driven like that occasionally, it's a dark place, and you shouldn't try to live there forever. Let some light in and invite others to join you on some aspects of your journey.
4. You build connections and a strong network. Each time you collaborate, you add people to your network. Those "friends of friends" start becoming your friends, too. You gain people you can reach out to for help, advice, and support.
5. A good collaboration can help you get out of a rut. It can be an escape from the norm.

In the end, collaboration isn't just about getting things done, it's about unlocking new possibilities and learning from each other. Every time you work with others, you're building connections, and growing your skillset. Sure, it may come with challenges, but the potential rewards far exceed the risks.

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-Sgt. Steve