OPortals.com

AN INDEPENDENT OPORTALS COMPANION

Seneca: On the Shortness of Life

READING SENECA



When being busy feels like living, ask where your time and attention are actually going.

ONE IDEA FOR AN ORDINARY DAY

Busyness does not explain its purpose



Let the purpose tell you when there is enough.

Seneca challenges the assumption that a full schedule is evidence of a well-used life. A day can be crowded with activities whose purposes have become difficult to name. The modern exercise is to examine a particular commitment, not accuse every busy person of wasting life. Work and care can be necessary, and time poverty is often a social condition. Where choice exists, ask which purpose the busyness serves and whether that purpose still deserves its present share.

A DISTINCTION TO KEEP

Begin with a commitment, not a verdict on a life.

READ ALONG

On the Shortness of Life 1–3

TAKE THIS INTO YOUR DAY

What would this activity need to accomplish to justify its time?

Bring it into your day.

AN ORDINARY SITUATION

You attend a recurring meeting because it has always existed. You ask what decision it supports and discover that a short written update would now serve the purpose more clearly.

ADAPT

Your circumstances matter.

TRY IT TODAY

Choose one recurring commitment and write the purpose it currently serves.

A question to carry

What would this activity need to accomplish to justify its time?

NOTICE	Describe the particular situation before judging it.
CHOOSE	What is one proportionate next action?
RETURN	What would tell you whether the change helped?