

“Brief habits.— I love brief habits and consider them an inestimable means for getting to know many things and states, down to the bottom of their sweetness and bitternesses; my nature is designed entirely for brief habits, even in the needs of my physical health and altogether as far as I can see at all: from the lowest to the highest. I always believe that this will give me lasting satisfaction now—brief habits, too, have this faith of passion, this faith in eternity—and that I am envied for having found and recognized it:—and now it nourishes me at noon and in the evening and spreads a deep contentment all around itself and deep into me so that I desire nothing else, without having any need for comparisons, contempt or hatred. And one day its time is up: the good things part from me, not as something that has come to nauseate me—but peacefully and sated with me as I am with it, and as if we had reason to be grateful to each other and thus we shook hands to say farewell. Even then something new is waiting at the door, along with my faith—this indestructible fool and sage!—that this new discovery will be just right, and that this will be the last time. That is what happens to me with dishes, ideas, human beings, cities, poems, music, doctrines, ways of arranging the day, and lifestyles.— Enduring habits I hate, and I feel as if a tyrant had come near me and that the air I breathe had thickened when events take such a turn that it appears that they will inevitably give rise to enduring habits: for example, owing to an official position, constant association with the same people, a permanent domicile, or unique good health. Yes, at the very bottom of my soul I feel grateful to all my misery and bouts of sickness and everything about me that is imperfect,—because this sort of thing leaves me with a hundred backdoors through which I can escape from enduring habits.— Most intolerable, to be sure, really terrible, would be for me a life entirely devoid of habits, a life that would demand perpetual improvisation:— that would be my exile and my Siberia.” F. NIETZSCHE (THE GAY SCIENCE, 295)