

The Obstacle Is the Way

by Ryan Holiday

A printable to-do list of the most effective habits from this book. Check one off each day you do it.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰¹ **The Morning Obstacle Audit**

Each morning, write down the one thing you are most dreading or avoiding today. Then ask three questions: What is the worst that can happen? What would a Stoic do? What is the smallest action I can take in the next 10 minutes? Do that action before checking email.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰² **Perception Journal - Rewrite the Story**

Pick a current frustration. Write the emotional version first - let it all out. Then rewrite it as a detached observer would describe it, stripped of judgment. Notice how the second version reveals opportunities the first version hides.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰³ **The Blocked-Path Pivot**

When your plan fails, immediately brainstorm three alternative approaches before allowing yourself to feel defeated. Write them down. Pick the most creative one and start within 24 hours. The Stoics called this the art of acquiescence - working with reality, not against it.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰⁴ **Voluntary Discomfort Practice**

Once a week, deliberately choose a mild hardship: cold shower, skipped meal, sleeping on the floor, walking instead of driving. This is Seneca's premeditatio malorum in action - rehearsing difficulty so real obstacles feel smaller when they arrive.

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⁰⁵ **The Inner Citadel Check-In**

At the end of each day, ask: What happened today that was outside my control? Did I waste energy fighting it, or did I redirect that energy toward what I can control? Score yourself 1-10 on acceptance without passivity. Track the trend weekly.

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⁰⁶ **Amor Fati Day - Love Everything That Happens**

Pick one day this month and commit: today I will treat everything that happens - delays, rejections, surprises, discomfort - as exactly what I needed. Not passive resignation, but active embrace. Say good to every setback, out loud, and find the gift in it.