

The Courage to Act

Speeding up your
decision-making

MI100



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A farewell to indecisiveness

Every day, we face the need to make decisions and take action; however, even simple choices can sometimes be puzzling. Indecisiveness may stem from fears, lack of self-confidence, too little or too much information. We worry because we crave certainty and are afraid of falling short. Yet, in reality, there are rarely decisions that are 100% foolproof.

What can we do then? Actually, there are many options. A decision can be deemed good if it propels us in the direction we wish to go while the fear of making a mistake can consume our time and mental energy, leading to stress and diminishing our overall satisfaction with life.

It might seem that delaying decisions or engaging in prolonged deliberation offers us infinite choices. But with time passing, the number of options dwindles as we get stuck in the same place. Deliberate decisions, even if imperfect, often yield much better outcomes than a simple lack of action.

In this booklet, we present useful insights, recommendations, and exercises that will help you become a more decisive person, assess challenges more accurately, navigate obstacles, and make responsible choices amidst uncertainty.



Each of us has more power than we know.

— Ryan Holiday,
a modern philosopher and the author of *Courage Is Calling*

Obstacles as opportunities

Obstacles along our path evoke a natural response: fear, disappointment, and a sense of helplessness. But in fact, the only thing that can truly hinder us is our own attitude. Throughout history, the most successful people like Rockefeller or Steve Jobs have used difficulties as stepping stones toward their objectives. Let's learn more about this from *The Obstacle Is the Way* by Ryan Holiday.

George Clooney's problem

George Clooney spent his first years in Hollywood getting rejected at auditions. He wanted the producers and directors to like him, but they didn't and it hurt and he blamed the system for not seeing how good he was.

Everything changed for Clooney when he tried a new perspective. He realized that casting is an obstacle for producers, too — they need to find somebody, and they're all hoping that the next person to walk in

the room is the right somebody. From Clooney's new perspective, he was that solution. He wasn't going to be someone groveling for a shot. He was the answer to their prayers, not the other way around. The difference between the right and the wrong perspective is everything

How we interpret the events in our lives, our perspective, is the framework for our forthcoming response. Where the head goes, the body follows.

An exercise by Marcus Aurelius

For all species other than us humans, things just are what they are. Our problem is that we're always trying to figure out what things *mean* — why things are the way they are. As though the *why* matters.

Marcus Aurelius had an exercise where he'd describe glamorous or expensive things without their euphemisms — roasted meat is a dead animal and vintage wine is old, fermented grapes. The aim was to see these things as they really are, without any of the ornamentation.

We can do this for anyone or to anything that stands in our way. Try it.

When the enemy is stronger

When you're at your wit's end, straining and straining with all your might, when you look like you might pop a vein... Take a step back and go around the problem. As someone once put it after fighting Jigoro Kano, the legendary five-foot-tall founder of judo, "Trying to fight with Kano was like trying to fight with an empty jacket!" That can be you.

Being outnumbered, coming from behind, being low on funds, these don't have to be disadvantages. Do not coast on brute force. Of course, when pushed, the natural instinct is always to push back. But martial arts teach us that we have to ignore this impulse. We have to pull until opponents lose their balance. Then we make our move.

The art of the side-door strategy is a vast, creative space. Remember, sometimes the longest way around is the shortest way home.

As the Haitian proverb puts it: Behind mountains are more mountains. The more you accomplish, the more things will stand in your way. There are always more obstacles, bigger challenges. But you can overcome these obstacles. Mental obstacles. Physical obstacles. Emotional obstacles. Perceived obstacles.



Find more stories and useful recommendations in [The Obstacle Is the Way](#)



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