



## ***The Obstacle is the Way* by Ryan Holiday**

### **Think you might want to read this book?**

Are you interested in a philosophical linking of adversity to success? If so, [The Obstacle is the Way](#) is a collection of historical examples where people found guidance, motivation, or meaning in various nadirs of life. It may be true that thinking more deeply about the struggles at your school or in your career will shine light on the best path ahead.

### **What would Socrates ask?**

- What did you learn when you were at your darkest hour? How did you come to that conclusion?
- What obstacles do you see in front of you now? Where might the opportunities lie?

### **Research**

- Half the companies in the Fortune 500 were started during a bear market or recession

### **Concepts**

- Apatheia - keeping emotions in check
- Premortem - we envision what could go wrong in advance, to understand potential pitfalls
- Sitzfleisch - Germans word for “staying power”

### **Quotes from the author**

- “Where one person sees a crisis, another can see opportunity. Where one is blinded by success, another sees reality with ruthless objectivity. Where one loses control of emotions, another can remain calm.”
- “Discipline in perception lets you clearly see the advantage and the proper course of action in every situation - without the pestilence of panic or fear.”
- “We defeat emotions with logic, or at least that’s the idea. Logic is questions and statements. With enough of them, we get to root causes.”
- “The implications of our obstacles are theoretical - they exist in the past and the future. We live in the moment. And the more we embrace that, the easier the obstacle will be to face and move.”
- “No one is coming to save you. And if we’d like to go where we claim we want to go - to accomplish what we claim are our goals - there is only one way. And that’s to meet our problems with the right action.”
- “We talk a lot about courage as a society, but we forget that at its most basic level it’s really just taking action - whether that’s approaching someone you’re intimidated by or deciding to finally crack a book on a subject you need to learn.”

- “Too many people think that great victories like Grant’s and Edison’s came from a flash of insight. That they cracked the problem with pure genius. In fact, it was the slow pressure, repeated from many different angles, the elimination of so many other more promising options, that slowly and surely churned the solution to the top of the pile. Their genius was unity of purpose, deafness to doubt, and the desire to stay at it.”
- “Remember, sometimes the longest way around is the shortest way home.”
- “Gandhi didn’t fight for independence for India. The British Empire did all of the fighting - and, as it happens, all of the losing.”
- “The obstacle is not only turned upside down but used as a catapult.”
- “It doesn’t always feel that way but constraints in life are a good thing. Especially if we can accept them and let them direct us. They push us to places and to develop skills that we’d otherwise never have pursued.”

### Quotes from others

- “The impediment to action advances action. What stands in the way becomes the way.” - Marcus Aurelius
- “Bad companies are destroyed by crisis. Good companies survive them. Great companies are improved by them.” - Andy Grove, Former CEO of Intel
- “The things which hurt... instruct.” - Benjamin Franklin
- “The perceiving eye is weak, the observing eye is strong.” - Miyamoto Musashi, sixteenth-century Samurai swordsman
- “... business opportunities are like buses; there’s always another coming around.” - Richard Branson, billionaire serial entrepreneur
- “A good person dyes events with his own color... and turns whatever happens to his own benefit. - Seneca
- “We must all either wear out or rust out, every one of us. My choice is to wear out.” - Theodore Roosevelt
- “Wise men are able to make a fitting use even of their enemies.” - Plutarch
- “You never want a serious crisis to go to waste. Things that we had postponed for too long, that were long-term, are not immediate and must be dealt with. [A] crisis provides the opportunity for us to do things that you could not do before.” - Rahm Emanuel, President Barack Obama’s Advisor

### Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning in education

Author(s) Last Name	Title
de Becker	<a href="#"><i>The Gift of Fear</i></a>
Hart	<a href="#"><i>Strategy</i></a>

The applicability of this book to education is ....



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