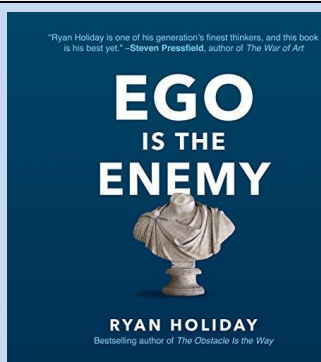


## Ego is the Enemy

Ryan Holiday

Reviewed by Malcolm Coon



### Why read this book?

The first principle is that you must not fool yourself -- and you are the easiest person to fool.

-- Richard Feynman

It is the nature of being human to fool ourselves. Sometimes all we need is a gentle reminder not get too full of ourselves. Humility and reality are the cure for ego.

### **ASPIRE**

One must ask: if your belief in yourself is not dependent on actual achievement then what is it dependent on? The answer, too often when we are just setting out, is nothing. Ego. And this is why we so often see precipitous rises followed by calamitous falls. p.20

What is rare is not raw talent, skill, or even confidence, but humility, diligence, and self-awareness.

We will learn that though we think big, we must act and live small in order to accomplish what we seek. Because we will be action and education focused, and forego validation and status, our ambition will not be grandiose but iterative-- one foot in front of the other, learning and growing and putting in the time. - p.21

We will challenge the myth of the self-assured genius for whom doubt and introspection is foreign, as well as challenge the myth of a pained, tortured artist who must sacrifice his health for his work. Where they are both divorced from reality and divorced from other people, we will be deeply connected, aware and learning from all of it - p.22

### **Talk, Talk, Talk**

It's a temptation that exists for everyone-- for talk and hype to replace action. - p.24

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### **To Be or To Do**

To be somebody or to do something? Which way will you go?

Having authority is not the same as being an authority. Having the right and being right are not the same either. Impressing people is utterly different from being truly impressive. p.32

### **Become a Student**

The power of being a student is not just that it is an extended period of instruction, it also places the ego and ambition in someone else's hands. p.38

You can't learn if you think you already know. -- Epictetus p.41

### **Don't Be Passionate**

In our endeavors, we will face complex problems, often in situations we've never faced before. Opportunities are not usually deep, virgin pools that require courage and boldness to dive into, but instead are obscured, dusted over, blocked by various forms of resistance. What is really called for in these circumstances is clarity, deliberateness and methodical logical determination. But too often, we proceed like this... A flash of inspiration: I want to do the best and biggest \_\_\_\_\_ ever. To be the youngest \_\_\_\_\_. To be the only one to \_\_\_\_\_. The firstest with the mostest. - p.46

Passion typically masks a weakness....The *passion paradox*: how someone can be busy and not accomplish anything. p48

Replace passion with realism and purpose. p49

### **Follow the Canvas Strategy**

Clear the path for the people above you and you will eventually create a path for yourself. p.53

Say little, do much. p.56

### **Restrain Yourself**

It doesn't matter how talented you are, how great your connections are, how much money you have. We want to do something-- something big and important and meaningful-- you'll be subjected to treatment ranging from indifference to outright sabotage. Count on it. In this scenario, ego is the absolute opposite of what is needed. Who can afford to be jerked around by impulses, or believe that you're God's gift to humanity, or too important to put up with anything you don't like? p.63

### **Get Out of Your Own Head**

Feasting on your own thoughts -- Plato. p.67

Living clearly and presently takes courage. Don't live in the haze of the abstract, live with the tangible and real, even if-especially if-it's uncomfortable. Be part of what's going on around you. Feast on it, adjust for it.



### **The Danger of Early Pride**

Pride leads to arrogance and then away from humility and connection with their fellow man. p.74

Pride blunts the very instrument we need to own in order to succeed: our mind. p.74

### **Work, Work, Work**

You can't build a reputation on what you're going to do -- Henry Ford p.80

Is it 10,000 hours or 20,000 hours to mastery? The answer is that it doesn't matter. There is no end zone. To think of a number is to live in a conditional future. We're simply talking about a lot of hours-that to get where we want to go isn't about brilliance, but continual effort while that's not a terribly sexy idea it should be an encouraging one. Because it means it's all within reach-for all of us, provided we have the constitution and the humbleness to be patient and the fortitude to put in the work. p.80

Our ego want the ideas and the fact that we aspire to do something about them to be enough. p.81

### **For Everything that Comes Next, Ego is the Enemy**

There is no shortcut. Face your shortcomings and put in the time. p.86

## **SUCCESS**

### **Always Stay a Student**

Every man I meet is my master in some point, and in that I learn of him. -- Ralph Waldo Emerson p.101

It's not enough to only be a student at the beginning. It is a position that one has to assume for life. Learn from everyone and everything. From the people you beat, and the people who beat you, from the people you dislike, even from your supposedly enemies. At every step and every juncture in life, there is the opportunity to learn. p.104

### **Don't Tell Yourself a Story**

Facts are better than stories and image. p.111

The way to do really big things seems to be to start with deceptively small things... Keep your identity small. p.112

### **What's Important to You?**

That's how it seems to go: we're never happy with what we have, we want what others have too. p.115

Ego rejects trade-offs. Why compromise? Ego wants it all - what you have and what you don't have. p.118

### **Entitlement, Control and Paranoia**

The complete and utter sense of certainty that got you here can become a liability if you're not careful. The demands and dreams you had for a better life? The ambition that fueled your effort? These began as earnest drives but left unchecked become hubris and entitlement. p. 122



A smart man or woman must regularly remind themselves of the limits of their power and reach. p.124

### **Managing Yourself**

Responsibility requires a readjustment and then increase clarity and purpose. First, setting the top-level goals and priorities of the organization and your life. Then enforcing and observing them. To produce results and only results. p.131

### **Beware the Disease of Me**

One of the most dangerous ironies of success is that it can make us someone we never wanted to be in the first place. p136

Everyone has the traits of ego, self-interest, pride, dignity and ambition, but can you temper yours with a sense of humility and selflessness? p.137

### **Meditate on Immensity**

Who am I? What am I doing? What is my role in this world? Nothing draws us away from those questions like material success-- when we are always busy, stressed, put upon, distracted, reported to, relied on, apart from. Ego tells us that meaning comes from activity, that being the center of attention is the only way to matter. p.139

Creativity is a matter of receptiveness and recognition. This cannot happen if you're convinced the world revolves around you. p.141

### **Maintain Your Sobriety**

The ego clouds the mind when it needs to be clear. Sobriety is a counterbalance a hangover cure - or better, a prevention p. 147

No more obsessing about your image; treating people beneath you or above you with contempt; needing first-class trappings and the star treatment; raging, fighting, preening, performing, lording over, condescending and marveling at your own awesomeness or self-anointed importance. p.148

Most successful people are people you've never heard of. They want it that way. It keeps them sober and helps them do their jobs. p149

### **For What Often Comes Next, Ego is the Enemy**

Instead of letting power make us delusional, instead of taking what we have for granted, we would be better to spend our time preparing for the shifts of fate that inevitably occur in life... that is, adversity, difficulty, failure. p. 153

### **FAILURE**

#### **Alive Time or Dead Time?**

There are two types of time in our lives: dead time, when people are passive and waiting, and alive time, when people are learning in acting and utilizing every second. p.171



### **The Effort is Enough**

You will be unappreciated. You'll be sabotaged. You will experience surprising failures. Your expectations will not be met. You will lose. You will fail. How do you carry on then?

We can't let externals to determine whether something was worth it or not. It's on us. The world is, after all, indifferent to what we humans want. p.181

### **Fight Club Moments**

There are many ways to hit bottom. Almost everyone does it in their own way, at some point. p. 182

Hard things are broken by hard things. The bigger the ego the harder the fall. p.183

### **Draw the Line**

Ego kills what we love. Sometimes, it comes close to killing us to. p.191

Most trouble is temporary... Unless you make that not so. Recovery is not grand, it's one step in front of the other. Unless your cure is more of the disease. Only the ego thinks embarrassment or failure are more than what they are. p.192

### **Maintain Your Own Scorecard**

Make a distinction between the internal scoreboard and the extra one. P.197

Anyone can win. But not everyone is the best possible version of themselves. p.197

### **Always Love**

You know what is a better response to an attack or a slight or something that you don't like? Love. p.202

It's so easy to hate. But hate just keeps us where we are. p204.

### **For Everything that Comes Next, Ego is the Enemy**

See much, study much, suffer much, that is the path to wisdom. p.209

Not to aspire or seek out of ego.  
To have success without ego.  
To push through failure with strength, not ego



**Absent of Ego**

Gen. William Sherman (p.16)  
Col. John Boyd p.29  
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Eleanor Roosevelt p.44  
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**Driven By Ego**

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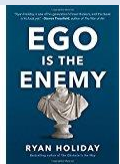

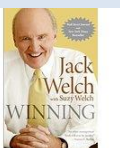
### Actions

*What thought or idea had the biggest impact on you today?*

*What is one specific action you will take TODAY from what was discussed?*

*HOW will you implement this action?*



| 2017 Calendar   | UTSA EMBA Alumni<br>7:30 – 8:45 | Houston – Wittigs<br>11:30 – 1:00 | San Antonio – Wittigs<br>8:00 – 9:30 AM |        |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--------|
|  | <b>Ego is the Enemy</b>         | Oct 6                             | Oct 26                                  | Oct 27 |
|  | <b>Leaders Eat Last</b>         | Nov 3                             | Nov 16                                  | Nov 17 |
|  | <b>Winning</b>                  | Dec 1                             | Dec 14                                  | Dec 15 |



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