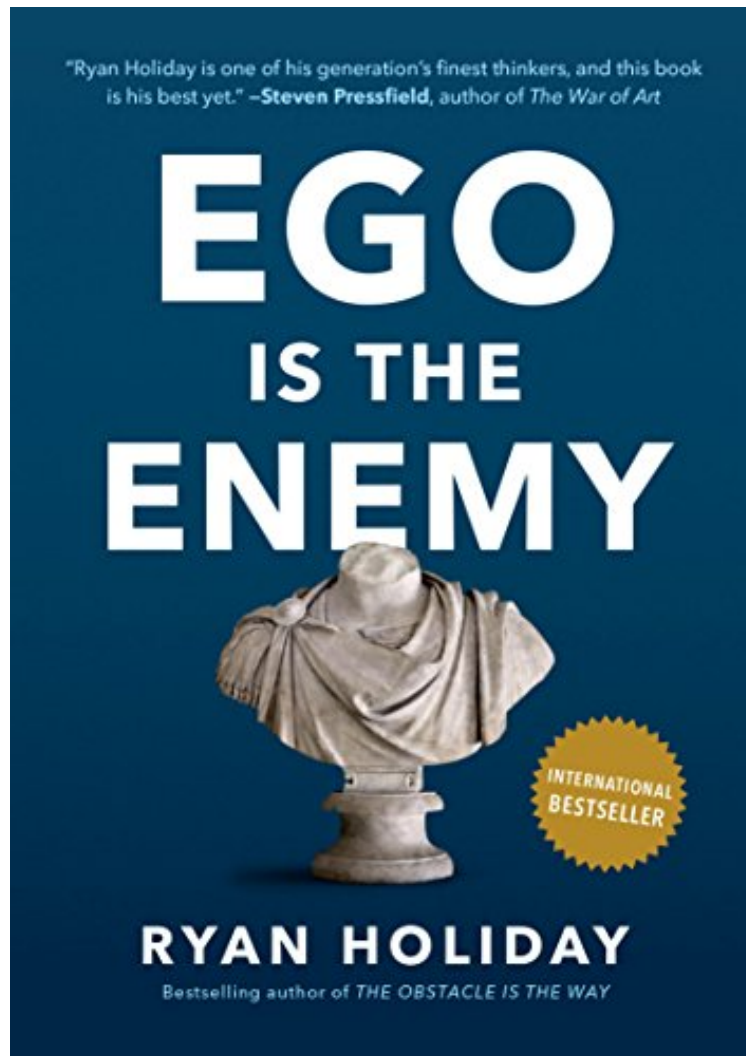


(Download) Ego Is the Enemy

## Ego Is the Enemy

Ryan Holiday

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**Ryan Holiday : Ego Is the Enemy** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ego Is the Enemy:

107 of 115 people found the following review helpful. A modern work of practical philosophy By Camden Gaspar If ego is nothing more than a Freudian concept to you, then you may not have any idea how it's holding you back right now. But don't think that author Ryan Holiday aims to bore us with the same stale pop-psychology tropes that most books on the Self-Help shelf use to fill out their pages. What the author has provided us is actually a great work of modern practical philosophy. Those familiar with Holiday's last book, "The Obstacle is the Way," will know exactly what practical philosophy means. Eschewing the commonly held view that philosophy is the province of academics in classrooms bloviating about abstract concepts, Holiday follows the Stoic tradition that

puts philosophy firmly in the realm of everyday life. It's about learning to deal with destructive emotions, unpredictable circumstances, self-interested people, and yes, ego, without succumbing to them. It's philosophy as a way of achieving a better life. In "Ego is the Enemy," Holiday moves beyond the clinical definitions of ego and places the concept firmly in the realm of the practical. To be sure, the clinical and the practical in this case have some common ground. Modern psychologists define the ego as a critical part of identity construction, and further, an egotist as someone excessively focused on himself. Holiday defines ego along those lines: "an unhealthy belief in our own importance. Arrogance. Self-centered ambition..." It's when the notion of ourselves and the world grows so inflated that it begins to distort the reality that surrounds us. The idea that becoming untethered from reality is the primary symptom of an ego out of control is the thread that unites all three sections of this book. Holiday expands this idea throughout the three sections that form a continuum - Aspire, Success, and Failure - to show how this form of ego plagues everyone from the ambitious and striving, to the wildly successful and those who have been crushed by personal and professional defeat. In our own lives, we are always somewhere on that circle of aspiration, success and failure. To this end, Holiday goes right to the sources of practical wisdom: the primary sources of great practical wisdom - Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Aristotle, and Martial to name a few - and the biographies of those who apply that wisdom to great effect or ignore it at their own peril. This is where Holiday's other key influence, strategist and author Robert Greene, becomes apparent. Like Greene, all of Holiday's chapters start out with a short, pithy title sets the direction of the advice contained within the chapter. From there, Holiday mines the stories of great men and women who have either applied the advice laid out in the chapter title or ignored it and shows us the consequences of both. For example, in the chapter titled, "Restrain Yourself" in the Aspire section of the book, Holiday launches right into the story of Jackie Robinson. As the first black player in the newly integrated MLB, Robinson faced discrimination and outright abuse at the hands of everyone from his own teammates and opponents, to hotel managers and restaurant owners and, of course, the press. At any point, Robinson could have lashed out, fighting back to defend his dignity against the injustices he faced. But Robinson knew that if he fought back even once, it would end his MLB career and set the prospect of full integration of the league back for a generation. As Holiday writes, "Jackie's path called for him to put aside both his ego and in some respects his basic sense of fairness and rights as a human being." Now, it's likely that few of us will face the kind of treatment Robinson did, but the lesson here is that when we have ambitions and goals, we're likely to run into the kind of people that Robinson did. The kind who react to your striving with cold indifference. The kind who aim to weaken your will with taunts and jeers. The kind who will go out of their way to sabotage you and undo all your efforts. Holiday concludes here that ego tells us to snap back at these people and demand the respect we think we deserve. But that won't earn it from anyone. We must ignore this impulse, no matter how badly we're treated, and continue to work on our craft and ourselves. We must forget what we think the world owes us and focus on building our base, developing our skills and continuing to learn. The rest of the chapters follow this same model, and plumb the depths of modern and ancient history to show us how those who put their egos aside achieve great things. Think of New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick spending years doing unpaid grunt work and film study before finally getting a chance to put his knowledge into practice. Think of the great conqueror Genghis Khan seeking greater knowledge and expertise from those he defeated, rather than forcing them into silent subservience. Yet, others turn themselves into cautionary tales. Howard Hughes was a mechanical genius who inherited a successful family business, and then squandered all of it through a lack of focus, entitlement and paranoia. John DeLorean had a great vision for an automobile company, but never built the solid foundation of leadership skills he would need to run a successful company. Holiday gives us a healthy dose of both kinds of stories, and that's what makes the advice in this book stick with us. Ultimately, practical philosophy is meant to be used in our daily lives, away from the safety of our reading chair. Holiday's aphoristic style of advice, bolstered by memorable stories is what gives us the tools we need to remember this wisdom when our egos start to take control of us. Holiday positions the three states of our lives - Aspire, Success and Failure - as being a never ending continuum. We must put our egos aside as we aspire to our goals, aside when we achieve them, and aside again when we flame out and have to start over. At each stage, ego threatens to knock us off the continuum altogether and lock us into an unproductive state of stasis. Taming your ego is never easy, but it is essential when we are confronted by failure or bolstered by success, as we all will be in our lives. Ego can easily let both conditions become debilitating: With success, we think we can stop being humble and working hard. In failure, we can become paralyzed, blaming others for our rotten luck and ignoring the fact that it's on us to right the ship. Ego is always encroaching on us, even after we think we've beaten it back. As Daniele Bolelli puts it, a floor doesn't stay clean because you've swept it once; you must sweep again and again. With this short, accessible book, Holiday gives us the tools we need to do just that.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book  
By West Coast King  
Prior to this book I've never given much thought about the topic of Ego. I think in life we all know someone with a huge one maybe someone who doesn't have enough. It's a very difficult thing to balance in this challenging world that we live in. This book gives you different examples of times Ego worked for and against people along with perspective on the topic. I thought it was definitely worth the money and enjoyed the entire book from start to finish.  
0 of 0 people found

the following review helpful. Insightful, Direct, No Fluff... Well worth the price and more. By Josh Holiday's book is direct, insightful, and immediately applicable. The two things I appreciated most about the book are: 1) its extensive bibliography (make sure to follow the link in the "What Should You Read Next?" chapter to get access to the full bibliography) and 2) its lack of fluff and filler. 1) Holiday models the humility he argues for by leaning on the examples and insights - both positive and negative - of those who have come before him, quoting everyone from Seneca and Marcus Aurelius (if you know anything about Holiday, you know his love for the Stoics) to legendary coaches Bill Belichick and John Wooden. Simply, Holiday has done his research. He's thought hard about the issues pertaining to ego, and his words are those of one who has put in the work required to write credibly on a topic like this. 2) Not a word is wasted. Holiday doesn't try to impress the reader with eloquent prose and unnecessary detail. He gets straight to the point in each of his short chapters to show how damaging our egos can be. Every word is there for a reason, and you can tell Holiday has trimmed and trimmed to get the book down to a Minimum Effective Dose, giving the reader just enough to make his point while never belaboring a point unnecessarily. If you think your ego may be getting in the way of true success and fulfillment, read this book. If you don't think that you have a problem with ego, read it twice.

The instant Wall Street Journal, USA Today, and international bestseller "While the history books are filled with tales of obsessive visionary geniuses who remade the world in their image with sheer, almost irrational force, I've found that history is also made by individuals who fought their egos at every turn, who eschewed the spotlight, and who put their higher goals above their desire for recognition." —from the prologue  
Many of us insist the main impediment to a full, successful life is the outside world. In fact, the most common enemy lies within: our ego. Early in our careers, it impedes learning and the cultivation of talent. With success, it can blind us to our faults and sow future problems. In failure, it magnifies each blow and makes recovery more difficult. At every stage, ego holds us back. Ego Is the Enemy draws on a vast array of stories and examples, from literature to philosophy to history. We meet fascinating figures such as George Marshall, Jackie Robinson, Katharine Graham, Bill Belichick, and Eleanor Roosevelt, who all reached the highest levels of power and success by conquering their own egos. Their strategies and tactics can be ours as well. In an era that glorifies social media, reality TV, and other forms of shameless self-promotion, the battle against ego must be fought on many fronts. Armed with the lessons in this book, as Holiday writes, "you will be less invested in the story you tell about your own specialness, and as a result, you will be liberated to accomplish the world-changing work you've set out to achieve." From the Hardcover edition.

"Ryan Holiday is one of his generation's finest thinkers, and this book is his best yet." —Steven Pressfield, author of the New York Times bestseller *The War of Art*  
"The comedian Bill Hicks said the world was tainted with fevered egos. In *Ego Is the Enemy*, Ryan Holiday writes us all a prescription: humility. This book is packed with stories and quotes that will help you get out of your own way. Whether you're starting out or starting over, you'll find something to steal here." —Austin Kleon, author of the New York Times bestseller *Steal Like an Artist*  
"This is a book I want every athlete, aspiring leader, entrepreneur, thinker and doer to read. Ryan Holiday is one of the most promising young writers of his generation." —George Raveling, Hall of Fame Basketball coach, Nike's Director of International Basketball  
"I see the toxic vanity of ego at play every day and it never ceases to amaze me how often it wrecks promising creative endeavors. Read this book before it wrecks you or the projects and people you love. Consider it as urgently as you do a proper workout regimen and eating right. Ryan's insights are priceless." —Marc Ecko, founder of Ecko Unltd and Complex  
"I don't have many rules in life, but one I never break is: If Ryan Holiday writes a book, I read it as soon as I can get my hands on it." —Brian Koppelman, screenwriter and director, *Rounders*, *Ocean's Thirteen* and *Billions*  
"In his new book Ryan Holiday attacks the greatest obstacle to mastery and true success in life—our insatiable ego. In an inspiring yet practical way, he teaches us how to manage and tame this beast within us so that we can focus on what really matters—producing the best work possible." —Robert Greene, author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Mastery*  
"We're often told that to achieve success, we need confidence. With refreshing candor, Ryan Holiday challenges that assumption, highlighting how we can earn confidence by pursuing something bigger than our own success." —Adam Grant, author of the New York Times bestseller *Originals*  
"Give and Take" —Once again Ryan Holiday has laid down the gauntlet for readers willing to challenge themselves with the tough questions of our time. Every reader will find truths that are pertinent to each of our lives. Ego can be the enemy if we are unarmed with the cautionary insights of history, scripture, and philosophy. As was said to St. Augustine more than a thousand years ago, 'pick it up and read'; for to not do so is to allow the enemy to bring despair." —Dr. Drew Pinsky, host of *HLN's Dr. Drew On Call* and *Love Lined*  
"In this day in age where everyone seeks instant gratification, the idea of success is skewed - many believing the road to their goals is a linear path. As a former professional athlete I

can tell you that the road is anything but linear. In fact it is one that consists of twists, turns, and ups and downs— it requires you to put your head down and put in the work. Ryan Holiday hits the nail on the head with this book, reminding us that the real success is in the journey and learning process. I only wish I had this gem as a reference during my playing days.” —Lori Lindsey, former U.S. Women’s National Team soccer player

Philosophy has gotten a bad rap, but Ryan Holiday is restoring it to its rightful place in our lives. This book—packed with unforgettable stories, strategies, and lessons—is perfect for anyone who strives to do and accomplish. It’s no exaggeration to say that, after finishing it, you’ll never open your laptop and sit down to work the same way again.” —Jimmy Soni, former managing editor of Huffington Post and author of Rome’s Last Citizen

“I would like to rip out every page and use them as wallpaper so I could be reminded constantly of the humility and work it takes to truly succeed. In the margins of my copy, I have scrawled the same message over and over—‘pre-Gold.’ Reading this inspiring book brought me back to the humility and work ethic it took to win the Olympics.” —Chandra Crawford, Olympic Gold Medalist

“What a valuable book for those in positions of authority! It has made me a better judge.” —The Honorable Frederic Block, United States District Judge and author of *Disobed*

“It’s rare that I finish a book then immediately reread it, this time with a yellow marker in hand. I can’t recommend this book highly enough.” —Kevin Rose, entrepreneur and technology investor

“Forget yourself and focus on the work. Be humble and persistent. Value discipline and results, not passion and confidence. Be lesser, do more. This message is crucial, but the opposite of almost every other book. I wish everyone would read this. I need to re-read it each year. It’s that important.” —Derek Sivers, author of *Anything You Want*

“In an age when self-promotion and celebrity are glorified to the hilt and ‘hero’ gets overused, Ryan Holiday’s book is a reminder that the biggest impediment to achievement is often ourselves. Holiday retells stories of the famous and not so famous that will both inspire you and stop you in your tracks. This is a book to savor by reading it in increments so the power of the examples sinks in, leaving time for healthy reflection. If the rat race of modern life has you feeling burned out, *Ego* is the Enemy—just might help you view philosophy as anything but a relic of the ancient Greeks.” —Edith Chapin, executive editor at NPR News

“Removing the ego is a daily struggle but it feels a little easier after reading this.” —Martellus Bennett, NFL Tight End, Super Bowl Champion

About the Author RYAN HOLIDAY is a bestselling author and media strategist. He dropped out of college at nineteen to apprentice under Robert Greene, author of *The 48 Laws of Power*, and later served as the director of marketing for American Apparel. His company, Brass Check, has advised clients like Google, TASER, and Complex, as well as many prominent bestselling authors. Holiday has written several other books, including *The Obstacle Is the Way*, which has been translated into twenty-eight languages and has a cult following among NFL coaches, world-class athletes, TV personalities, political leaders, and others around the world. He lives on a small ranch outside Austin, Texas. Visit [www.RyanHoliday.net](http://www.RyanHoliday.net).

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It’s wrecked the career of promising young geniuses. It’s evaporated great fortunes and run companies into the ground. It’s made adversity unbearable and turned struggle into shame. It derails ambition, turns success into poison, and makes failure the most bitter taste of all. Its name? *Ego*. *Ego* is the enemy—of what you want to achieve, of what you have, and what you’re struggling to overcome. It’s an internal opponent warned against by every great philosopher, in our most lasting stories and countless works of art, in every culture, in every age. In the pages of this book, we fight to destroy it before it destroys us.