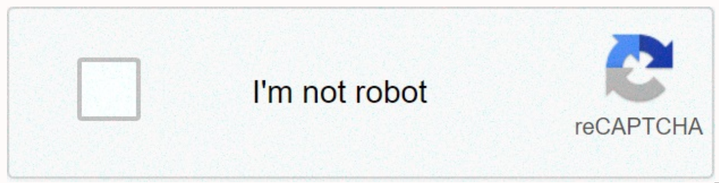

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The undefeated mind pdf

Legions of self-help authors rightly urge personal development as the key to happiness, but they typically fail to focus on its most important objective: hardiness. Though that which doesn't kill us can make us stronger, as Nietzsche tells us, few authors today offer any insight into just how to springboard from adversity to strength. It doesn't just happen automatically, and it takes practice. New scientific research suggests that resilience isn't something with which only a fortunate few of us have been born, but rather something we can all take specific action to develop. To build strength out of adversity, we need a catalyst. What we need, according to Dr. Alex Lickerman, is wisdom - wisdom that adversity has the potential to teach us. Lickerman's underlying premise is that our ability to control what happens to us in life may be limited, but we have the ability to establish a life-state to surmount the suffering life brings us. The Undefeated Mind distills the wisdom we need to create true resilience into nine core principles, including: A new definition of victory and its relevance to happiness The concept of the changing of poison into medicine A way to view prayer as a vow we make to ourselves. A method of setting expectations that enhances our ability to endure disappointment and minimizes the likelihood of quitting An approach to taking personal responsibility and moral action that enhances resilience A process for managing pain - both physical and emotional - that enables us to push through obstacles that might otherwise prevent us from attaining our goals A method of leveraging our relationships with others that helps us manifest our strongest selves Through stories of patients who have used these principles to overcome suffering caused by unemployment, unwanted weight gain, addiction, rejection, chronic pain, retirement, illness, loss, and even death, Dr. Lickerman shows how we too can make these principles function within our own lives, enabling us to develop for ourselves the resilience we need to achieve indestructible happiness. At its core, The Undefeated Mind urges us to stop hoping for easy lives and focus instead on cultivating the inner strength we need to enjoy the difficult lives we all have. We have previously written about the strong parallels between Buddhism and Stoicism but deciding to better our understanding, we reached out to Dr. Alex Lickerman, someone who has deeply studied Buddhism and can bring lessons from the Eastern philosophy that readers of the Daily Stoic can benefit from. Alex is a physician, former assistant professor of medicine, former director of primary care, and former assistant vice president for Student Health and Counseling Services at the University of Chicago. He is also the author of The Undefeated Mind: On the Science of Constructing an Indestructible Self, which draws on lessons from Buddhism to help you build resilience and a strong mind. In our interview Alex offers different helpful tools from Buddhism (the concepts of “expect obstacles” and “accept pain” will sound familiar to any student of Stoicism), what is the mindset required when facing a difficult moment in one’s life, the invigorating power of one’s ichinen, favorite Stoic quotes, book recommendations on Buddhism, and more. Enjoy our interview with Alex Lickerman below! *** In your book, The Undefeated Mind: On the Science of Constructing an Indestructible Self, you draw heavily from Buddhism to bring lessons to your readers on how to achieve resilience and a strong mind. Can you share some of those with the Daily Stoic readers? I think there are two principles in particular that will resonate with Daily Stoic readers. The first is called “expect obstacles.” Studies show that often our expectations of an event color our experience of that event even more than the content of the experience itself (this is apparently especially true of optimists). For example, if we expect a movie to be spectacular and it ends up being merely good, we’ll often leave the theater disappointed. On the other hand, if we go in with low expectations but the movie is really great, we’ll more likely find ourselves thinking it was spectacular. In other words, it’s often the difference between our expectations of an experience and the quality of the experience itself that determines how we feel about the experience. Well, it turns out this is also true for our expectations of task difficulty. Studies show that when we have a goal that requires the completion of a series of tasks and we fail to achieve the first task, we’re more likely to be discouraged and quit if we expected that first task to be easy instead of difficult. That is to say, expecting tasks to be hard immunizes us against discouragement when we fail at them. We also tend to assess task difficulty mindlessly. If instead we pause to consider just how hard a task is likely to be—or even better, interview people who’ve already accomplished what we’re trying to accomplish not to learn how they accomplished it but to learn what obstacles they faced and how hard it was to accomplish—we’ll have some real data from which to accurately judge how hard the task is likely to be for us. Then by telling ourselves the task is likely to be even a little harder than what the data we’ve gathered suggests, if and when we fail, we’re far more likely to shrug our failure off, try again, and then succeed. The second principle is called “accept pain.” When most people feel pain—whether physical or emotional—their instinct is to try to end it, to reject it. But studies show that trying to suppress pain invariably only makes it worse. This is especially true for painful emotions like anxiety. But if instead of rejecting or suppressing our emotions, when we view them non-judgmentally and fully accept them, paradoxically their intensity tends to diminish. By allowing ourselves to feel what we feel—even if we don’t like it—we make it possible for our unpleasant emotions to end. In other words, by deliberating trying to block ourselves from feeling an emotion we’re really only blocking its exit. So while accepting our painful emotions and allowing ourselves to feel them doesn’t feel good, it enables us to accomplish goals we might otherwise not be able to. Say, for example, you have a goal to ask someone out on a date but you keep failing because even the prospect of picking up the phone with the intention of asking induces too much anxiety. Rather than wait to become someone who doesn’t feel anxiety when asking someone out on a date, if instead you fully accept your anxiety and let yourself feel it no matter how awful it becomes, it will no longer prevent you from taking action, from actually making the call. You may feel anxious while doing it, but do it you will. In this way, but accepting pain you become capable of taking the action you need to take to accomplish your goal. Further, by draining your judgment not just of your anxiety but also of yourself for feeling anxiety, you can avoid the negative self-talk that convinces you that you don’t have any business trying to ask someone out on a date in the first place. The Stoics have the concept of the Inner Citadel—the strong fortress we can retreat into in difficult situations and stresses. Do the Buddhists have anything similar? What would they call it? Buddhism talks about the power of acceptance to help us manage painful feelings (as I discussed above) as well as to help us avoid suffering over things we can’t change. The ability to surmount the worst pains in life (e.g., the loss of a loved one, the inevitable loss of our own life) is considered to arise out of enlightenment—an awareness of the true nature of life and of the universe itself. Buddhism also places a premium on the power of ichinen, which is usually translated as single-minded determination. When we’re being buffeted by obstacles and feel despair, Buddhism encourages us to return to our original determination to refresh ourselves and to remind ourselves why we set down on the path we’ve been following. Finally, as Nietzsche once wrote, “He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.” In Buddhism, being to committed to a life mission, to having a purpose, becomes the Inner Citadel that not only protects us from difficult situations and stresses, but propels us forward with renewed ichinen when obstacles arise. You open the book with you falling into a paralyzing depression during medical school and feeling utterly lost and paralyzed. Obviously that’s a feeling that many people come to know in their lives to varying degrees. Knowing what you know now, if you could go back in time, what would you tell yourself? What should someone who feels like they are at the complete bottom tell themselves and what actions should they take? I would tell myself several things. First, that what caused my depression was among the most common of causes: believing myself to be powerless to solve a significant problem the way I wanted. Second, that this belief was a delusion, that my ability to see what options lay before me and to accurately predict the outcome was poor at best. And third, that the only way out of a problem is through it. It’s extremely difficult to believe we can solve a problem that we don’t see how to solve, but when we’re at the complete bottom remember that just because you don’t see the way forward doesn’t mean there isn’t one. You recently wrote about the benefits of intermittent fasting—a very Stoic practice in itself. Aside from the numerous health benefits on your body, how have you found fasting to affect you in your thinking and day-to-day perspective? What I like about intermittent fasting—other than what looks like a number of health benefits—is the challenge it represents. It’s hard to deny basic drives, and hunger is one of the most basic drives there is. But by accepting my hunger when it flares during an intermittent fast I’m able to master it, which means prevent it from governing my behavior. By making a friend of pain, I’m able to get myself to behave the way I want. I’ve found in general that learning to tolerate any kind of pain in the service of achieving a goal takes practice, but also that if you practice in one context it helps you in many others. Have you read much of the Stoics? If so, we’re wondering if there are any quotes or exercises that have resonated with you? So many Stoic quotations resonate with me. Here’s one of my favorites (because I see it every day with my patients): “We suffer more in imagination than in realty.” We’ve written previously about the close similarities between Buddhism and Stoicism and it is natural for many of our readers to be wanting to learn more about Buddhist teachings. What are your go-to resources when someone asks you that? Do you have any favorite documentaries, books, etc.? All the books on Nichiren Buddhism that I like unfortunately stress the mystical aspects, which I don’t believe in. But for the philosophy, I’d recommend The Buddha in Daily Life by Richard Causton. the undefeated mind book. the undefeated mind pdf. the undefeated mind review. the undefeated mind pdf free download. the undefeated mind by alex lickerman. the undefeated mind amazon. the undefeated mind pdf download. the undefeated mind audiobook