

YOUR BATTLE TODAY

# THE NEED FOR APPROVAL

*You say yes when you mean no. You check who saw what you posted. A single criticism stays with you for days.*

# I

## WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU

*You say yes when you mean no. You check who saw what you posted. A single criticism stays with you for days.*

It isn't a character flaw, and it isn't something you have to live with. It's a battle, and battles can be trained for. The Stoics knew this one two thousand years ago and left a method for fighting it.

# II

## WHAT THE STOICS SAY

Marcus Aurelius marveled at the same thing almost two thousand years ago: each of us loves himself more than anyone, yet values other people's opinion more than his own. Epictetus said it more plainly: what others think of you isn't up to you; what you do is.

Every time you need applause to feel at ease, you hand command of your state of mind to someone else. Taking it back starts with something small: a no, said in time.

> *"I have often wondered how it is that every man loves himself more than all others, yet sets less value on his own opinion of himself than on the opinion of others."*
>
> MARCUS AURELIUS · MEDITATIONS, XII, 4

# III

# YOUR EXERCISE FOR TODAY

## A clean no 5 MINUTES

Do it today, with paper and pencil. Write right here: what gets written down gets done far more often than what only gets thought.

I Think of a request you'd accept today just to avoid looking bad.

II Write your answer in one sentence, with no excuses or long apologies: "I can't this time."

III Say it today. Afterward, write down what you were afraid would happen, and what actually happened.

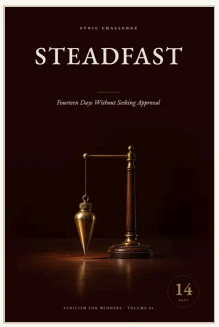
*A respectful no doesn't push away the people worth keeping. It brings you closer to yourself.*

# IV YOUR SEVEN-DAY PLAN

One practice a day. Check it off when you've done it.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| DAY 1 | A clean no: today's exercise. | ☐ |
| DAY 2 | Post or say something, and don't check afterward who reacted. | ☐ |
| DAY 3 | When you're criticized, ask yourself: is it true? If it is, correct it. If not, let it go. | ☐ |
| DAY 4 | Give your opinion first in a meeting or a conversation. | ☐ |
| DAY 5 | A day without apologizing when no apology is due. | ☐ |
| DAY 6 | Write down your three values. Whose permission are you asking to live by them? | ☐ |
| DAY 7 | Review: how many times did you choose your own judgment over applause? | ☐ |

# V YOUR NEXT STEP




THE STOIC'S LIBRARY · NO. 04 · WINE EDITION

## Steadfast

A 14-day challenge to speak plainly, set limits and stop asking permission to exist: one mission a day and 20 ways to say no.

masterstoic.netlify.app/library/steadfast

THIS HELPS TOO

### Thick Skin

Seven techniques from Epictetus and fifteen ready-made answers, so nothing people say can move you.

THE FOUNDATION OF EVERY BATTLE

### The Stoic Code

21 days with Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and Epictetus to separate what is up to you from what is not.

Personal development grounded in Stoic philosophy. It is not a substitute for help from a mental health professional.