

FOR THE 3AM REPLAY CROWD.

# YOUR BRAIN WANTS A REPLAY. YOU OWE IT A REPORT.

*Rumination isn't reflection; one is useful and the other is a loop*

## THE STOIC PRINCIPLE

Reflection has an exit. Rumination doesn't. The difference is whether the thinking ends in a decision, or starts another lap around the same cul-de-sac at 3am. (Spoiler: the cul-de-sac doesn't have answers. It has a streetlight and a raccoon.)

## THE STOIC SUPPORT

*"Get back up when you fail, celebrate behaving like an imperfect human and fully embrace the pursuit that you've embarked on."*

MARCUS AURELIUS | MEDITATIONS

# STOIC STEPS FOR RADICAL RESILIENCE

Five steps to actually learn something from a failure, then close the tab.

## 01 NAME THE LAP YOU'RE ON

Are you replaying this for the first time? The fifth? The fiftieth? (Be honest, no one is grading.) If you can't say, you are not reflecting. You are suffering on autopilot. There is a difference. One produces a lesson. The other produces eye bags.

## 02 WRITE IT DOWN ONCE

One page. What happened. What you did. What you would do differently. Three bullets, fine. Most rumination is the brain refusing to commit the lesson to paper, because once it's on paper, you can't dramatically replay it anymore. The brain hates that. Tough.

## 03 SET A RE-VISIT DATE

Tell yourself: 'I will think about this again on Sunday.' Not 'I will never think about it again' (a lie you'll never keep). Not 'I will think about it constantly' (you already are). A date on the calendar. The brain is a kid in the backseat. It needs to know how long until we get there.

## 04 ASK THE FAILURE A QUESTION IT CAN ACTUALLY ANSWER

'Why am I such an idiot' gets no useful reply. Just more loop fuel. 'What did I miss in the prep?' or 'What was the first warning sign I ignored?' gets actual work. The question shapes the answer. Garbage in, more 3am, more garbage out.

## 05 RE-ENTER THE GAME

You can't think your way out of a replay loop. You can only act your way out. Send the next email. Take the next call. Coach the next practice. (My daughter's flag football team lost 40-0 this year. The loop ended when the next play started, not when I figured out the previous one.) The brain can't loop something that isn't there.

### THE REFRAME

*The lesson is the souvenir. The loop is the gift shop. Take what's useful and walk out.*