Twitter Thread by Brad Johnson



Brad Johnson
@Brad_Johnson

A Thread - What to read in 2021?

Wisdom via @EricJorgenson via @naval via @illacertus... from @Navalmanack a book I'll be rereading in 2021.

Here's why.

"I don't want to read everything. I just want to read the 100 great books over and over again." - @illacertus

7:06 AM

You almost have to read the stuff you're reading, because you're into it. You don't need any other reason. There's no mission here to accomplish. Just read because you enjoy it.

These days, I find myself rereading as much (or more) as I do reading. A tweet from @illacertus said, "I don't want to read everything. I just want to read the 100 great books over and over again." I think there's a lot to that idea. It's really more about identifying the great books for you because different books speak to different people. Then, you can really absorb those.

> Reading a book isn't a race—the better the book, the more slowly it should be absorbed.

"I think there's a lot to that idea. It's really more about identifying the great books for you because different books speak to different people. Then, you can really absorb those." - @naval

I don't know about you, but I have very poor attention. I skim. I speed read. I jump around. I could not tell you specific passages or quotes from books. At some deep level, you absorb them, and they become threads in the tapestry of your psyche. They kind of weave in there.

I'm sure you've had this feeling where you pick up a book and start reading it, and you're like, "This is pretty interesting. This is pretty good." You're getting this increasing sense of deja vu. Then halfway through the book, you realize, "I've read this book before." That's perfectly fine. It means you were ready to reread it. [4]

> I don't actually read a lot of books. I pick up a lot of books and only get through a few which form the foundation of my knowledge.

It was a few years back I started thinking about the idea of rereading books vs trying to "keep up" with the constant consumption of new material rolling off the book publisher's assembly lines.

I believe the consept first landed on my radar from that very @farnamstreet podcast where @naval shared the quote referenced above.

It immediately made sense to me.

It's crazy to think about how much the world has evolved in just the last decade.

Technology is creating shorter attention spans with the constant bombardment of bite-sized "click bait" headlines and iPhone

notifications.

For those who haven't watched the Netflix doc The Social Dilemma, look no further than the algorithms designed to constantly keep our eyes glued to our phones and in turn the ad dollars being spent there.

Which leads me to a thesis I believe to be more and more true.

I believe the ability to focus...

to absorb...

to go deep...

is becoming a true super power.

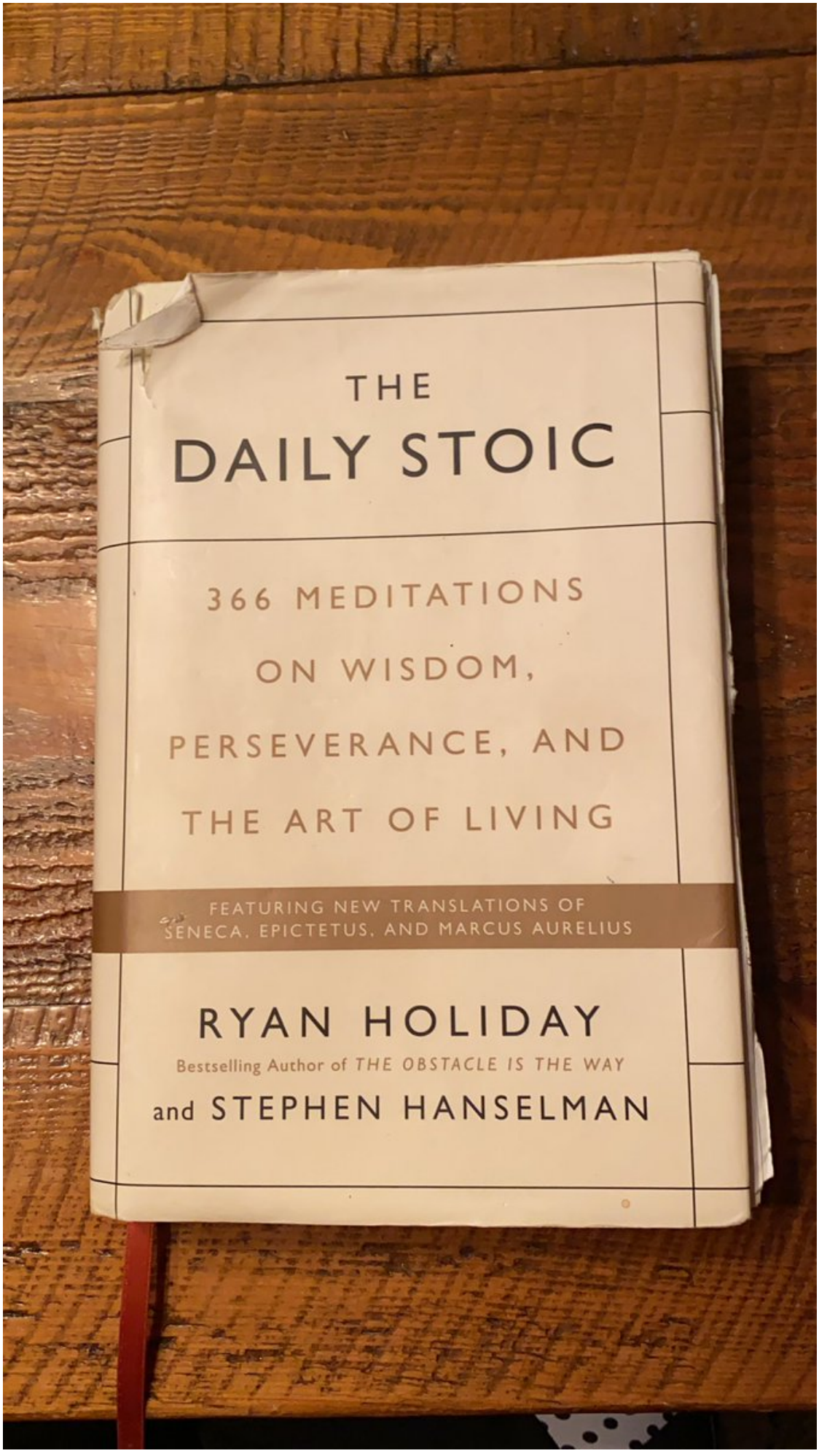
Which brings me back to the idea of compiling a short list of books that you want to truly absorb and reading them over and over until you understand them to the level you've acquired all they have to offer.

With that in mind...

Today marks my third time reading through @RyanHoliday & @SteveHanselman's @dailystoic.

Pictured is my copy below, which I grabbed back in 2016 when it came out.

As you can see, it's got some miles on it as it's literally traveled with me mostly wherever I've gone since.


THE
DAILY STOIC
366 MEDITATIONS
ON WISDOM,
PERSEVERANCE, AND
THE ART OF LIVING
FEATURING NEW TRANSLATIONS OF
SENECA, EPICTETUS, AND MARCUS AURELIUS
RYAN HOLIDAY
Bestselling Author of THE OBSTACLE IS THE WAY
and STEPHEN HANSELMAN

All cliches aside, this book has made me a better version of myself.

More patient.

More accepting.

Less anxious.

A better listener.

I can honestly say this year's reading was by far the most impactful.

Yes, maybe some of that was due to the year that was 2020.

However...

Looking back, I simply wasn't ready for many of the passages my first few times through.

"When the student is ready the teacher will appear." - Tao Te Ching

Also, with multiple readings, I've benefited from the "compound effect" of absorbing, putting into action, and building upon that which I've read before.

So...

Here's to distilling your list of books/ideas/goals down to what is essential this year.

Go deep.

Absorb.

Make those "words become works" in 2021.

December 31st
GET ACTIVE IN YOUR OWN RESCUE

"Stop wandering about! You aren't likely to read your own notebooks, or ancient histories, or the anthologies you've collected to enjoy in your old age. Get busy with life's purpose, toss aside empty hopes, get active in your own rescue—if you care for yourself at all—and do it while you can."

—Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 3.14

The purpose of all our reading and studying is to aid us in the pursuit of the good life (and death). At some point, we must put our books aside and take action. So that, as Seneca put it, the "words become works." There is an old saying that a "scholar made is a soldier spoiled." We want to be both scholars and soldiers—soldiers in the good fight.

That's what's next for you. Move forward, move onward. Another book isn't the answer. The right choices and decisions are. Who knows how much time you have left, or what awaits us tomorrow?

If you could choose only 1 book to reread this year, which one would it be?