


Discipline Equals Freedom: Field Manual

Jocko Willink

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The instant *New York Times* bestseller!

FIND YOUR WILL, FIND YOUR DISCIPLINE--AND YOU WILL FIND YOUR FREEDOM

Jocko Willink's methods for success were born in the SEAL Teams, where he spent most of his adult life, enlisting after high school and rising through the ranks to become the commander of the most highly decorated special operations unit of the war in Iraq. In *Discipline Equals Freedom*, the #1 *New York Times* bestselling coauthor of *Extreme Ownership* describes how he lives that mantra: the mental and physical disciplines he imposes on himself in order to achieve freedom in all aspects of life. Many books offer advice on how to overcome obstacles and reach your goals—but that advice often misses the most critical ingredient: discipline. Without discipline, there will be no real progress. *Discipline Equals Freedom* covers it all, including strategies and tactics for conquering weakness, procrastination, and fear, and specific physical training presented in workouts for beginner, intermediate, and advanced athletes, and even the best sleep habits and food intake recommended to optimize performance.

Within these pages discover the keys to becoming stronger, smarter, faster, and healthier. There is only one way to achieve true freedom: The Way of Discipline. Read this book and find The Way.

Discipline Equals Freedom: Field Manual Details

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From Reader Review Discipline Equals Freedom: Field Manual for online ebook

Kristin Boldon says

A short, powerful book about making short, powerful changes in your life. I am not the target market for this book; I'm not a hardcore fitness enthusiast. But there's something for everyone here, and the exhortations to cut the crap and hold the line are useful to me. I started getting up an hour earlier at the beginning of the year and now have a morning routine of yoga, meditation, writing, and reading before breakfast. That said, it's on the extreme side for emotional suppression and relentlessness.

Jewelianne says

Okay, hear me out. On the one hand, I read this book after midnight while eating licorice. The next day (which I had off of work), I slept until 11. So that's kind of EXACTLY the opposite of what the author is advocating for people to do in their lives. But maybe that is why I need this book. I feel like I'm pretty good at not being in denial about all my many shortcomings and bad habits. The thing I like about this book is that there is no room for the denial. At times it is a bit repetitive, but the author's main point is if you want to do something, then you should do it. The end. Don't waste time on all the planning, fear, perfection, etc. And don't make compromises and excuses with yourself. In general, I feel like this is my philosophy too. Any time I have accomplished something difficult (impossible!) it finally happened when I got out of my own way and quit making excuses. Weight loss (or in this case, more like health and exercise in general) are probably no different.

I also really like what the author says about self-discipline having to come from within. That is entirely true also. As much as you SAY you want to do something, you would do it already if you really wanted to. None of the pills, or medications, or programs or anything else are going to help you to achieve your goals if you aren't really committed to it internally. But even if you aren't at that point yet, I think it's good to read books like this. The more you expose yourself to people and ideas that you wish to emulate, the more you will realize it is possible. And hopefully that will cause the internal motivation to click on a little sooner (like you know, before your genetically likely diabetes sets in...)

The only thing I kind of don't like about this book is how the author applies this theory to pretty much all aspects of life. He does say to learn from mistakes and failures, and use that as a learning opportunity, which I agree with completely. But I do think there are SOME things that are impossible. For example, there are always going to be poor people, and poverty is not a moral failure or a character flaw. Some poor people can rise above their station, but not all of them. Of course he doesn't say anything about poverty, so maybe I am being unfair on this point. But I think that while his philosophy can absolutely apply to many people and situations (specifically of course health and exercise for otherwise healthy people), it is too simplistic for others.

Gina says

About as useful as a drill sergeant yelling at you for 30 minutes. Black pages, large gimmicky font with

weird offset that looks like Instagram meme material, not much content other than a hefty dose of tough love. The gist of the entire book:” shut up, don’t complain, just do it!” There, I just saved you from reading the thing.

Matt says

Good, practical advice from someone with abundant credibility

This book got off to an uneven start for me: Jocko begins with some very short, rhythmic, poetic chapters on perseverance, will, and discipline. He comes off as a very ‘run through walls to get success!’ kind of motivational speaker, and I wasn’t getting much out of it.

I realize that mentality comes before action whatever we’re doing, but my figurative ears perked up once Jocko got onto specific tactics and strategies. He IS a fan of rest, recovery, and not overtraining, but that doesn’t show up until you read the second half of the book. I think the book as a whole might have been more valuable with the concrete training, eating, and living advice up front, with the mental exhortations to follow. You’d know more about what exactly you’re kicking ass to achieve!

That aside, I think this book is a great intro to working out, martial arts (it’s gotten me fired up to try some Brazilian Jiu Jitsu!), and paleo eating. Definitely a worthwhile quick read.

David Chabot says

Okay, so I've read Extreme ownership and loved every word in it. Willink is obviously some kind of superhuman and I respect the guy a lot.

BUT.

This book couldn't be more boring. It felt like reading the transcript from a motivational youtube video. I expected so much more from the author, such as real life example, thorough explanation of his thought process, even philosophy.

In the end, it's just a mind numbing repetition of a few keywords mixed with "You can do it if you set your mind onto it" type of chapters.

It's actually sad, because Jocko Willink has a LOT to teach and I was first in line to listen.

Trisha White says

you can read this book or watch the shia labeouf video
i did both

<https://tenor.com/view/just-do-it-shi...>

Jason Crawford says

I am a person who gets enjoyment from reading, studying, and working my mind. The danger in this is that many times I don't "do". I don't take action on what I learn.

"Discipline Equals Freedom" is a shot of motivation right into the veins. Nothing in this short book is anything ground breaking or new, but it is said in a way to make you want to attack your day with purpose and self discipline.

If you enjoyed "The War of Art" then you will love "Discipline Equals Freedom". If you haven't read either then stop what you are doing and read them now. You will look for the challenges in your life so you will have something to attack and slay.

Do the work! Do!

Stephen Heiner says

I had originally thought to go with 3.5, but that's not possible on Goodreads, and so I rounded down.

This can also be entitled "Intro to Jocko's philosophy." The problem is, if you have even listened to a handful of his podcasts, you've got the whole book, so for those who "get" and "like" Jocko, as I do, this book is not valuable. It's valuable to give as a gift to others who have never heard of Jocko, especially if those people are struggling with execution, as Jocko relentlessly strips away excuses through his short 2-3 page "essays."

To get a good sense of whether the book is for you, my favorite chapter is also my favorite content from Jocko ever, and it is entitled "Good." (pages 58-60) You can watch him read it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdTMD...>

The book itself is printed in an innovative way - black pages and white ink. There's also an appendix to get you started with working out without complicated machines. Stuff you can do in hotel rooms.

"Go through the motions. Lift the weights. Sprint the hill. Work on the project. GET OUT OF BED. I don't like procrastination. But if you feel like you need a break - that is one thing you should procrastinate." (p. 49)

"Every day is a Monday." (p. 64)

"Most of us aren't defeated in one decisive battle. We are defeated one tiny, seemingly insignificant surrender at a time that chips away at who we should really be." (p. 72)

"Fasting will recalibrate what hunger is to you. You will realize that you aren't actually hungry most of the time. You are just bored. And at the end of a fast your food will taste better too."

Emma Sea says

I got this from the library for the home-based fitness routine, but I actually really liked the whole thing. I wish there had been a section on pull exercises for absolute beginners. The "easy" option of doing a negative repetition is beyond me. I cannot hold my weight up with my chin over the bar if I stand on a box. I cannot even suspend my own weight hanging. I have **nil** pull strength. I cannot be the only human who is starting from absolute zero. Also, I weigh only half a pound less than the max weight for any pull-up bar I could find: I seriously don't trust them to hold me. It would have been great if Willink just had, like, one paragraph on some alternative exercises. At least I found options online. Still an awesome book, enough I'm considering buying a copy when this has to go back.

Richard says

This is harmful nonsense for one very simple reason: an amount is not an approach.

Leave aside the many aesthetic failings (the black pages with white text, the self-parodically terse phrasing, the meathead vacuity) and look only at the ideas. What do we have?

"Work hard"

"Hard" is not *what* to do, it's *how much* you do. It is not a prescription, it's a dosage. He says again and again that the secret to success is early mornings and late nights, that the way to be tougher is "BE TOUGHER". That is not useful information.

Worse than that, it creates a false model of the world in which the only thing that matters is how many hours you threw at a problem, how white your knuckles got, how deep your brow furrowed. If you succeeded: great, you spent enough time. If you failed? Guess you were weak, loser.

Chris De says

If you follow Jocko, you have heard it all before. I was intrigued by his workouts that range from beginner to advanced, I am excited to start those. I could hear his voice as I read the book. Read it in an hour. Consider it Jocko's version of Ray Dalio's Principles.

Brent says

Boot camp in a book.

Raine says

I have both versions audiobook and book.

I prefer the audiobook.

Benjamin Uke says

Written by an alleged navy seal wrote out a simple formula for self improvement in a series of white typewriter lettering vomited upon black paper. Full of proclaimed techniques of mastery with no scientific backing or ideas but that of artistic bold block-text that belongs on spray painted on the wall of a gym.

I get that exercise and well being are a mindset, I get that. However there is a lack of underlying scientific knowledge that makes it insincere and full of empty bravado. It's not a 1/5 on account of having one or two useful standard operating procedures (SOPs) that would in fact build some form of discipline. But expecting over thirty dollars for a book, that has around five-pages of writing fully compressed? That's just pretentious.

David says

I agree with a lot of Jocko's advice. It might even bear repeating. And repeating. AND REPEATING IN ALL CAPS.

In my own words, the core principles found in *Discipline Equals Freedom* that I agree with are:

- * Doing things is the cure for procrastination
- * Master yourself, don't worry about people or situations outside your control
- * Have long-term goals and move towards them in a meaningful way
- * If you can't do what you planned (illness, injury), *do what you can*, even if it's just a little bit; keep the momentum going
- * Don't wait for motivation
- * Sugar is the devil (and a person weakness of mine)
- * Humans don't have to eat constantly (fasting is natural)

In my own personal improvement journey I've experienced each of these things. I agree with them. I believe in them.

So why the low star rating? First, as other reviewers have noted, there is very little content in this book.

Second, I don't think Jocko makes a very convincing case for his principles. If you're *not already convinced*, I don't see how this text will convince you. If you *are already* convinced, this is little more than a pep talk.

And third, the section titled "Psychological Edge" demonstrates several serious misunderstandings of the science of **willpower**.

"Now, some scientists have claimed that discipline dissipates the more it is used -- that willpower is a finite resource that is reduced every time it is used during the day."

Right, that's what I've read and it certainly reflects my experience.

"This is wrong. That does *not happen*."

Take that, science!

Okay, Jocko. So how does it work?

"To the contrary, I believe, and studies have shown, that discipline and willpower do not go down as they are called into action -- they actually get stronger."

Funny, I've read that too...by the same scientists! How could this be!?

Because in the second case, they're talking about the strengthening of willpower (by exercising it) over the course of *many days*. It's just like a muscle, Jocko. You can wear out a muscle in the course of a day, but strengthen it over the course of many days. Same thing. The scientists are saying that willpower is like a muscle.

"This is obvious if you actually try the experiment yourself: Before you go to bed...Stage your workout clothes so you don't even have to think when you get up."

Oh, for Pete's sake! That works because you're not depleting your willpower in the morning - you've already made the decision the night before. The fact that the "experiment" works *literally demonstrates the point about depleting willpower*: you get the stuff ready at night because you know it would be *harder* to make the decision to get on your gear and go workout in the morning.

Furthermore, I don't think Jocko demonstrates that he understands the role in which habit plays in his morning workout ritual. At this point, I doubt it requires much if *any* willpower for Jocko to wake up early and workout. It's a deeply ingrained habit. Of course he has to maintain the habit, and that does require discipline, but it's not a *decision* he has to make each morning any more - it's as automatic for him as brushing our teeth is for the rest of us.

The willpower thing rubbed me the wrong way.

I'll end with this: I think this book would have been *far* stronger if it had included some anecdotes and examples to reinforce the principles. Surely Jocko has some stories from his own life or inspiring people he's known whose lives illustrate his message? I would have liked to have read that sort of material -- and as an added bonus, they would have helped with the word count!
