

# The Obstacle is the Way Reflection Cards

Developed by Dr. Chris Cavert | [FUNdoing.com/blog](http://FUNdoing.com/blog)

The information on these Obstacle Reflection Cards is from, *The Obstacle is the Way: The Timeless Art of Turning Trials into Triumphs*, by Ryan Holiday. Please let me know how they work for you.

As team builders we help our groups, all the time, practice working through obstacles (problems) we give them so they can get better at doing it. Holiday shares that overcoming an obstacle is a discipline of three critical steps: Perception, Action and Will.

What a great process to share with our groups (and I love things in threes - easy to remember). The information on the cards I put together from the book can enhance the learning of this process. There are three types of cards:

## Critical Steps Cards

There are three: Perception, Action & Will. We can frontload a program with the idea of overcoming obstacles and what it takes to do so. Then, bring out the Steps cards. Go over each one and bring up examples/life stories of each. These three cards can also be brought out during a program when there seems to be an 'obstacle' preventing progress - "Which step are we involved with right now?" And, "What do we need to do in order to make some progress through this obstacle?"

## Concept Cards

There are three: 'Obstacle Mindset,' 'Force of Purpose' and 'Steel Yourself.' These three concepts stood out to me as driving reminders when faced with an obstacle. I envision using these cards when moments/emotions arise that connect to these concepts - talking about the concepts when the group is in an emotional moment of recognition. We can also spend a little time defining these concepts in the way the group interprets them. Then, how is the interpretation used during a program.

## Quote Cards

The other 24 cards are filled with quotes that have come from the sections in the book about each Critical Step in the obstacle-facing process. Here are some ideas I have for these cards (so far):

- Frontloading: With all the quotes face up on the floor have participants choose a quote that draws them in.
- Frontloading: Pick quotes that fit a story in participant's lives.
- Mid-Processing: Take a break in the midst of the activity, scatter all the quotes down and ask, "What quotes do we need right now to help us move forward?"
- (Once I know the quotes even better...) Pull out a quote that is directly connected to what is happening with the group. Stop them and ask, "Why did I pull this quote out for you to consider right now?"
- At the end of an activity: "What words of wisdom did we follow? What words of wisdom did we miss?"
- At the end of a program, set down the Critical Steps cards and challenge the group to place the Quotes Cards under the steps they pertain to. As this is happening, take little learning moments to point out some of the quotes and find out how the group connects them to their program.

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# Perception

See things for what they are.

*The Obstacle is the Way*, Ryan Holiday

# Action

Do what you can.

*The Obstacle is the Way*, Ryan Holiday

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# Will

Endure and bare what you must.

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

# Obstacle Mindset

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*What impedes us  
can empower us.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Whatever  
obstacle we face,  
we have a choice.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*I decide  
how something  
will affect me.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Just because your mind  
tells you something,  
it doesn't mean  
you have to agree.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*The extent of the  
struggle determines  
the extent  
of the growth.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Fight the urge to  
panic - focus only on  
what you can change.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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# Steel Yourself

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Problems often come  
from applying  
judgements to things  
we don't control.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*Problems are  
precisely as bad  
as we think.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Each obstacle we  
overcome  
makes us stronger  
for the next one.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*



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*Failure is an asset  
if you are really  
trying to improve.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*A new path, by  
definition, is unclear -  
new things means  
obstacles.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*Failure shows us the way, by showing us what isn't the way.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Everything we do matters...everything is a chance to do and be your best.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*Sometimes the  
longest way around  
is the shortest  
way home.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Don't just do  
something,  
stand there.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*Choose to act  
instead of acting out  
when faced  
with an obstacle.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Right action  
instead of  
blind action.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*Nothing can ever  
prevent us  
from trying. Ever.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*The will is the one  
thing we control,  
always.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*The path of least  
resistance is a  
terrible teacher.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Nobody is born with a  
steel backbone.  
We have to  
forge that ourselves.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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*Turn what you  
must do into what  
you get to do.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*We don't always get to  
choose what happens to us,  
but we can always choose  
how to feel about it.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

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# Force of Purpose

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*

*Each obstacle  
can give you strength,  
wisdom and perspective.*

*The Obstacle is the Way, Ryan Holiday*



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