

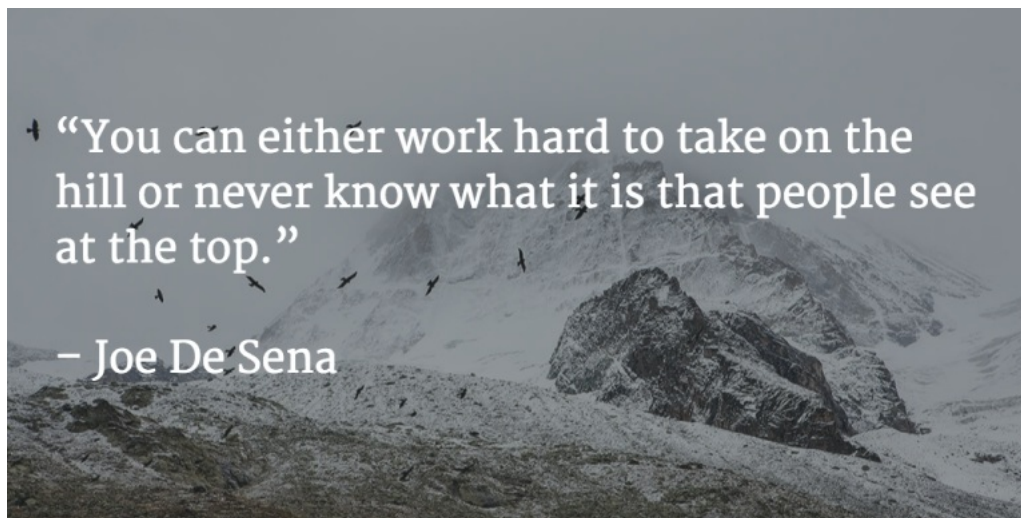
Spartan Up Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/spartan-up-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *Spartan Up* is a call for you to ditch modern day comfort, take up a challenge and don't quit until you reach your goal by developing the mindset of an ancient Spartan warrior.

Read in: 3 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Feeling good sitting on the couch, watching TV and munching on some Cheetos?

Well, hold on to your remote, because things are about to **get tough**.

If you've ever landed on the movie 300 while flipping through channels, you probably secretly wished you were as tough as these guys.

The 300 Spartans held off tens of thousands of Persian soldiers in battle. How did they do it? By being tough when they got there.

An entire life of training, fighting, hunting and practicing had prepared them for what was to come.

The first rule of Spartan life was Spartans had to prove their fitness – over and over again.

Joe de Sena, creator of the Spartan Race and author of *Spartan Up*, thought that's what he'd work on, in order to overcome the sadness that his boring, comfortable, modern day life left inside him.

The Spartan Race is an obstacle course designed to challenge participants both physically and mentally – to make them tough. A more extreme version of it is The Death Race – where participants have to sign a waiver noting that they indeed might die during the race.

Joe found competing in such races required him to delay gratification, which in turn made him healthier and happier.

The idea of **delaying gratification** was originally investigated in the famous marshmallow experiment by Walter Mischel. In the experiment, children are given a marshmallow and told they'll get a second one if they hold out on eating it for 15 minutes.

What makes it truly interesting is that the children who delayed gratification turned out to have better lives later on, as suggested by multiple follow up studies (like this one) on the same kids.

You can make your life hard, or you can make your life easy, but it's up to you to make it **fulfilling** and that's where delaying gratification will help.

De Sena encourages you to **take a challenge** by signing up for a sports event in advance whenever you can. Breakdancing lessons, Karate training, a marathon, whatever suits you.

But by creating a plan beforehand and committing to an event, **you're forcing yourself to be honest if you don't end up going**. As you might remember from the 300 movie, honor is the most important value in a Spartan's life, and they always follow through on what they say.

Include others in your plan to **hold you accountable**, even people you might not realize support you. For example one of De Sena's professors asked his students the name of the school janitor on a test (for actual points!), because he wanted them to appreciate her. Joe still remembers her name today: Sarah.

When creating a plan, **keep it simple**. Pick something local that catches your eye and sign up. Don't overthink the challenge.

What should also be simple is your **diet**. Forget about all the modern day diets, since most of them are useless, and focus on a few categories of food you know are healthy, like nuts, veggies and fruits, which also strengthen willpower.

Unhealthy foods that contain a lot of salt, sugar and fat, are the reason why half of all Americans either have diabetes or pre-diabetes.

Just like Spartans never would have eaten at McDonald's, they also wouldn't have become so **passive**. As children we seem to have endless energy and run around all day. But with adulthood comes laziness. Life gets busy and serious and we don't make the time to move.

Your challenge will help you return to simpler ways of eating and exercise, which will give you the exact toughness you need to stick with things when they get hard.

You **will think less and do more**, just like De Sena applied multiple times to various colleges until he got in. He didn't worry about being rejected over and over again due to his ADD.

A simpler life will also make you happier. As put in few words by ancient Greek philosopher Epictetus: *"Wealth consists not in having great possessions, but in having few wants."*

However, you should always know the difference between **your real limits and your perceived limits**. Don't push your body or mind beyond what it can do.

Some things are just outside of your control, and that's okay.

On your journey towards becoming a true Spartan you'll also learn about the stoic calm, which means to not lose your temper and **focus only on what you can control**.

It doesn't matter where you start, as long as you start challenging yourself.

So get off the couch, go outside and leave your comfort zone!

Spartan Up Review

Spartan Up is mainly a marketing tool, created by Joe to promote his races. The summary on Blinkist is quite short as well, but the scientific research and insights in it are sound.

It's more for beginners who still need their wake-up call to do something meaningful with their life, but does that just fine.

Who would I recommend the Spartan Up summary to?

The 16 year old who wastes all her spare time with meaningless distractions, the 47 year old who wonders if he's still got it and anyone who spends the majority of their evenings with a bag of Doritos in front of the TV, watching Netflix.

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