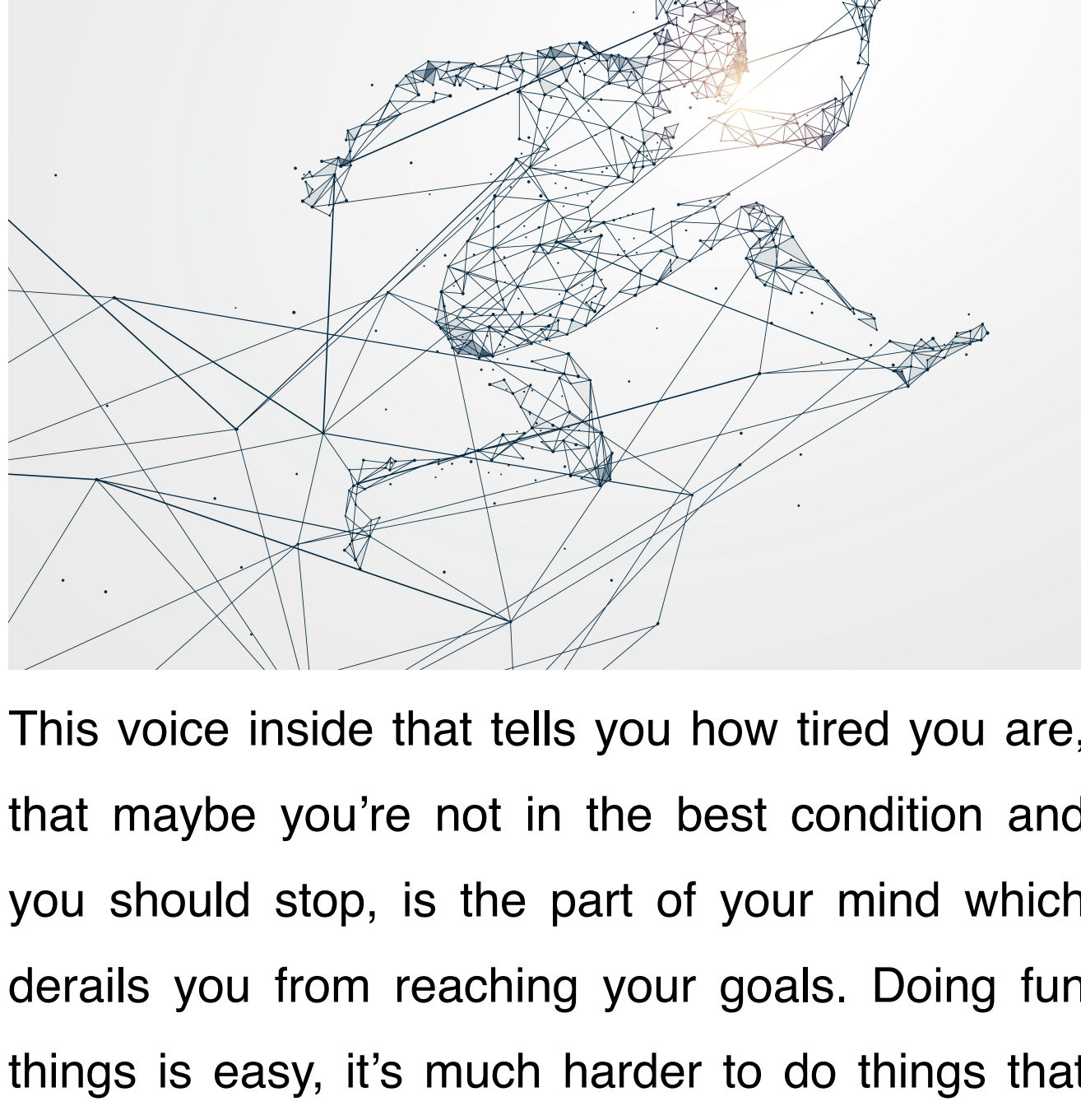


OVERCOMING

RESISTANCE



This voice inside that tells you how tired you are, that maybe you're not in the best condition and you should stop, is the part of your mind which derails you from reaching your goals. Doing fun things is easy, it's much harder to do things that aren't. **BUT DOING THINGS YOU FIND DIFFICULT SHAPES YOUR STRENGTHS AND DEVELOPS TOLERANCE OF PROBLEMS THAT WILL INEVITABLY COME BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR GOALS.**

In his book *The War of Art*, author Steven Pressfield identifies the voice in our head that prefers it when we do fun things and stops us from reaching our goals as *Resistance*: "Resistance will tell you anything to keep you from doing your work... It will pledge anything to get a deal, then double-cross you as soon as your back is turned... Resistance is always lying and always full of shit."

So, how do you outsmart Resistance?

Have A Plan

One of the biggest ways Resistance beats us is when we run out of enthusiasm for a project. If we're giving a large amount of energy and attention to a project, at some point it's likely our energy is going to dip. It's in these moments that Resistance says, "this is too difficult, wouldn't it just be easier to give up now?"

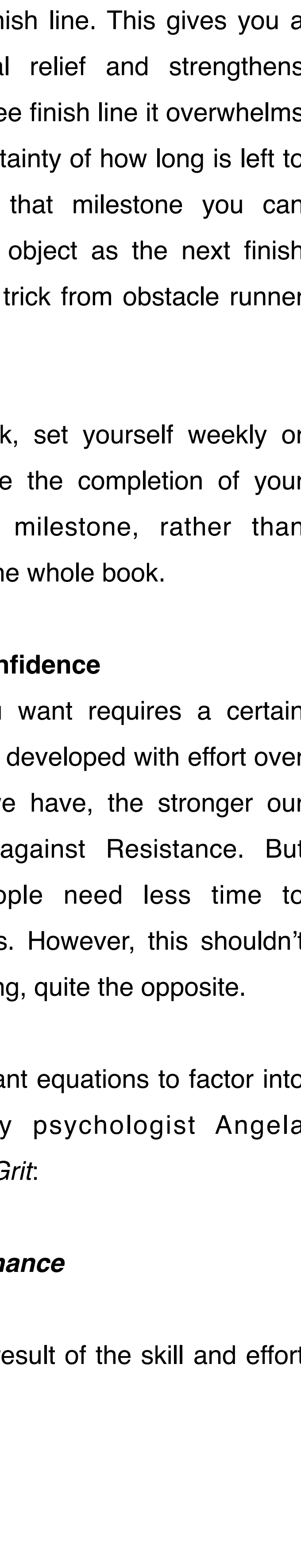
Our goals usually involve us stepping outside of our routine and comfort zone (Resistance's favorite place!) In order to combat this, we need to get used to long term thinking and delayed gratification; this is where a plan comes in. Having a plan of how you'll reach your goal keeps your mind focused and increases your motivation because you can see how much progress you've made.

For example, if your goal is to stop eating sugar for a month, you know on Day 15 you're halfway there. But if your goal is vague, like weight loss, without specifying *how much* weight you aim to lose you won't know when you've reached your goal. Without an end in sight you'll find it hard to stay motivated.

Break Your Goal Down

Thinking about big goals is overwhelming and can trigger Resistance. Instead, think about the next small step.

For example, when halfway through running 15 km, you feel tired and start to question your ability to finish.



Focus on a next visible milestone, like a tree, and think of this as your finish line. This gives you a huge sense of mental relief and strengthens focus. When we don't see the finish line it overwhelms our brain with the uncertainty of how long is left to go. When you reach that milestone you can choose another visible object as the next finish line target (I heard this trick from obstacle runner [Amelia Boone](#).)

If you're writing a book, set yourself weekly or monthly goals, and see the completion of your next chapter as the milestone, rather than worrying about writing the whole book.

Practice Increases Confidence

To get the results you want requires a certain amount of skill, which is developed with effort over time. The more skill we have, the stronger our arsenal in the fight against Resistance. But naturally talented people need less time to develop the same skills. However, this shouldn't be a deterrent to us trying, quite the opposite.

There are some important equations to factor into success, outlined by psychologist Angela Duckworth in her book *Grit*:

Skill x Effort = Performance

Your performance is a result of the skill and effort you put into something.

Talent x Effort = Skill

Skill is a result of two things; **talent**, which is a natural or genetic attribute, but also the **effort** put into practicing something. Regardless of natural ability, anyone can put effort into learning something new. By switching these equations around, we get:

[Talent x Effort] x Effort = Performance

Which can be reduced to:

Talent x Effort² = Performance

In other words, **EFFORT IS TWICE AS IMPORTANT AS TALENT WHEN IT COMES TO PERFORMANCE!** If you're not naturally talented at something, doubling down your effort can produce greater results than someone who is naturally talented at the same thing but practices less. Remind yourself of these equations the next time Resistance tells you you'll never be as good as others.

Identify Your Resistance

That voice in your head telling you you won't succeed might seem less intimidating when you clearly identify what it's saying and write it down on paper. Looking at your Resistance objectively gives you more space to mentally plan how you're going to overcome it. Some aspects of your Resistance may have no basis in reality, others may just need to be dealt with calm reasoning.

THE MORE YOU CONSCIOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR RESISTANCE, THE LESS IT HAS A GRIP OVER YOU.

Knowing When to Quit

Know when you should give up. This is not to justify your Resistance, but to give you a clear idea of what your stopping point is, preparing you with the mentality to keep going when it's hard but stopping when it's too much.

For example, if you're running a marathon, you could set yourself the strict parameters of if you're uninjured, can still breathe and your legs are functioning, then you will keep on going until you reach the end. Resistance will arise before the end of the three marathon, but keep at it. Stay bold in the face of Resistance!

To Summarize

DOING THINGS THAT WE FIND DIFFICULT INCREASES OUR PROBLEM-SOLVING ABILITY AND MENTAL TOUGHNESS

THE PROBLEM IS THAT WE HAVE INNER RESISTANCE TO DOING THINGS THAT ARE OUTSIDE OF OUR COMFORT ZONE

THERE ARE STEPS WE CAN TAKE TO OVERCOME OUR RESISTANCE: HAVING A PLAN, BREAKING OUR GOAL DOWN INTO MILESTONES, INCREASING OUR CONFIDENCE THROUGH EFFORT AND PRACTICE, AND LOOKING AT WHAT THE RESISTANCE IS SAYING TO US FROM A BALANCED PERSPECTIVE, AND KNOWING WHEN TO QUIT

MAKE SURE YOU EXHAUST ALL POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS BEFORE YOU GIVE UP