

IDIOTS **ARE INVINCIBLE**

**... and they always
manage to ruin our day.**

**The fool-proof “Ro”
method to handle them,
solve problems, and
enjoy the process!**



**Dr Angelo
Rodafinos**

DR RO

Dr ANGELO RODAFINOS

Author of *Prince to Frog and ... Vice Versa!*

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British spelling of most common words has been used.

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Kind Words

Your books have been monumental readings to me (G. Kyriakides, Training Director, Human Asset Ltd.).

You made me laugh aloud several times. I keep thinking about the cartoons and smile inside me. Congratulations for your wonderful book. You have done an amazing job! (T. Maria, Lawyer).

A book for a lifetime! I have thought of a few dozens of friends that absolutely need to read it (C. Vovori, Psychologist).

A psychologist friend recommended that I should follow a Rodafinos therapy, every morning, noon, and evening. Thank you for your contribution in making our life more beautiful (V. Anthoulakis, Army Officer).

I wish to congratulate you for transmitting this knowledge in a wonderfully unique manner (M. Banava, Business Consultant).

This is the first time that a book motivates me to contact the author. It is really a great piece of work. Well organized, combines theory and practice with a lot of humour. It can serve as a guide (S. Athina, Lecturer, Aristotle University).

I really enjoy readings your books! They improve my mood. They were exactly what I needed and have helped me in my personal and professional development. Keep writing in the same spirit (T. Elisavet).

Incredible writing style, with so much humour that someone may indeed consider changing his or her habits. Check it out. I do not know the author; I was impressed and just wished to express it (Andria's blog).

If you could cast a spell on Angelos Rodafinos, what would it do? Make him write a third book (P. Megremis).

To the members of the Idiots Club!

The President,

A. Rodafinos

Prologue to the English edition

Those who read the title of my book *Idiots are Invincible*, nod condescendingly in agreement: “Indeed, the author is right, they really are invincible,” thinking most probably of people other than themselves. I do not know who they are thinking of, but no one, until now, has happened to come across my book and agree: “Indeed, the author is right, *we* really are invincible.” I am beginning to think that perhaps idiots are mythical creatures, as I have yet to meet a single one!

The truth is that when I started writing the book, I also had “the others” in mind: the boss, the professor, the referee, the inept driver, the rude employee, the clumsy waitress, the delayed colleague, the annoying salesperson, the mother-in-law and generally anyone who doesn’t behave “properly,” i.e., “the way *we* would like them to behave!” [Obviously, I do not refer to mental retardation but to people who simply have a different outlook and behaviour to us].

At some point, however, I realized that as a manager, professor, driver, co-worker, I am often the idiot in other people’s lives. In their opinion I do not always behave *properly*, i.e., “as *they* would want me to!” Later, I also realised that more often I was the “idiot” for myself! Irrational thoughts and beliefs such as: “everyone must love me,” “my house must always be clean,” “I must be a good husband, lover, manager, father, son, friend ...” create problems and imbalances for us and those around us.

If some books can change your life, I am confident that the present book will change, if not the conditions in your life, at least the way you think and how you see your life – and for the better.

At least this is what several hundreds of the thousands of readers of *Idiots are Invincible* who have contacted me in the past few years have claimed.

DR RO

If what you have tried so far has not produced the desired results, and if your approach to life is not working out the way you would like, it may be time to try something new – absorb the ideas described in the following pages and test the “Ro” method for yourself. You have absolutely nothing to lose but a little time.

In fact, if my prediction is right and the claim many readers have made is valid, the immediate benefits of reading this book are likely to include the following:

- More effective problem solving
- Better decisions and choices
- Improved interpersonal relationships
- Less tension, anxiety, worry and guilt
- A stronger immune system
- A feeling of control
- Increased self-esteem
- A healthier body
- A more pleasant and satisfying life

Enough with the promotion.

At www.rodafinos.weebly.com you will find the ... *Idiots' Club* a.k.a *Boneheads' Academy Blog*, where you can share your stories and your ideas for dealing with idiots and adverse situations. Research (e.g., Pennebaker et al., 1988) showed that talking about the problem or confiding, even in the form of a diary or on a simple piece of paper – even if we just throw it away and never show it to the person who caused our emotions – is connected to more efficient operation of the immune system and better overall health. Arm yourselves with pen and paper and ... move over Anna Frank!

Record your stories concerning the town planning committee supervisor, the grumpy newsagent, your school teacher, the tax office clerk, your boyfriend or girlfriend, etc. Remember to add what you did to feel better and view things differently. Do not forget that we are often the ‘idiots’ for others (and that maybe at this moment they are writing about us) ... and even for ourselves.

If you like it, feel free to share the sample chapters in this e-book with your friends.

Happy reading!

Dr Ro

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DR RO

Sample text

Preface: The end



I think the most unfair thing about life is the way it ends. I mean, life is tough. It takes up a lot of your time. What do you get at the end of it? A death! What's that, a bonus? I think the life cycle is all backwards. You should die first; get it out of the way. Then you live in an old age home. You get kicked out when you're too young, you get a gold watch, you go to work. You work for forty years until you're young enough to enjoy your retirement! You go to college, you do drugs, alcohol, you party, you have sex, you get ready for high school. You go to grade school, you become a kid, you play, you have no responsibilities, you become a little baby, you go back into the womb, you spend your last nine months floating ... You finish off as a gleam in somebody's eye.

– Reverse cycle life, Sean Morey

DR RO

WHAT A NICE way to start ... from the end. Kind of unusual for a book. But this *is* an unusual book, for unusual people. I am confident that its content will mark the *end* of a period in your life and the beginning of another, becoming an important aid in reducing negative thoughts and emotions, and living healthier and happier. Now, off we go!

Story: Some escape!

On a cold and rainy winter's afternoon at an airport, a 12-year-old boy observed a number of passengers at an airport, waiting for an update on their flight. The flight was delayed and they looked worn out and glum.

"How come those people look so tired?" he asked his father.

"Perhaps because adult life is tough," replied the father.

"You mean I will also become like that when I grow up?" the twelve year old asked.

Taking a minute to think, his father responded:

"Some people manage to escape."



Is this how I'll be when I grow up? I think I'll pass!

Who manages to "escape?" What kind of coping strategies do people implement when faced with life's challenges? Why is it that some individuals never seem to be able to cope while some others appear to face less adversity in their lives?

These are the questions that intrigued a number of distinguished researchers, including Paul Stoltz, the University of Pennsylvania professor who shared the preceding story, and, of course, myself!

To begin to answer these questions, though, the first thing is really to understand, well, how you are doing.

How are *you* doing?

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[... Here is an excerpt of the related text: A short exercise that can instantly change your mood. It's also a taster to motivate you to read more on managing your and others' emotions.]

GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS

I admit it. I have a soft spot for salutations. In this peculiar area of human behaviour, one can be formal and ordinary or choose to be slightly eccentric without people getting the wrong impression – much. Conventional greetings are fine, except they are monotonous and dull. I tend to get bored and tired:

“Good morning/evening.”

“How are you?”

“Not too bad, yourself?” (Not too bad? Good Lord ... what an expression.)

“Good, how are the kids?”

“Good to see you, have a nice day.”

Therefore, I would suggest you use your imagination and try to be resourceful and creative. All of us can afford to be slightly bizarre or uncommon in one facet of our behaviour. Now, if you are generally a bit odd or atypical in other aspects as well, it is probably best to avoid the following exercises, just in case people really begin to wonder.

Here are some alternative salutation ideas:

“Hello.”

“Yellow!”

“Good morning.”

“Isn't it just!”

“How are you?”

“Delighted!”

“Hi!”

“Very high!”

etc.



How Are you Doing? Super-Duper!

Today, probably late in the evening (I do not want you getting into trouble early in the morning), I suggest you print the table that you will find at the end of this chapter and post it on the usual spot: the mirror in the elevator in your apartment block, office, or even someone else's apartment block.

It is far more empowering for elevator-way passengers to read the particular SentimenTable© rather than the elevator usage instructions and warnings, everyday for years on end:

“Maximum number of passengers, four. Maximum load weight 320 kg. In case of elevator malfunction, do not panic. The cubicle has adequate ventilation ...”

You must have grown tired of reading the same text day-in, day-out. Not to mention the spelling mysteiks it friquently contains.

I have developed the table below to coach you and others in using alternative styles of greetings. I guarantee it can profoundly change the dull and uninteresting protocol you followed until this day, provided you are prepared to get rid of formalities.

“How are you?” people will ask, as they usually do.

“Fabulous! Just great! Why shouldn't I be? I would be crazy not to be” you may respond.

Or “I'm fine. Everyone else needs therapy!”

Shall we embark on some preparation?

Every morning, as you enter the elevator, following the instructions, choose one of the words from the SentimenTable. When, during the day, people ask you: “How are you?” “How are you feeling today?” “Did you have a good time?” you will use the new,

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unexpected (for your conversational partner) word or phrase you happened to select from the table.

Let us assume you chose the word “exceptional.” During the day, regardless of how you are actually feeling, when asked you are obliged to answer “Exceptional!”

“How are you, dear Don, this fine day?”

“Exceptional, perfect, fabulous, fantastic, super duper, great, tutto bene [all good, in Italian], tutti frutti [all ... fruits],” and getting better at time goes by!

These are the right answers!

Even if you have – for the sake of argument – the top five reasons in the world for feeling awful, changing your vocabulary and expressions towards a more positive outlook, creates an inconsistency in your mind: you are feeling one way but expressing quite another. If you pay a little attention and eavesdrop, you may even catch yourself saying:

“What am I saying, I’m feeling awful!”

The notional conflict between exceptional and awful, which results from the dissonance between what you are saying and how you are actually feeling, produces a form of tension inside your skull. Our brain cannot cope for long with inconsistencies between thoughts and actions.

To reduce the tension, it chooses to modify the initial negative sentiment to a milder one (as it knows what is better for us before we have even thought about it). As a result, the distance between how you actually felt (awful) and your response (exceptional) decreases. Your mood shifts towards the middle values on the awful – exceptional axis.

When you try it, you will find difficult to control the goofy smile that will accompany the “semi-automatic” improvement in your mood.

Even if it does not work, if the change does not occur and you cannot convince yourself, at least you will ... confuse the other person! The bewilderment of your unsuspecting conversational partner “what’s got into Don this morning?” caused by the unexpected content of your response to their greeting will set in motion the transformation.

We all know that our emotions affect our behaviour. Few know that it’s the other way around too: our behaviour affects our emotions!

If you wish to test the validity of the aforementioned theory, next time you catch yourself feeling down, raise your arms up above your head [caution: do not attempt this exercise while riding a bike without support wheels or swimming without arm floats at the deep end of the pool], smile from ear to ear and try shouting at the top of your voice:

“I feel horrible; I’m in a mess, I am *really* depressed!”

Because your behaviour will be incongruent with your statements, you will probably feel ... ridiculous. As a result, you may burst into laughter, hence moderating once again the intensity of your initial emotions. Robins (1986) suggested you try shouting something even more preposterous:

“Hallelujah! My feet don’t smell today!”

As always, there is a chance that people will make disapproving comments:

“What is he on ...?”

Do not pay any attention. Carry on regardless!

The Vocabulary of the Debonair

Based on the above, you may wish to modify your vocabulary when communicating with others, after greeting them. Eliminate strong negative words such as disgust, misery, awful, and angst from your frequently used list of words, and replace them with milder or more positive ones. For example:

[Poor word – Better word]

Problem – Challenge

Disaster – Something to master

Angry – Tickled

Furious – Tweaked or Cool ... ious

Stress – Motive to act

S*it – Hit!

Grrr – Grrrodafinos

Likewise, I recommend replacing negative thoughts with positive ones. For example, instead of “It’s raining again, damn!” opt for “It’s raining again, I might just have some bran,” thus achieving a sense of well-being, a good diet, and a rhyme.

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SentimenTable[©]

Instructions: Pick any letter from A to D and a number between 1 and 40 (without looking at the table). E.g., C and 3.

The number-letter pairs (C-3) form the coordinates of the words in the Table that follows below. Now look at the table. Find the word that corresponds to the specific coordinates. In this case, C-3 = glittering.

Throughout the day, use the sentiment you have come up with either as an adjective or as an adverb to describe how you feel when asked “how are you, how are you feeling, how are you doing” etc. Respond thus: “I usually feel very good but at the moment I’m feeling ... [the word you’ve come up with].”

If you wish, you can supplement your own words to the table. You may also create new compound phrases using the words in the table plus one or more of the following: hyper, super, mega, giga, extra, special, etc. For example, extra-juicy, super-attractive, hyper-bright. Go on, give it a try, see how you go!

DR RO

	A	B	C	D
1	ace	effervescent	gifted	mmmm
2	admirable	elated	glamorous	no 1
3	adorable	electrifying	glittering	outstanding
4	attractive	elegant	glorified	overjoyed
5	awesome	elevated	glorious	passionate
6	beaming	empowered	glowing	peaceful
7	blessed	energized	grand	precious
8	bombshell	enlivened	groovy	priceless
9	brave	enormous	handsome	prominent
10	breezy	enthusiastic	happy	purposeful
11	bright	euphoric	heavenly	radiant
12	brilliant	exceptional	heroic	refreshed
13	bubbly	excited	high	relaxed
14	buzzing	exhilarated	immaculate	remarkable
15	calm	exotic	in control	replenished
16	carefree	explosive	in high spirits	revitalized
17	champion	exquisite	in love	royal
18	charismatic	extraordinary	incomparable	seductive
19	charming	extra-special	incredible	sensational
21	cheerful	exuberant	infatuated	sexy
20	cherished	fabulous	intrigued	smashing
22	chic	fantastic	invigorated	spectacular
23	collected	fascinated	invincible	spicy
24	cool	festive	irresistible	splendid
25	confident	first-class	jolly	stirring
26	connected	flashing	jovial	stunning
27	courageous	floating	jubilant	superb
28	crisp	floral	juicy	superhuman
29	cuddly	flourishing	kissable	supreme
30	cute	flowing	knockout	terrific
31	daring	focused	legend	top-quality
32	dazzled	fortified	lively	unbeatable
33	debonair	fortunate	loved	unique
34	decisive	fragrant	luminous	untouchable
35	delicious	fresh	magnetic	vibrant
36	delighted	free	magnificent	vigorous
37	deluxe	fulfilled	marvellous	wonderful
38	dependable	full of life	muscular	wow!
39	dynamic	genius	mesmeric	youthful
40	ecstatic	giddy	mighty	v.i.p.

End of the free part...

As folk wisdom has it, all good things come to an end. You have reached the end of the FREE part of the book “Idiots are invincible.”

Yet, this does not really have to be the end. Dr Ro, the president of the *Boneheads Academy* (AKA *Idiots Club*), invites you to a) join the club and tell us your personal stories in the related Idiot’s blog, and b) continue reading by purchasing the printed or the electronic version.

A gift with a MEANING!

There is no need to stop after buying your personal copy. You are allowed to order two or more copies, on the side for gifts - rather than aimlessly wondering around, searching for a last minute present for a friend’s anniversary, birthday, a dinner invitation etc.

You may also wish to visit [the author’s site](#) to find out about future events, watch video presentations, download free lecture material, articles, podcasts, and send your feedback.

The President

Angelo Rodafinos

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SPECIAL THANKS

To the dear readers who literally embraced the Greek version and shared their experiences with me online and by phone; some introduce themselves in person on the street, in shops, at the cinema, and joyfully describe the changes they accomplished in their lives.

To the most loyal “fans,” who read extracts every morning, applying generous splashes of *Eau de Ro* to get them through the day. I am flattered and will probably become slightly arrogant, but do not worry, carry on. I can take it!

To Klio Panourgias who assisted in the translation. To the friends and colleagues who have proofread drafts and suggested corrections.¹

To Kostas Tsakonas, Lambros Lazouras, and Anna Konkouri who illustrated the text with their sketches.

Thanks to you, my dear reader, for taking the time to read this book. If you enjoyed it, please share it with a friend.

¹ I have made every effort to acknowledge the original authors of short tales, quotes, and texts and to ensure their content is as accurate as possible.

Wherever this was feasible, their names are cited in accordance with ethics and copyright law requirements. However, on certain occasions, these are either attributed to more than one source, or are orphan (i.e., of unknown origin; you know, the ones we tend to call “Chinese proverb”), and I have not been able to identify the copyright owner. If you know the source, kindly email me the information, so that I can make the necessary corrections in future editions.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR (Self-praise ...)



Angelo (Kaissidis-) Rodafinos began his studies in the Athens Metchovion School of Marine Engineering because ... he was a top student in high school. Being a keen basketball player who loved sports he changed major and, despite the expectations of significant others, went on to study Physical Education and Sport Sciences at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He then went on to complete an MSc in Sports Psychology and Teaching at Ithaca College, New York, and a PhD in Psychology at the University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia.

An academic for nearly 20 years, Dr Ro taught general, applied, social, and work psychology at Universities, and has been the Head of the Department of Psychology at City College, International Faculty of the University of Sheffield for nearly a decade. He has published numerous articles in academic journals and popular magazines, while he has appeared in several TV and radio shows. His first book *Prince to Frog ... and Vice Versa! Applied Psychological Techniques to Improve Yourself – or Others* (in Greek) has become a popular reading guide for people from all ages and backgrounds. His second book *Idiots Are Invincible* deals with stress and problem solving.

Today he (probably) lives in Melbourne and is Program Director of Social Sciences at Online Educational Services, and Adjunct Senior Lecturer at Swinburne University of Technology.

TRAINING AND CONSULTING

A professional speaker and consultant for organizations and individuals, Dr Rodafinos presents numerous seminars and workshops on topics related to change, stress and time management, motivation, communication, persuasion and negotiation, management, team building and cohesion, public relations, success and happiness, exercise and nutrition, etc.

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KIND WORDS FROM WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

The worst part of the seminar was ... the break! – Nikos Anthopoulos

I really believe business around the world need to hear a voice of calm, positive, and realistic opportunities during tough economic times. I was most impressed with your positive and enthusiastic presentation style.

–Bill Lewis, President Extension Management Inc., USA

Congratulations for the presentation you delivered in Sheraton Sofia on Wednesday! It was exact, having in mind the audience, with humour, positive and easy-to-get message. – Draga Paskova, Human Resources Manager at Interamerican, Bulgaria

Today I thanked God for giving me the courage to get up and come to your seminar. I want to thank you as well for reminding us of the simple but basic truths in life. – Chris Vovori

A wonderful presentation. We wish it was more than six hours! I was not tired at all. It was interesting with lots of variety. – Panos Rogaris, Managing Director, Hellenic Telecommunication Insurance Co.

I regret that you are not in Sydney, because if you were here, maybe I could attend some of your lectures. They were one of the most interesting during the whole ExecMBA program of City College, Sheffield. – Marietta Kostadinova, MBA

CONTACT DETAILS

To organize a book show, a lecture, or a workshop for your company, club, association, high school, etc., view Dr Ro's schedule, to connect with him online, or to download free eBooks and presentations,

visit the official <http://www.rodafinos.weebly.com>

or Facebook site <http://www.facebook.com/IdiotsAreInvincible>

or contact him via email: arodafinos@gmail.com

or SKYPE: rodafinos

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CLIENTS

Dr Rodafinos' list of clients includes companies, educational institutions, fitness, and health centres etc.

