

First Principles

Turning Misfortune into Strength - by Sgt. Steve

We all face seasons where the workload spikes and the pressure mounts. When we look ahead at a difficult road, the natural reaction is to brace for impact. We call this our "misfortune." But there is a different way to frame the struggle.

“Misfortune is virtue's opportunity.”

- SENECA

The goal isn't just to survive the storm; the goal is to use the storm to become stronger.

THE ANCHOR IN THE CHAOS

The Founding Fathers faced war, treason, and societal collapse. Yet, they did not crumble. How? By focusing on “First Principles.”

George Washington was a devoted student of the Stoics. It is said that even on his deathbed, a copy of Seneca's letters lay on his nightstand. He understood that in a world of chaos, you need an internal anchor that cannot be moved.

One historian analyzed the letters of the Founding Fathers. You might assume their most frequent word was “Freedom” or “Independence.” **It wasn't even close.**

The word used most frequently was:

VIRTUE

To them, Virtue was the First Principle. This applies directly to whatever difficulty you are facing right now. Virtue is the one thing the job cannot beat out of you.

WISDOM To make the right choice when you are tired.

COURAGE To act when others hesitate.

JUSTICE To remain fair when you are tested.

DISCIPLINE To hold the line when it is easier to give up.

If you resolve to make Virtue your First Principle, you will not just get through this difficult season; you will come out the other side with more character and fewer regrets.

Recommended Reading: For a deeper look at how philosophy guided the decisions of the founders, check out: *First Principles: What America's Founders Learned from the Greeks and Romans and How That Shaped Our Country* by Thomas Ricks.

**Amor Fati,
Sgt. Steve**