



SCAN TO READ THE FULL PIECE

The Stoic Citadel

Mastering the Mind in the Machine Age

THE ONE THING TO KNOW

Your child is growing up inside an algorithmic environment **engineered to hijack their attention** and override their judgment. The ancient Stoic framework — built on the Dichotomy of Control and Four Virtues — is the most durable defence available. It does not protect against AI. **It builds the sovereignty to choose how to engage with it.**

THE CORE THREAT

- **Algorithmic manipulation**

Platforms optimise for engagement, not truth. Emotionally charged content spreads 6x faster — algorithms are tuned precisely for this.

- **Epistemic erosion**

AI-generated content makes it harder to know what's real — producing paralysis or surrendered judgment to the feed.

- **Dopamine architecture**

Every major platform is engineered to defeat Temperance — the one virtue that makes sovereign AI use possible.

THE FRAMEWORK

I Practical Wisdom

Know when to use the tool, when to question it, and when to put it down.

II Courage

Hold an unpopular opinion. Think independently when the feed pulls the other way.

III Justice

Recognise the human — or the absence of one — behind the content.

IV Temperance

Use the tool. Don't be used by it in return.

THIS WEEKEND'S EXERCISES

The Evening Reflection

ALL AGES 3 MIN · FAMILY

At dinner, each person answers three questions: *What did I do well today? Where did I fall short? What will I do differently tomorrow?* The parent who models this first — including honest shortcomings — teaches more about self-regulation than any curriculum. Three minutes. Compounds over years.

DO IT TOGETHER — START TONIGHT

"What did you do well today?" — then tell them honestly what you're still working on. Your honesty is the whole lesson.

The Algorithm Audit

AGES 8-17 10 MIN · WEEKLY

Once a week, scroll through your child's feed together. Ask: *What emotion does this want me to feel? Is that the emotion I want to feel? What does my click history say about where my attention is being pulled?* One honest audit per week produces a noticeable shift in how children engage.

DO IT TOGETHER — MAKE IT A GAME

"This one is trying to make me feel..." — let your child complete the sentence first. Turn it into a game before it becomes a lecture.

The Truth Delay

AGES 10-17 ONGOING HABIT

When any content produces a strong emotional reaction — outrage, fear, excitement — impose a 24-hour delay before sharing or acting on it. The share button is designed for impulse. The stronger the pull to share immediately, the more important it is to wait. Real information doesn't expire in 24 hours.

DO IT TOGETHER — MODEL THE DELAY

"That's interesting — let's come back to it tomorrow and see if it still matters."