

EPISODE 049

## The Obstacle is the Way

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See the show notes at [storiesinsongs.com/podcast/episode-049](https://storiesinsongs.com/podcast/episode-049)

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[00:00:00] Hi, this is Melanie from Stories in Songs - Writing the Lyrics.

Today I've got something very important for you that I've just learnt about yesterday.

And all night I kept thinking about it so that I have to share with you today.

Because it is that important.

Especially when you feel stuck in your songwriting, or in life in general, I'd like to share with you the approach that helped me.

So if you feel stuck sometimes... maybe this helps.

### TEASER

## Overcoming being Stuck

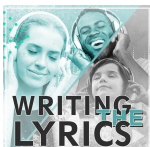
[00:01:04] So yesterday I watched a presentation from the mindset coach Steve Larsen.

Amazing guy, super funny. And so honest.

And he said something that at first didn't make sense, but the more I thought about it, he was absolutely right.

He said: "The obstacle is the way."

"The obstacle is the way."



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Think about that.

Whenever we are trying to do something that's important to us, we get stuck at one point.

We hit a wall.

We hit that obstacle.

And overcoming an obstacle is always hard.

It takes strength, willpower, and perseverance, and a good portion of hope and confidence.

Mostly, it takes time and consistency, wanting to do what it takes to overcome it.

But the thing is, once we hit that obstacle, we often see it as a blocked path.

We see it as a wall that tells us it's a dead end.

And that's a misconception.

But when we hit that wall, we just turn and look for other options.

But all those other options are just the easy way out.

Now imagine, the place where you are now is your current position, right.

So just put a mental pin in where you are right now in your life.

And you have a goal that you want to achieve, right?

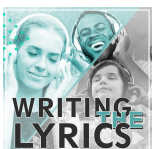
There's always something that we want.

It could be

- finishing the lyrics for a song,
- getting back together with someone you love,
- getting the courage to play your first show,
- putting yourself out there through your songs,

Whatever.

You want to move from point A to point B.



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But right on that path, there's an obstacle, because that's just the way it is.

That's life.

There's this thing between you and your goal.

Maybe it's a wall.

For others, it's like they're standing on a cliff.

And others have already fallen down the cliff, and now they're stuck at the bottom.

And there's this huge wall again, right?

So the best thing but also the hardest option to reach the other side or our goal is to simply overcome that obstacle.

But what do we do instead most of the time?

We just turn away from the obstacle and head the other way.

We take the easy way.

We head away from what we actually wanted... because we hit that wall.

- So we never finish the lyrics,
- we don't fight for our love,
- we distract ourselves with other things thinking they are more important when they are not,
- we even stop doing what we are passionate about because that next step in our personal journey feels so hard.

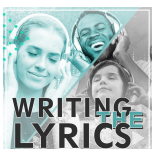
But does the easy way lead to our goal?

It does not.

So here's the thing: The obstacle is the way.

So whenever you feel stuck or there's something that's blocking the path you're supposed to go, I want you to face it.

Lean into it.



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I know it feels hard.

It's uncomfortable.

But you know... that wall just marks the limits of where we still feel comfortable.

And we have to push through it.

Tony Robbins says the Pathway to Success goes through the threshold of control.

The Pathway to Success goes through the threshold of control.

So think about that wall like a circle that surrounds you.

You are in the middle.

And around you there's this area where you feel comfortable.

And you feel comfortable because you feel certain about what actions lead to which outcomes.

But then... there's this wall at the border that surrounds your comfortable area.

And beyond that wall... there's this problem that you're facing.

And it's a problem because it's scary outside.

Anything you haven't done before is uncertainty.

And you probably have faced those moments before.

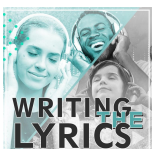
As long as you ignore that thing... it grows bigger and bigger.

But if you solve it, similar problems won't feel that overwhelming anymore.

There won't be a wall anymore, because you've already broken through it.

So all you need are six seconds of courage and push through that wall.

And if you can't do it yourself, get help from someone.



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But only by pushing through those walls and taking the uncomfortable action... only this way do we grow.

Have you ever been skiing?

You know, when you start learning to ski, you are on those easy little slopes. They are marked green, because it's for the ultimate beginners. But if you never skied or snowboarded before, it's scary and intimidating.

But you master it eventually.

But then, you might have taken a wrong turn and you stand above this huge double black marked slope and it's like a cliff going down.

And you think: I'm gonna die here! I'm gonna die!

There's no way I can survive the descent.

And you have two options.

You can either sit down and cling onto the slope as hard as you can while you slide down. And somehow make it down.

Or you can commit to it.

You have learnt the skills and now it's just focusing.

One turn after the other.

Just start with what's the next step.

And you push through.

You commit to it and you push through.

And then, when you are back on a blue or red slope, it feels like you can master anything.

So all I'm saying is: The Obstacle is The Way to grow.

It's the way to level up.

It's how we can get to where we wanna go.



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And of course it's hard in the beginning.

Because we've never done it before.

So how can we be certain of the outcome.

We can't ... unless we firmly believe and imagine ourselves at the other side of it.

And how it would feel like to have mastered it.

But ultimately, what I wanna say today,... and I hope it doesn't feel like I'm preaching... but we all struggle with holding ourselves back because we feel uncertain... or blocked.

So think about it this way.

Whenever you hit that wall, you can smile.

Because hitting that wall means you're just one step away from learning a new skill or achieving something.

And if it fails, that's perfect too.

We need to fail at certain things, because that's how we can make progress.

The people who never take action because they are afraid to fail will never get anywhere. They will keep living in their small comfortable bubble.

But the ones who push through ... gosh, I firmly believe that progress equals happiness.

Just think about something that felt scary but you pushed through anyway...

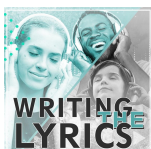
Remember how that felt!

So when you hit that obstacle and feel some kind of resistance, then know that you're on the right track and you just need to keep going in that direction.

Don't derail from the path so you can reach what you intended to set out to do.

The obstacle is the way.

**But there's also something else going on here.**



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If you think about the obstacle as the way, then there's a condition to it.

I don't know if Ryan Holiday talks about this in his book under the same title. I haven't read it yet. It's on my list now, though.

But last night I kept thinking about what would be the scenario when we are heavily reluctant to overcome that obstacle.

And I thought about our inner voice.

Now when you think about something like certain principles that you wouldn't break, then you immediately hear the voice in your head:

*"NO, don't do this.*

*Don't cheat on her!*

*Don't hurt that person!*

*Don't sell out!"*

Your inner voice is very good at saying NO to keep you from danger.

When that happens, it's not an obstacle.

It is not a wall.

It's not something to push through anyway.

It's just a barrier because there's no path behind it.

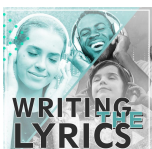
It's no place you want to go to because there's no goalstate awaiting you.

It's just a barrier telling you: TURN BACK.

But when it comes to an obstacle, then your inner voice says:

Yes, I WANT this.

I want to release that song!



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I want to get heard.

I want to make an impact.

So that's how you know if you're on the right track:

You want the goal and the obstacle is telling you that you need to follow that path and you'll reach your goal.

I hope that's helpful.

And here's the cool part.

Even in your lyrics you can show how your song's main character pushes through an obstacle.

That's something inspiring, isn't it?

That's how you can empower your audience, too.

And feel empowered yourself.

It's all about the journey.

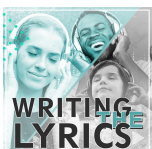
It's all about the experience!

So, push through the things that stand between you and what you want!

Have an awesome day!

## Show Notes

- "The Obstacle Is the Way" by Ryan Holiday



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