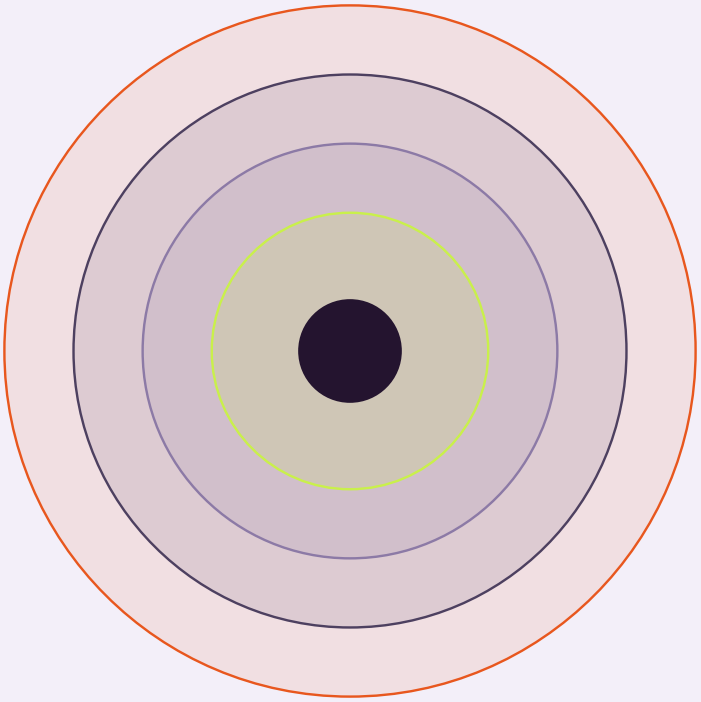


How to Think Like a Cat

A reading of the book by Stéphane Garnier (2018)

1. ACTION BOOK

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of How to Think Like a Cat, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

Stéphane Garnier's short, funny field guide to cat qualities worth stealing — independence, rest without guilt, immunity to other people's opinions, and the ability to say no without a speech.

Below are the 8 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

A cat is impervious to judgement — not because he is brave, but because it genuinely has not occurred to him to care.

A chapter on this theme reframes confidence as an absence of a habit rather than the presence of a virtue.

2 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

He rests before he is tired and without having earned it.

HourLife's reading: a quiet attack on productivity culture: in a cat's economy rest is the default state and activity is the exception.

3 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

He knows exactly what he wants and asks for it, repeatedly, without a preamble.

No apology, no justification, no reading of the room first — Much of our asking is spent softening the ask.

4 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

He says no immediately, and then does not explain.

A cat leaves the lap the moment it stops being pleasant, the cleanest boundary any animal has ever set.

5 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

He avoids conflict rather than winning it. Leaving the room is a legitimate outcome.

Disengagement as strategy rather than cowardice — a cat does not stay to be proved right.

6 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Curiosity, in a cat, is a daily habit rather than a personality trait.

He investigates the same room again today, an antidote to a life you have stopped actually looking at.

7 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

He is entirely himself in front of everyone, and adapts instantly when the situation changes.

The paradox: total consistency of self, total flexibility of behaviour, and no perceived contradiction between the two.

8 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Nothing about a cat's day is urgent, and yet everything that matters to him gets done.

The book's "Your Cat's Day" section is its real argument — a whole day organised around attention and rest rather than output.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Pick your three cat qualities
- [ ] Find your sunbeam
- [ ] Take the phone out of the first ten minutes
- [ ] Book one nap into the week
- [ ] Write your standard no

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Ask once, plainly, with no run-up
- ◯ Leave when it stops being good
- ◯ Sit at the window for ten minutes

30 days · Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

- [ ] SETUP 1

Pick your three cat qualities

Out of the book's qualities, choose the three you most obviously lack.

Write them on something you see. A long list is a browse; three is a project.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 2

Find your sunbeam

One spot at home where you genuinely like being — light, chair, view.

A cat relocates several times a day to stay in the good spot; most people never identify theirs at all.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 3

Take the phone out of the first ten minutes

Charge it out of reach overnight.

The cat's 7:30 is a decision about whether to get up; yours is currently being made by whatever loaded first.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 4

Book one nap into the week

In the calendar, with a name, before anything else claims the slot.

Rest that has to win an argument against work never happens.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 5

Write your standard no

One sentence you can say without inventing a reason.

"I can't do that one." A cat's no takes no words at all; yours can take four.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Ask once, plainly, with no run-up

Every day, make one request with nothing in front of it — no softening, no apology, no justification.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6 ○
7 ○	8 ○	9 ○	10 ○	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Leave when it stops being good

The call, the party, the meeting that ended twenty minutes ago.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Sit at the window for ten minutes

No phone, no podcast, nothing to finish.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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December 2026

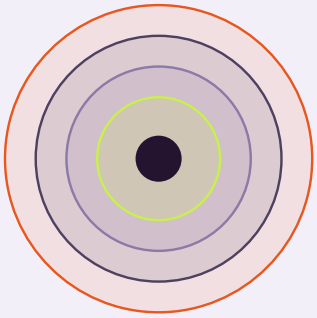
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



The cat is not indifferent. He is simply not available for things that do not concern him.

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY