

# The Happiness Equation Summary

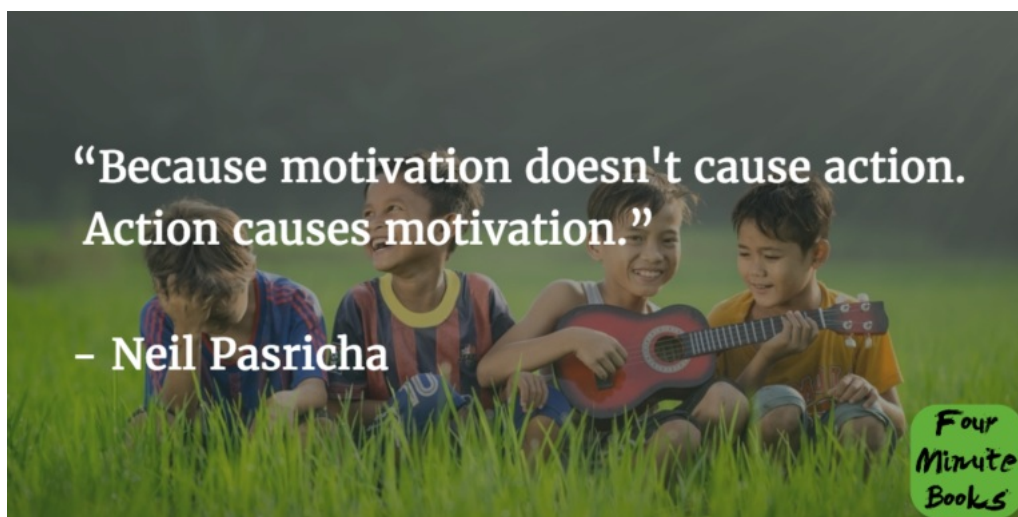
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 [fourminutebooks.com/the-happiness-equation-summary](https://fourminutebooks.com/the-happiness-equation-summary)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *The Happiness Equation reveals nine scientifically backed secrets to happiness to show you that by wanting nothing and doing anything, you can have everything.*

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



We have a saying in the small village in the Southwest of Germany where I live: today it only rains once – meaning it'll rain all day. Today was such a day. Luckily, me and my Dad got up early. While we were sitting at breakfast, we saw the sunrise. At 7:30 AM, the sky turned red and for five minutes, we stood outside and watched nature do its thing.

Such a small, insignificant moment, but, as I later realized, an abundance of tiny sparks of happiness. Developing this ability to notice and appreciate the little things has happened slowly over years, but the thinking behind it is the same kind Neil Pasricha put into his book *The Happiness Equation*.

It's about the simple nature of happiness and how to get more of it into your life with nine secrets that go against conventional happiness advice.

Here are my favorite 3:

1. The Germans invented retirement and the Japanese found a cure for it: *ikigai*.
2. Take the Saturday Morning Test to fix the relationship with the most important person in your life: you.
3. Ignore most advice, including the one from this summary, website and me.

The happiness equation isn't as easy to solve as your usual third grade arithmetics, but if you work on those variables long enough, they'll fall into place. Let's practice!

## Lesson 1: Ikigai is better than retirement.

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In one of his secrets, Neil takes us on a little history tour. He says we (the Germans, that is) invented retirement in 1889. Neil's right. I remember the *actual* history lesson in school.

Otto von Bismarck, the Chancellor of the German Empire at the time, who controlled much of the country's politics, put in place the world's first proper pension program. Originally designed to pay for the living costs of disabled workers over 70, our modern system still relies on the basics of it today: employer and worker pay equal parts into a fund each month, which is used to pay the annuity later in life.

It is still considered a prime example of a state providing excellent social welfare. There's only one problem: it stopped working years ago. When Bismarck implemented the system, the average lifespan was 45. Almost no one lived to collect the pension. Today, people who retire at 65 might live another 30 years, and due to the shift in age groups, one guy might have to pay for five retirees.

But fear not, the solution is around the globe. In Okinawa, Japan, where people have the longest life expectancy on earth, a study with over 40,000 people found that ikigai, which means "reason for waking up in the morning" is hugely beneficial to health in old age.

**What it comes down to is abandoning retirement altogether and continuing to work until you die, albeit at a slower pace and in different ways.** We have an intuitive understanding that being productive gives us purpose: around half of all people would prefer to postpone retirement anyway.

## Lesson 2: Take the Saturday Morning Test.

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Another one of Neil's happiness secret is really straightforward: be yourself. Haha, good one Nik, platitudes much? I know that's easier said than done, because often, we don't quite know who we are, if we're honest. It's a lifelong process of finding out.

That's what Neil's made this really cool test for, I took it just now. It's called the Saturday Morning Test and is rooted in one, simple question: **"What would you like to do on a Saturday morning, given you have no other obligations to fulfill?"**

I thought I would probably sleep in, have a really nice, big breakfast, or meet someone for it, then have an adventure throughout the day and spend the evening with the girlfriend I currently don't have. I even caught myself thinking: "maybe write a little."

That's a sign I'm on the right track! The idea is that the more Saturday morning activities you manage to implement in your life, the happier you'll become. Don't stress yourself, do it for fun.

You can always turn pro later and make your calling your career.

## Lesson 3: Don't listen to much advice at all.

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Life is full of contradictions. Often, these contradictions confuse us, because they come to us in the form of advice from so many people, books, lectures, experts, family and friends. Funny enough, none of them know you as well as you know yourself.

**The real challenge is not to listen and trust your own judgement.** You know who you are better than anyone, therefore, only you can know what works for you. This includes everything I ever say or write, this summary and this entire website! I'm not trying to sell you on all the ideas. I want you to pick the ones that serve you well and ditch the rest.

If anything, I'm a big fan of embracing all of life's contradictions. Take whichever end of the spectrum serves you the best on any given day. Who cares if you change your mind? People are always mad at everyone for everything. Life's too short to live by anyone's rules but your own.

So always subject every single piece of advice to ruthless scrutiny: Does this work at all? And if it does, does it work for me?

You don't need anyone to tell you what you need. You know. You got this. And you'll find your own way to happiness.

## The Happiness Equation Review

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I like the basic formula of the equation, I like the way *The Happiness Equation* is structured, I like the stories, examples and creative ways of practicing happiness. A refreshing read all around!

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## What else can you learn from the blinks?

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- How most people have the relationship of happiness and work backwards
- Which two battles are constantly raging in your brain
- What the historic odds of being born are
- Why Harvard grads and retail managers sometimes earn the same money
- The magical weekly split of three
- How to do laundry just once a month
- Two surprising barriers that keep us from happiness

## Who would I recommend The Happiness Equation summary to?

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The 28 year old young marketer, who's hustling and hustling and not getting to where he wants with his income, the 47 year old housewife who fell out of love and anyone who lost someone they held dear.