

# Invisible Influence Summary

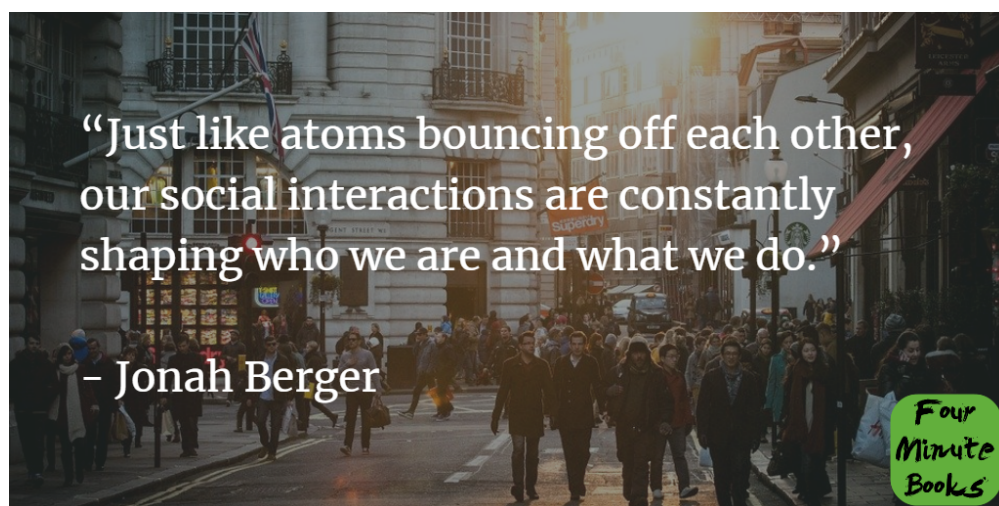
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 [fourminutebooks.com/invisible-influence-summary/](https://fourminutebooks.com/invisible-influence-summary/)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Invisible Influence* will help you learn how to make better choices by revealing the effect that others have on your actions, thoughts, and preferences.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



We would like to think that we are all individual and original. Maybe you feel like you march to the beat of your own drum while others just follow the crowd.

In reality, it is virtually impossible to not be influenced by the people around us, at least a little bit. You might have “your own” sense of fashion, but unless you are making your own clothes, you probably are buying the same mass-produced clothes everyone else is.

Most of us are heavily affected by our surroundings and don’t even know it. Have you ever felt like the people around you are influenced far too easily? One celebrity sharing their view on a political issue can convince tons of people to adopt that opinion. One friend, one documentary, or even just one tweet can shape how we feel about the world. And of course, this isn’t always a good thing.

Jonah Berger’s *Invisible Influence: The Hidden Forces that Shape Behavior* is all about how our world affects us more than we think. This is a book that will not only show you how to spot when you’re succumbing to this influence, but also how to take advantage of it.

Here are the 3 most fascinating lessons this book taught me about the influence of others:

1. Other people affect the choices you make, but knowing about this phenomenon will help you beat it.
2. Whether you like it or not, your everyday choices and opinions are an imitation of what the people around you are doing.

3. Our social surroundings change the way we perform and can motivate or distract us.

Are you ready to see how knowing about the unseen influence of others can improve your life? Let's get a move on!

## Lesson 1: Learn about the affect others have on your choices so that you can overcome it.

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A study by psychologist Richard Moreland proves the power of invisible influence. Four women of similar attractiveness attended a big college class, acting like regular students. Each attended a different number of class sessions ranging from 0 to 15.

After the semester finished, Moreland had class members review photos of the women. **The majority preferred the girl that had been to the most class sessions, without even being aware they'd ever seen her!**

We prefer familiar people, even if we don't realize that they are familiar to us. This is only one example of the unseen effect that others have on us. But simply knowing about this influence will help it impact you less.

Take a young girl who is bullied by students who hate bookworms, for example. At first, she might feel discouragement at their despising her love of books. But once she realizes that they are affecting her thoughts, their power diminishes.

As the girl considers if it's true that people who read a lot are losers, she'll recognize that these bullies are wrong. She may look to all of the successful people that reading has made and realize that she's right to like books.

## Lesson 2: Although you might not see it at first, you usually embrace other's opinions and imitate their actions.

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Even if you feel like you're a pretty independent thinker, you're likely wrong. We're highly inclined to adopt behaviors and opinions from the people who are around us.

The first reason we do this is simple: it saves us time. We don't have to figure our opinions about everything out for ourselves. Remember the time your friend told you that a new restaurant was terrible? You probably didn't bother going there. Or maybe you adopted the same political views as your parents before you really took the time to study out what you really believed. Sometimes we just adopt other's opinions to save ourselves time.

**Another reason that we adopt others' opinions is because of social pressure that makes us feel the need to conform.** In a study, researchers asked participants to match the length of a line shown to them on a card with one of three other lines shown on a different card. The answer was very obvious, but six out of the seven in each group were actors who gave the same wrong answer. In one-third of cases, participants conformed and gave the wrong answer due to peer pressure.

Social influence even explains why people like certain media. In a study, teens listened to songs by unknown artists and were asked to download what they liked. One group did this without any outside influence, but the second group was shown the number of previous downloads among their group. People in the second group

chose the more popularly downloaded songs much more than the first one. This shows why it's so hard to predict what book will be a bestseller— social influence is hugely powerful in our tastes.

## Lesson 3: Motivation or distraction come from the people around us, depending on the type of task we're doing.

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When people lose weight, they often join groups for support. But what is it about these connections that is so valuable?

As we've learned, people mimic what they see other people doing. So for those in a weight loss group that hear of others success get a boost of confidence that they will be successful too. Running in a competition has the same effect, and makes us run faster.

But some tasks, like those that are more difficult, are even harder when others are watching. In these cases we may focus on appearing smart rather than performing well. The spectators may bring your attention to the thoughts that are disconnected from whatever you're trying to do.

Say you're trying to solve a complicated math problem. **The presence of other people activates the parts of your brain that make you want to fight, flee, or have fun.** None of these feelings will help you solve the equation, but only make it harder.

If you want to take advantage of the invisible influence of others, find someone who is good at a goal you have. You may want to work harder or run faster. Spending more time in the office with the hardest working team member, or going for a run with your athletic brother will help you achieve your goals faster.

## Invisible Influence Review

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*Invisible Influence* is really interesting and insightful! It's making me rethink what I thought I knew about how much others influence me and why. I believe everyone in the world can benefit from this book!

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## Who would I recommend the Invisible Influence summary to?

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The 34-year-old deep-thinker who is curious to know how others influence their choices, the 54-year-old leader who needs to make more unbiased decisions, and anyone who'd like more control over the choices they make.