

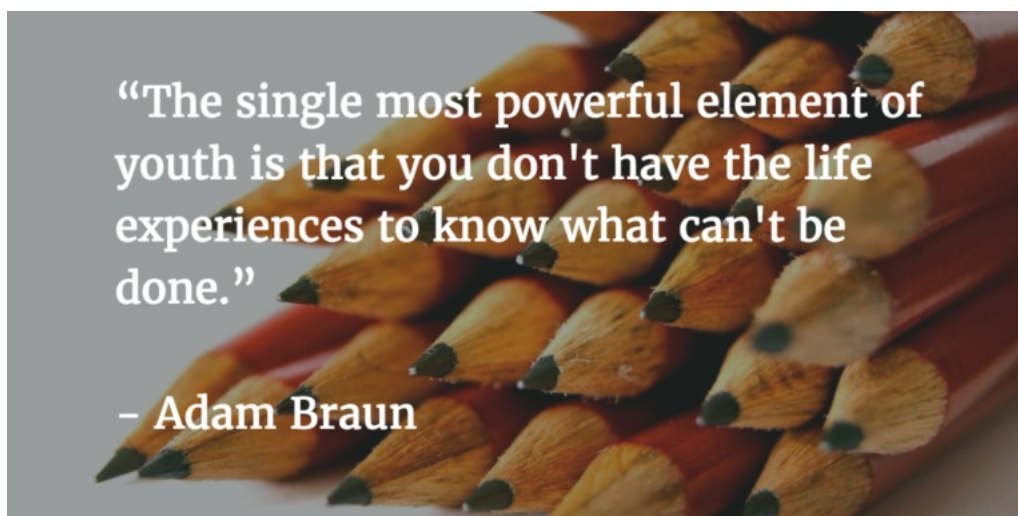
The Promise Of A Pencil Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/the-promise-of-a-pencil-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *The Promise Of A Pencil* narrates the story of how Adam Braun, well-bred, average college kid, working at Bain & Company, shook off what society expected of him and created a life of significance and success by starting his own charity, which now has built hundreds of schools for children in need.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



“The single most powerful element of youth is that you don't have the life experiences to know what can't be done.”

– Adam Braun

What do you want most in the world?

10 million dollars? Your own farm? A private jet? A Ferrari?

Imagine asking someone that question, and their answer is this: “A pencil.”

That’s exactly what happened to Adam Braun, as he was traveling through India, when he asked a little boy this question. Humbled, he gave him one of his own pencils. Adam couldn’t believe that something that meant so little to him could mean the world to someone else and decided that he would embrace the giving power he and many of his fellow Americans had.

His “for-purpose” organization, as he calls it, Pencils of Promise, is one of the most notable charities in the world and has built over 300 schools across the globe, helping more than 35,000 children receive an education, who were to get none before.

The Promise Of A Pencil tells his story and delivers practical advice on how you can follow your own dreams too, just like Adam did.

Here are 3 lessons about building a life of success and significance:

1. Follow your intuition more often.

2. Act confident, even when you don't know what you're doing. Especially then.
3. Stop trying to avoid mistakes and start learning more from them.

Whether you want to build a charity, business, or book club, I hope you're game to learn from Adam, because I sure am! Let's go!

Lesson 1: You're not following your intuition often enough. So do it more.

Have you ever felt bad for following your intuition when it really mattered? Think about this for a second. Really hard.

All those times when you had to decide whether to quit your job, if you should break up with someone, where to move to, which school to choose, you know, the big decisions in life.

Have you followed your intuition and afterwards said: "Damn, this was a REALLY bad move." or vice versa, went against your gut and it turned out to be the best choice? I guess not.

That's because your intuition is your most powerful advisor. It knows what's good for you, long before you do.

Therefore, no matter how often you do it already, you're still not trusting your intuition often enough. Adam, for example, had a consulting job when he started Pencils of Promise. Eventually, his bosses noted his lack of commitment, and forced him to make a choice. On the way home, he came across a cardboard box with some graffiti. It said "Become your dream." Knowing that the charity meant much more to him than any job, he took this sign as a confirmation of his intuition, and quit the job.

Note: Intuition is different from cravings. I'm not talking about giving in to the urge to eat at Burger King every time you walk by one. This is about the important things in life.

Four Minute Books was started entirely on intuition, so don't wait once your gut knows what's up. Take that momentum and run with it!

Lesson 2: Act confident, even when you don't know what you're doing. Especially then.

Too much confidence can be a problem. It's often the reason the loudest person in the room makes the big decisions, and not the smartest one. While confidence and competence are two different things, **it's crucial for you to have an unshakeable belief in yourself and your dream.**

Confidence is what keeps you from throwing in the towel when the going gets tough, and even if it sometimes means being in the wrong, it's the only thing that'll get you past all the rain you have to sit through to finally get to the rainbow.

Adam learned that confidence is especially important in those times when you have no clue what you're doing. It'll not only show yourself that you're strong and unafraid, it'll also keep you out of trouble.

When Adam's taxi got stuck in the middle of an aggressive protest in Nepal, and protesters were about to attack him, he just got out of the car, greeted the protesters, and walked away confidently – without having even the slightest idea where to go. But it kept him from getting beat up or worse.

You can't change that you have to face a ton of failures and problems on your journey, but you *can* change how you approach them – and it will make all the difference.

Lesson 3: Quit trying to avoid mistakes and instead focus on learning from them.

I love this one. It's so simple. Yet so deep.

"Self-improvement comes from learning from your mistakes."

Duh! Way to be captain obvious, right? But if you think about this, it can change your entire attitude. We spend 99% of the time we work trying to get everything right and avoid making mistakes. This is an effort in vain, as not making mistakes is impossible.

So instead of obsessing over not making any in the first place, **if you change your focus to just learning as much as you can from the mistakes you *do* make, you'll get the better of it.**

Imagine this: You're having a great time at work, when a colleague calls you and tells you the numbers you submitted for a report were wrong and now a client can't move forward. What if you *instantly* dove into the numbers, corrected them, sent them to the client, apologized for your mistake and set a new reminder to have a colleague review your numbers any time you submit a report?

You'd become a lot better at everything you do, insanely fast. So stop trying so hard to avoid mistakes and just focus on learning as much from every single one you make.

The Promise Of A Pencil Review

I'm afraid I've run out of words, because I just wrote and learned too much, haha. That's a first. I think that tells you everything you need to know about what I think of *The Promise Of A Pencil* – plus one from me!

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- What bad advice Adam's family gave him when he first started his charity
- Why most people live in a personal bubble, and why you have to pop yours
- What happened when Adam watched a piano player from the New York Philharmonic
- Why you shouldn't worry if your first business bank deposit is just \$25
- The reason Adam chose PoP to be "for-purpose" instead of "non-profit"
- What "one person, one thought" means
- How one thank you note saved Adam thousands of dollars
- Why taking breaks will help you make better decisions

Who would I recommend The Promise Of A Pencil summary to?

The 25 year old who's done everything to please her family so far, but has an itch to do her own thing for a while, the 49 year old, who just started at a new job and is worried about making mistakes, and anyone who's ever thought of starting a charity.