

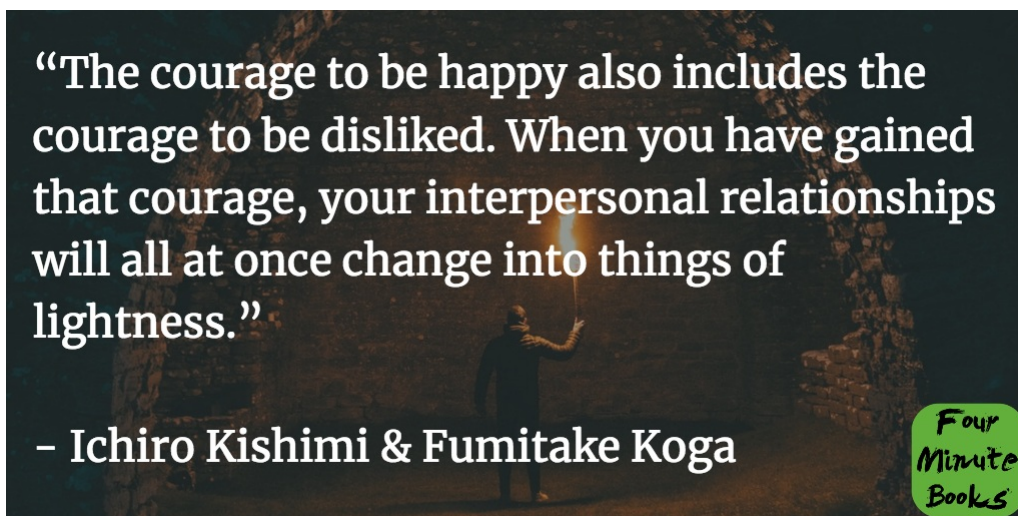
The Courage To Be Disliked Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *The Courage To Be Disliked* is a Japanese analysis of the work of 19th-century psychologist Alfred Adler, who established that happiness lies in the hands of each human individual and does not depend on past traumas.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



In 2016, people finally found conclusive evidence to prove Einstein's theory of general relativity. That means, for over 100 years, an entire branch of physics operated under the *assumption* that this idea was true but didn't *actually* know. The chance that decades of work from thousands of people could collapse in an instant might seem like a crazy price to pay, but the truth is science has always worked this way. Everything is a theory, waiting to be proven wrong.

Hence, you shouldn't be surprised if you see a resurgence of old ideas in any given field. In psychology, the works of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung have dominated for a long time. But now, an opposing contemporary of theirs is resurfacing: Alfred Adler. The Japanese authors Ichiro Kishimi and Fumitake Koga have analyzed his work for decades and now present an adapted version of it, ready to serve the modern world in our quest for happiness.

The result is *The Courage To Be Disliked*, an instant bestseller in Japan and now a global phenomenon, with over 3.5 million copies sold. The book tells the story of an unhappy young man, who visits a philosopher on the outskirts of his city. Over the course of five conversations, the teacher helps him take control of his own life and happiness.

Here are 3 lessons I learned:

1. One of our most dangerous beliefs is that our past determines our future.
2. If you focus on what's wrong with you, you might be looking for reasons to hate

yourself on purpose.

3. Most of what we think of as competition is just made up and hurting our happiness.

Let's see how Adler's ideas can help us take charge, live true to ourselves, and exercise control over our one life!

Lesson 1: Your past does not determine your future.

The key word in Freudian psychology is 'trauma.' It asserts that most of our self-image takes deep root in our psyche at a young age. Therefore, bad experiences then will lead to much trouble later. As a result, Freud assumed most of our adult lives is spent trying to fight, unravel, and overcome our limiting beliefs from the past.

According to Adler, this isn't true. While he agreed that we form a style of life early on, whether that's being an optimist or a pessimist, for example, he didn't believe this was a fixed point of our character. Adler defended the idea that we can change who we are in any given moment.

Even if you could trace all your flaws back to two or three instances in your childhood, so what? You can only change them now, in the present. What's done is done. **You have to believe that something different can happen in order to break old patterns.** And you can choose that new outlook at any time.

So why not choose it *right now*?

Lesson 2: Hating yourself is usually a way of shutting out others, rather than actually warranted.

One of the author's students once admitted that he disliked himself because he was too aware of his own flaws. Adler categorized such flaws into two categories: objective and subjective inferiorities. Objective ones are those we can measure and confirm, like being shorter than someone else or having less money. Subjective inferiorities, however, are often entirely made up.

In talking to the student, Kishimi too realized that the flaws the young man saw weren't real. In essence, **he was coming up with reasons to hate himself in order to seek isolation from others and, thus, avoid getting hurt.** His loneliness was the cause of his misery, not the effect of any actual shortcomings.

Adler said the only inferiorities we have to actively deal with are the objective ones, and only if they really hinder us in reaching our goals. But the subjective ones aren't even there, so be sure to probe them before you deem yourself unworthy.

One wonderful antidote to this problem is, as author Kamal Ravikant puts it, to Love Yourself Like Your Life Depends On It.

Lesson 3: A competitive mindset destroys your mental health.

In one of my most popular posts, I wrote:

Mark Twain remarked that “comparison is the death of joy.” But, and this is worse, it’s also the birth of misery.

This is something Adler would agree with. **He saw competitive societies as detrimental to our mental health and well-being.** Today, this is a prominent topic in debates around Western vs. Eastern culture. Countries like Japan and China also have competition, but are, overall, more focused on cooperation, whereas nations like the US and Germany really focus on individual winner types.

The problem is that if you believe in order to be happy, you need to come out on top of some game, like earning money, getting likes, or having friends, you’ll be sad and stressed either way. The losers feel bad for losing, the winners constantly worry about their success.

Adler sought something much more productive to be the purpose of psychology: to help humans be courageous. Once you let go of a narrow, competitive mindset and embrace abundance, you’ll never feel like anyone is holding you back. After all, there’s enough to go around for everyone and as long as you work on yourself, you can achieve anything you want!

The Courage To Be Disliked Review

What an empowering, rational, thoughtfully crafted book. *The Courage To Be Disliked* comes in the calm, cool-headed style you would expect from Eastern philosophers. By shining a light on Adler’s work, it fills a gap in our current pop psychology conversation. It provides a useful, level-headed approach to living a happy and fulfilled life.

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- When we first form our life style
- What to avoid to not fall into the competition trap
- How you can build meaningful relationships without getting frustrated
- Why you should treat even inanimate objects like friends
- Which root cause triggers most of our addictions

Who would I recommend The Courage To Be Disliked summary to?

The 14 year old girl with braces, who gets bullied at school, the 23 year old grad student, who’s worried about his future career, and anyone who feels like their past continues to haunt them.