

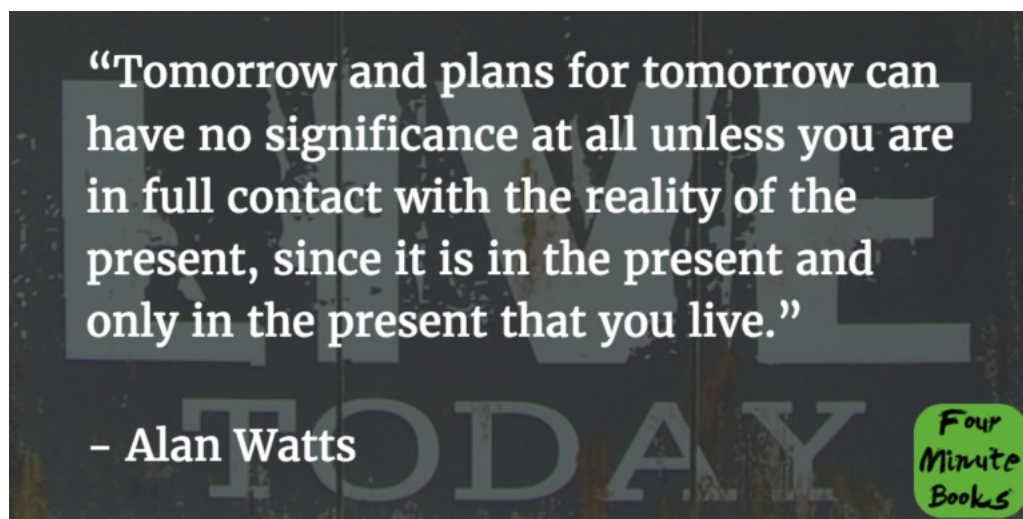
The Wisdom Of Insecurity Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/the-wisdom-of-insecurity-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *The Wisdom Of Insecurity* is a self-help classic that breaks down our psychological need for stability and explains how it's led us right into consumerism, why that won't solve our problem and how we can really calm our anxiety.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



If you like watching motivational videos on Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, etc., chances are, you've come across this name some time: Alan Watts. It's often hidden somewhere in the description and says something like "narrated by Alan Watts."

My favorite one is "What would you do if money were no object?"

You can tell from the audio quality that the recordings are old, sometimes take place in classrooms, yet don't feel like a lecture. So what's that about?

Alan Watts was a philosopher, speaker and writer, who spent the majority of his life getting the Western world to open up to Eastern philosophy, primarily from 1930-1970. He had a long-time radio show at a station in the San Francisco Bay Area, which is also where he gained a large following and wrote most of the over 25 books he published on topics like Zen, Buddhism, religion and spirituality.

Here are my 3 lessons after reading the summary on [Blinkist](#):

1. Without religion to tell us it'll be okay, life can become very uncertain, and that's terrifying.
2. The happiness consumerism promises us is really just emptiness in a pretty wrapper.

3. Pleasure and pain always come in one package, and embracing that will make you less anxious.

Want to be happy in a world where you have no idea what's next? Let's learn how to live with uncertainty!

Lesson 1: Without the reassurance of religion, life becomes unbearably uncertain.

If you asked Americans what their religion was in 1948, more than 9 out of 10 would've told you they're Christians. Today, almost 20% of them openly admit to having no religion, meaning they've either left church or are just not religious at all.

This reversing trend of religiousness started as early as the 1920s, when the Industrial Revolution brought wealth and prosperity to the US. As communication technology and science were on the rise, mythical stories and promises of a wonderful afterlife lost their touch – but also their positive impact.

While not being all sunshine and rainbows, the strong and indoctrinated morals and beliefs of religion gave people a sense of comfort and fulfillment. **Knowing you're working towards an afterlife in paradise is reassuring and lets you put up with a lot pain.**

Once you stop believing in that, there's a gap you have to fill in order to make sense of all the suffering in life. You start asking yourself: "Where is the reward that makes enduring all this worthwhile? Why should I put up with all this shit?"

Of course there are no easy answers to such big, existential questions – you can't find them overnight. What you can find overnight though, are things like alcohol, TV and a new handbag.

Lesson 2: Consumerism comes with an empty promise of happiness.

Enter consumerism. Yes, you could spend your Saturday pondering why you didn't get the promotion, what else you could do with your career and work out a life plan. Ooooooor, you can go shopping, eat steak for dinner and then to a club! That sounds like a lot more fun. Let's do that!

But...those things cost money. Ugh! But maybe if you put your head down, work hard and impress your boss, you'll get the promotion next time, and then you can buy even nicer clothes, eat even fancier dinners and go to even more expensive clubs! In the meantime, why not just get some credit to pay for all this stuff?

Hold on, hold on – do you see what’s happening here? This is exactly the way we talk ourselves into getting on the hedonic treadmill – that is doing things you don’t like, to buy things you don’t need, to go on living, to keep doing things you don’t like.

It’s stupid!

This chase for happiness will *never* be over. **It’s just what society’s trying to sell you, because it still hasn’t managed to come up with a better way of giving you true fulfillment.**

The degree, the job, the nice car, the house, once you have all that, retirement’s still a long way away, so you might as well deal with the important questions now.

Lesson 3: Pleasure and pain are just two ends of one spectrum, one always includes the other.

The reason answering these questions is so hard is that both finding the answers and accepting them leads to a lot of pain. Even if you know you’d like to be a painter, going for it is hard. You won’t conform to other peoples’ expectations of you any more, you might not make a lot of money, maybe you can *never* even make a full-time living.

That’s painful. So our brain tells us to do something pleasurable instead, like eating a pizza or having a drink.

But here’s the thing: These things don’t fall into two different buckets. **They fall into the same bucket, just on opposite sides of it – and one always entails the other.**

The pain of all the hardships of a painter will always be accompanied by feelings of gratitude, joy and passion, because you’re doing what you really love. Just like the fourth vodka martini comes with a terrible hangover the next day.

If you can learn to process the painful parts as just one half of the whole thing, you’ll learn to see these emotions as temporary and that both are a necessary part of life.

It’s a minor shift in perspective, but a major shift in how you perceive life and will allow you to make much, much better decisions in the long run.

The Wisdom Of Insecurity Review

You don’t need validation. You don’t need reassurance. The world only tries to sell you things you don’t need, because there’s a lot of money in getting you to believe that’s what’ll make you happy. But you don’t need any of that. You’re the best as you are, go do shit you love!

[Read full summary on Blinkist >>](#)

[Free Preview >>](#)

What else can you learn from the blinks?

- What constant stimulation does to you
- How what makes well for a donkey makes you miserable
- What a vicious cycle of anxiety looks like
- Why thinking is never as profound as feeling
- How to listen to your gut-feeling

Who would I recommend The Wisdom Of Insecurity summary to?

The 14 year old, who just had her confirmation ceremony, but isn't sure how religious she really is, the 32 year old consultant, who just got a new Porsche, but wonders why he doesn't really enjoy driving it, and anyone who suffered from a really painful event this year.