

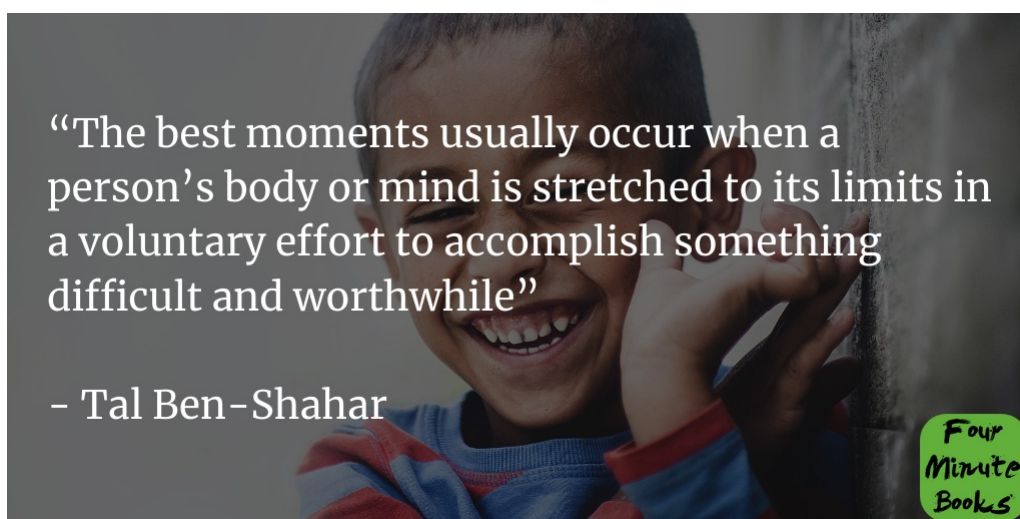
Happier Summary



1-Sentence-Summary: *Happier* will improve your mental state and level of success by identifying what you get wrong about joy and how to discover what's most important to you and how to make those things a more significant part of your life.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



These days, most of us seem to have it all. A computer in our hand that can make calls, good food, and technological advancements that make our life expectancy longer than ever before.

And yet, a large portion of the world is lacking one vital aspect: happiness.

When we take a closer look at how we grew up, however, this makes a little more sense. We always had to accomplish the next big achievement, to be happy.

Whether it was a good grade, degree, new job, or promotion, none of these objectives actually made us happier. And it only gets worse when we consider the plague of consumerism.

If you feel like you're floundering when it comes to finding meaning in life, look no further than Tal Ben-Shahar's *Happier: Learn the Secrets to Daily Joy and Lasting Fulfillment*. He'll give you some specific and actionable tips to increase your joy today.

Let's discover how much we can learn about this emotion in just 3 lessons:

1. Happiness breeds success and all life goals point toward it.
2. Balance your outlook on the present and future to get more joy in your life.
3. Nurturing worthwhile relationships will make you happier.

Are you ready to have a better life? Let's get right to these lessons and discover how!

Lesson 1: All goals in life point to the ultimate aim of happiness, which leads to success.

It's obvious that we all want to be happy. But have you ever think about why we think of it with such high regard?

Consider the fact that people acknowledge the goal of wanting to be happier as valid without question.

If you're playing a game and someone asks you why you're doing it, for example, you'd likely say because you find it enjoyable. That's a valid answer that the person asking will always accept regardless of whatever you're doing.

Any other response to the question "why are you doing that?" is just a step toward your ultimate goal to be happy. It doesn't matter if you're doing something for money, power, respect, or fame. Someone could ask you why you want those things and the answer will always be happiness.

Consider every other answer to the "why" question as simply a step on the way to having more joy. Each of those action steps is just a tool to get to the ultimate goal.

In the mind of the 18th-century British philosopher David Hume, happiness was the sole purpose of everything humans do, from the arts to science and even law.

When we do things we enjoy and are generally happy, we're also more likely to be successful at them and in life. Research from Sonja Lyubomirsky, Laura King, and Ed Diener shows that happier people have better relationships, health, and finances.

And if you want to learn more about why happiness leads to success, check out *The Happiness Advantage*.

Lesson 2: To have more joy, learn how to balance your view of the present and future.

There's a famous quote by Lao Tzu that proclaims that depression is living in the past, anxiety is living in the future, and peace comes in the present. While I mostly agree with this, I've learned it's vital to learn from the past and prepare for the future.

We all look at the importance of the future and present in different ways. There are four outlooks we can have:

- The first is people that hedonistically center their lives on finding as much pleasure in the here and now as possible. They have little to no concern for the future.
- Next comes nihilists, who exhibit no interest in life at all, whether now or later.
- Third, there are those that get stuck in the rat race of living for the future. They work hard and suffer now and seek the pleasure that will come at a later date.
- **Last, and best, is those who choose to find joy in the present and identify ways their actions now will benefit their future.**

Most often you're a mixture of all four of these types, but you should work toward being like the last to have the most happiness.

Society teaches you to be in the third group. From a young age you were taught to get good grades, then you'll get into college and be happy. But once in college there was just another rung to climb to "become happy." This constant postponement of pleasure just makes you miserable.

If you set goals and stay focused on being happier in the present, however, you can beat this destructive mentality.

Lesson 3: You will be happier if you nurture meaningful relationships.

Have you ever come home from work exhausted only to have a friend or family member invite you to dinner? Although you're tired, you go and by the end of the outing, you're filled with energy again.

Although it seems like this night out might contribute to your exhaustion, the social component of it actually boosts your happiness in the long-run.

Martin Seligman and Ed Diener showed this to be true in a study back in 2002. They wanted to know what made "very happy people" different from those with less joy in life.

The only major difference was that the happier people had deep connections with the family, friends, and significant others around them.

In other words, if you want to become the happiest, you need to focus on social connections.

When you share your life with people, you're letting them in to share their lives with you as well. This helps improve the meaning you find in life as you share their joys and sorrows too.

Romantic companions are another important source of happiness. Research by David Myers identified that one of the greatest predictors of happiness is an intimate life-long relationship.

This makes sense when you consider how much you can be your true self whenever someone around you loves you unconditionally. But find a balance between pleasure now and long-lasting connection for your relationship to positively impact your happiness.

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Happier Review

What I love most about *Happier* is how extensively it dives into the many facets of happiness in life. It excellently teaches the path to happiness in relationships, finances, and health, and also explains what goals have to do with joy. I've read and summarized a lot of books on this subject and this is one of my favorites.

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Who would I recommend the Happier summary to?

The 21-year-old college student that is trying to choose their major, the 46-year-old parent that wants to help their children see the truth about chasing success, and anyone that's feeling trapped by life and wants to find more purpose and joy.