**Articles**:

* Video Notes=> Robert J. Waldinger, M.D. Brigham and Women’s Hospital Harvard Medical School
* **Maslow’s**
  + **Academic Journal** JOURNAL OF PALLIATIVE MEDICINE Volume 9, Number 5, 2006 © Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/pdf/10.1089/jpm.2006.9.1120>
  + ‘
* **Happiness Network**
  + **Academic Journal** <https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/337/bmj.a2338.full.pdf>
* Article 1 notes=> Self awareness <https://thequintessentialmind.com/developing-self-awareness/>
* **Hedonic Treadmill** =><https://positivepsychology.com/hedonic-treadmill/>
  + **Academic Journal** <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11098-004-7817-y>
* **Epicurus Happiness** 
  + **Academic Journal** <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s10902-006-9036-z.pdf>
* 2 Article => Psychology of Money <https://www.collaborativefund.com/blog/the-psychology-of-money/>
* 3 Article => “How to love what you do” Paul graham.
  + <http://www.paulgraham.com/love.html>

Questions:

* Would you opt to live a life without pain? [hedonism => Maslow’s]

Quotes:

- "It's what you do in the dark, that gives you the light."

- "Motivation doesn't lead to hard work, hard work leads to motivation."

- "Money can't buy happiness, it can rent happiness."

- "Winning is the ability to fail and make a quick recovery."

- "Things going wrong isn't a rare thing - it's an ordinary thing that doesn't occur every day."

- "Actions may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action."

- "What you do, and how you do it, is much more important than how hard you do it."

**Storyboard of Presentation:**

Topics to cover: Hedonism, Money, Maslow’s, Personal Experience,

* Intro
  + A story about my own personal journey
* Hedonism
  + Introduce the idea and the concept
  + Explain the description of the concept
  + Find the faults and show the downfalls.
* Maslow’s
  + Introduce the idea again
  + Explain with a given example
  + Show why it fails
* Money
  + Talk about the 4 main points of the psychology of money
  + Show how it doesn’t benefit us
* Self-awareness
  + Why you need it
  + How you can get it
  + What comes up afterward?
* Epicurus
  + Stoicism and the philosophies
  + How it allows you to live life doing what you love.
* Synthesis
  + Joyful fulfillment and the ability to do what you love.
  + Have connections to your life
  + How I tried to exercise these ideas.

**Notes: On Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs**

***JOURNAL OF PALLIATIVE MEDICINE Volume 9, Number 5, 2006 © Mary Ann Liebert, Inc.***

I believe that after reading the ideas developed by Maslow’s hierarchy of needs this is my general conclusion and interpretations. Painting to represent this: Nighthawks (painting)

With the ranks of the hierarchy, a majority of these steps towards self-actualization is self achievable. Meaning it actually doesn’t require you to rely on others or rely on external measures to help achieve these last states. Anything below Safety and security is a choice. The above layers are a matter of mindfulness. Below security and physiological needs, reality dictates your well being. But anything above security is a matter of personal mindset and perception. For example, self-respect is a matter of changing your own perspectives and changing your mind. The higher you are on these steps, the more the problem has to do with your own mental game than it has to do with reality. Basic needs are almost entirely reality-driven, you know you are lacking basic needs if you have no food, water or shelter. In contrast, it is not as evident if people truly love and care about you. Love isn’t measurable as basic necessities and thus we can often choose to deny the love we receive or believe in a love that isn’t there. And so this requires perspective and a trained mindset.

Above security and physiological state, how you feel is 100% mindset, 0% reality. Ie: I chose not to be traumatized by the knife incident, but rather to use it as an opportunity to grow my mindset and better myself as a person.

I believe that there is a need to practice this change of perspectives in order to live a life where we are happy with our existence. This mindset change is seen in the paper when they conducted the case study on Frank’s life.

Level 3 and 4 depended on perspective changes and paradigm shifts made by Frank himself. This shift was externally supported by the practitioners but ultimately required Frank himself to realize what he hadn’t seen before.

*“At each stage of his illness, Frank began to express gratitude for the life and time that he had, in contrast to so many that he knew.”*

*“Frank comprehended his prognosis. He knew he was dying, yet that awareness somehow provided a deep, existential relief. “*

*Another instance of Frank’s movement toward self-actualization came from doing things he mistakenly believed he could no longer do*

**Hedonic Treadmill Notes Are We Forever Chasing Rainbows? :** [**https://positivepsychology.com/hedonic-treadmill/**](https://positivepsychology.com/hedonic-treadmill/)

Hedonic treadmill is the constant pursuit of pleasure and gratification from the actions you do. For example the chase for the fantasies you’ve dreamed of having. Example of such a house or car or the “american dream”.

The problem is that when obtaining such things don’t actually make you feel happier. That the “happiness boost” didn’t last that long or wasn’t as intense as you’d imagined.

* Each person has a happiness set point, which refers to one’s genetically determined predisposition for happiness.
* This set point for happiness is responsible for about 50% of the differences in happiness from person to person. [researcher Sonja Lyubomirsk]

*The theory of the hedonic treadmill states that regardless of what happens to people, their levels of happiness will eventually return to their baselines.* No matter what you do in life you will eventually average out to a baseline happiness. The catch is when you experience positive reinforcement for a long time you believe that that baseline has shifted up but in reality your expectations are higher than your reality. Thus the crash is hard.

Brickman and Campbell’s research [1971], studied two sets of people: One was a group of people who won large lottery prizes, and the other was a group of accident victims who were now paralyzed. The effects of happiness didn’t turn out to be long lasting.

**Hedonic cycles**. =>

* The set point is not neutral.
* Set points are individualized. We have multiple set points. Happiness can change. Individual adaptation

**Escaping the treadmill.**

An individual’s definition of an event, his or her interpretations, and their perspective is important to how someone feels.

Happy people tend to master the emotions and generate positive feelings from normally detrimental events. Unhappy individuals tend to dwell on the negative aspects of events

* Accept your emotions, including fear, sadness, and anxiety.
* Simplify your life. Focus on one thing.
* Find meaning and pleasure. Engage in goals you want to achieve
* Focus on the positive and be grateful.
* Increase the effort you put into your relationships

**Hedonism- Is It Possible to Become Happier? (And If So, How?)Kennon M. Sheldon and Sonja Lyubomirsky University of Missouri–Columbia 2 University of California, Riverside**

Interesting to note that not all factors actually relate to improving happiness. Even obvious measures such as money and wealth.

Infact, money doesn’t necessarily alleviate the problems one faces. It is true that poor nations suffer from low “happiness” levels but that is in part due to the political climates, and natural resource issues that make life difficult.

A big problem within the hedonic treadmill is the issues related to one’s ability to experience happiness. This experience is largely related to the person’s set point. Which is their baseline happiness which is determined by heritability. This is the ultimate reason as to why the cases of unhappiness is so difficult to solve. A majority of our experiences are rooted by biological needs.

This new issue is caused by our ability to adapt to our happiness levels when things change. We become quickly accustomed to the new “happier life” and it becomes our baseline lifestyle. It doesn’t really make us happier but makes us stay the same.

*“summarizing what we have observed so far: that about10% of the variance in SWB can be explained by relatively static demo-graphic and circumstantial factors and that about 50% of the variance can be explained by genetics”*

This is an important statistic in terms of the factors affecting our state of well being. These are circumstance, intentional activity and set point. Set point is a baseline that we always have and

SWBt = β0(set point) + β1(effects of circumstances) +β2(effects of activity) + error

These are the important traits for people to follow in terms of alleviating issues. Interesting take. Might use later.

This is interesting as it relates to the concepts in maslow’s hierarchy of needs. The idea that a majority of the problems within our lives are internal and part of our own perspectives. Circumstance doesn’t dictate our happiness as much as we think. The issue is when we let our circumstances dictate our perspective.

Yes, it may be possible to become a happier person, and emerging research is supplying concrete and experimentally validated information on how this can be accomplished.

**Notes on Epicurus Research Paper : Happiness in the Garden of Epicurus**

**The Tetrapharmakos**

“The four part remedy”

Epicurus saw everything as a plague in our society, Thus he attempted to cure it and an attempt to answer that age old question “what makes people happy.” Here’s what he came up with.

**It is not hard to obtain the good things in life.**

Take for example the air you breathe or the water you drink. It is not that difficult to satisfy those needs. If you’re thirsty, drink some water. Done. If you’re dying for air. Just breathe. You need food? Just eat. It is not difficult to meet these needs, yet we so often overlook these little things in life. Epicurus’ great revelation is realizing that the truly necessary things in life are quite easily satisfied. The things that are super difficult to obtain are simply unnecessary. We don’t really need a new car or mansion, so why bother trying to obtain them? We have everything around us to keep us alive and well, we don’t actually rely on lavish things to keep us alive and happy.

Do not work for money. You shouldn’t be excited to work for the pay cheque at the end of the week but work for the impact you can make in our society. The most fulfilling thing we can do is waking up each day and knowing what you’re doing today matters.

**Don’t let death scare you.**

We’re all terrified of it. I am too. We often live our lives terrified of this uncertainty, but we really shouldn’t. Instead, death should be comforting because we know that life is limited. Pain is limited by death and thus we can never truly feel an infinite amount of pain (which is good) and thus we should be comforted by our limitations in life.

**God Is Nothing To Fear.**

Traditional religion gets us to revere those above us, albeit some take the form of a God or divine substance within our universe. We, humans, often beat ourselves over the fear of displeasing the heavens and thus we bring upon much stress and anxiety into our lives.

Epicurus believed that we should be aware that we can make no amends with the Gods and that any attempt at pleasing the heavens above makes no logical sense.Epicurus believed that there is nothing that we can do to actually influence the Gods above and thus we shouldn’t stress over our imperfections.

**Things that are difficult are easy to endure.**

Things can never get infinitely difficult. Epicurus understood that you can always choose to end your life and cut off the pain. Despite however long lasting your struggles maybe there is always a limit as to how much you have to endure.

**Doing What You Love - Advice From Paul Graham**

**Main Points**

- Find What You Love Doing

- Do What You Love

- Prestige Doesn't Matter

**Find What You Love Doing**

*We’ve been told three lies as a child.* Growing work is worse than school work. School work is not real work. Many people lie to you when they say they love their work.

Doing what you love doesn’t mean do what you love at this moment. Work that you love must be better than doing nothing, but it also shouldn’t be what you want to do at this very second. Work that you love should be something you’re willing to do even without being paid. Work CAN be FUN.

To do something well you have to like it. This is why most people lie when you ask them if they like their job, they want to be perceived as skilled

**Find what you love doing.** For many people, it's easy to make a living. So the question becomes "how do I make an original contribution to the world?” We don’t need to keep our basic needs instead we should focus on what we actually want to do.

The greatest productivity tip is to work on what you love. Then you won't require much discipline to get great work done.

**Do What You Love**

**Use the Craftman's Mindset:** Always be producing. Do you really want to become a programmer? Best way to find out is by making software. Additionally, you'll make some cool stuff along the way, and this is what criteria most employers/universities look for. "What have you made?"

**Prestige Doesn't Matter**

If you let prestige guide you, you'll end up doing work you don't enjoy. A struggling poet will have way more prestige after being published in The New Yorker, but they'll have the same skill as they did the day before and after. Prestige makes you like the idea of doing something more than actually doing it. If the job didn’t suck there is no need to make it prestigious.

Do work that you admire and something that you can look back with fulfilment and say that everything was all worth it.

Ambitious people are tempted and drawn into prestige. It makes them feel like its worth while while it probably isn’t.

Money

Money leads people astray. People say that you can’t do what you love because someone has to do unpleasant jobs. That's not true. The only time in Canadian history where you’re actually forced to work for something nobody really likes was during the wars where conscription was in place. We merely encourage people to do unpleasant jobs with money.

**Quotes**

"Do a good job at whatever you're doing, if you don't like it. Then at least you'll know you're not using dissatisfaction as an excuse for being lazy. Perhaps more importantly, you'll get into the habit of doing things well."

**Dynamic spread of happiness in a large social network:**

**longitudinal analysis over 20 years in the Framingham**

**Heart Study**

The research paper conducted a multi-decade long study on happiness and how people develop and how this has shaped their development over time. This was a grand sociological study on the connections between individuals and the network of relationships connected to each node.

The insight discussed most in the paper was the use of alters and egos. Altars were those that affected the ego and egos were the prime subjects at question. We study the behaviour of egos based on the effects given by the alters. Each alter acts as a node and the connection represents an edge or social tie. This relationship forms a system of multiple egos within the group.

The end result of the study was that friendships were the biggest predictors of one’s happiness and also their previous emotional state. It is calculated that almost 25% of one’s chance of happiness was dependent on the emotional states of those around him or her by a degree of 3. Degree 3 separation means anyone further in the social circle meant that they weren’t able to have a meaningful effect on the ego’s ability to be happy.

This is seen in the following:

*Longitudinal statistical models suggest that clusters of happiness result from the spread of happiness and not just a tendency for people to associate with similar individuals. A friend who lives within a mile (about 1.6 km) and who becomes happy increases the probability that a person is happy by 25%*

*An ego is 45% (4% to 122%) more likely to be happy if a friend who was examined in the past half year becomes happy. In contrast, the effect is only 35% (6% to 77%) for friends who were examined within the past year, and it declines and ceases to be significant at greater periods of time.*

The rest of the study focused on the statistical analysis of the data collected over nearly 70 years of research. The main regulator of happiness they used was the CES-D scale for happiness.

**The Psychology of Money: Key Notes**

* If you want success, figure out the *price* you have to pay for it
  + Be willing to pay that emotional price if you truly want it, or not
* Being normal is a choice (whether it's with money, emotional cost, or time)
* The more average you are, the more people you can be with
* Be intentional with time- the things you want to enjoy should align with what you want!
* Impress people with good traits
* The paradox of wealth: the guy flexing with the Ferrari to other people doesn’t make the other people look up to him, he makes the people imagine themselves in his Ferrari
* People keep trying to upgrade themselves to the next level of wealth, only to reach Bill gates level and THEN GIVE IT ALL AWAY
* We tend to see wealth: people who want to be a millionaire actually want to spend a million dollars. THAT’S LITERALLY BEING THE OPPOSITE OF A MILLIONAIRE
* Whatever you will go all-in on, is what you think the world should look like in 5 years: a vision.
* Your personal experiences make 0.00008% of what’s happening in the world, but makes up likely ~80% of how you think the world works.
* Knowing you know nothing + active mindset + curiosity = become a learning machine??
* Not everyone in the position you want to get to is smart or were super intentional by getting there. Be aware of getting people’s winning lottery tickets vs their winning play-by-plays
* Don’t over admire specific people, and underestimate other people (including yourself!)
* Bubbles are dominantly affected by psychology: whether it’s housing, crypto, stocks, these are often ruled by raising and falling levels of serotonin, dopamine, and adrenaline.
* Certainty comes with competition
* Popularity is inversely proportional to opportunity
* Compounding is an irrefutable consistency that makes money.

Notes

**Hedonism:** The constant pursuit of bliss and pleasure

**Thought Experiment**

Imagine you’re a tribal kid in the Congo, and suddenly you’re transformed into your current body. How would you feel?

A: Extremely grateful! Superpowered! *Holy shit I have everything!*

**Feeling and State**

State: The subjective place where your life is at a given moment

Feeling: How you feel at a given point at a time.

**No matter what your state is, whether living in the Congo or a Bridal path apartment, you can feel extreme happiness or extreme unhappiness.**

Gratitude = The delta between your current state and your conceivable worst-case scenario.

Unhappiness and entitlement come when you just look up and only conceive of a “better state”.

Entitlement = The delta between Conceives best scenario and Current situation

Ambition is pursuing your best state while having gratitude and excitement (Looking back and appreciating your worst-case scenario)

This is why social media breeds entitlement: It provides you a high conceivable best scenario and makes yourself loathing of your current scenario.

Look at people’s worst-case scenarios instead.

**Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs:**

Theory: Anything below Safety and security is a choice. The above layers are a matter of mindfulness. Below security and physiological needs, how you feel is 25% mindset, 75% reality

Above security and physiological state, how you feel is 100% mindset, 0% reality. Ie: I chose not to be traumatized by the knife incident, but rather to use it as an opportunity to grow my mindset and better myself as a person.

**Joyful Fulfillment = Being on a journey to your better scenario, while being grateful for your conceivable worst-case scenario and being appreciative of your current scenario.**

To get into the highest emotional bliss state, people need these emotions:

* **Love**
* Belonging
* **Gratitude**
* **Accomplishment through struggle**
* Impacting others

Activate ways to fill your life with these emotions.

To get into the lowest emotional bliss state, people need these emotions:

* Envy
* Abandoned
* Illness and physical pain (Biohack your immune system!!!)
* Ruin
* **Fear**
* **Regret**
* **Disappointment**
* Death
* Hopeless
* Resentment
* **Anxiety and Stress**
* **Insecurity**

All our emotional baselines are relatively the same since emotions are chemicals. But sensitivity to them is the big difference makers. Your emotional baseline can’t always be super high, but IT CAN be super low all the time.

**Perceived reality vs Actual reality:** Insecurity, anxiety, fear, they all produce a perceived reality and products of a perceived reality like “Failure”, “Embarrassment”, “Anxiety”

REALIZE THAT YOUR REALITY ISN’T NORMAL. THIS IS CRAZY AWESOME! YOUR PERCEIVED REALITY IS WHAT WILL GIVE YOU THE UNHAPPINESS.

**Tools vs Crutch**

Depending on your character, your mindset, and how intentional you are, things can be a tool or a crutch.

**Investment vs Enjoyment**

Your ideal state is to enjoy your investment time. A lot of times, the initial time spent on investment is going to suck (ie: starting to work out for the first 3 months). Whatever you want to work on should be the intersection of investment and enjoyment.

**5 Steps to Self Awareness (Reflection)**

Print out the next reading, it gives you so much value. Try out printing it and writing up the notes as you go along.

Knowledge ---> Awareness ---> Control ---> Power

“Humans will always seek to belong, and this lust for tribalism can yield friction in society.”

Thought: Is the desire to seek belonging and self-awareness inversely proportional?

Is the need for belonging evolutionary?

* Self-awareness can be the context for belonging
* Or you can be completely unaware and seek belonging that way

Prefrontal Cortex: The part of the brain that’s LEAST susceptible for genetics, and fully grows AT AGE ~25

**This part of the brain is most shaped by the environment you're in.** This is why younger people struggle with:

* Moderating Social behavior
* Planning complex cognitive behavior
* Personality expression
* Decision making

What the heck can happen if you invest in developing your prefrontal cortex at this age?? What will the compound effect look like? Have the mindset of super powering yourself, and doing what you can to get there.

A key thing to note is that the understanding that you know nothing, is what allows you to learn new things and try new things. Knowing that you know nothing and internalizing it, helps you become less dumb.

* No strong base of insecurity
* The desire to understand

**Insecurity is the biggest barrier to greatness for most people.**

Plato Reflection

* You can live your entire life not realizing that some of your thoughts

How many of “your own” thoughts aren’t really your own at all? How many of these thoughts are seeded by other people?

Knowledge ---> Awareness ---> Control ---> Power

Self-knowledge + awareness without action is useless. When you don’t take action, do you even have power over yourself?

* Set frequent awareness reminder
* How many times a day are you aware of the moment and have self-control?

This can be translated into everything from how you fiddle with pens, to how you speak, work, treat people, study, etc.

One of the best things to start being aware of: (in order)

* Posture
* Fiddling
* Words
* Actions
* Behaviors
* Thoughts

Without optimizing yourself, you can’t optimize for anything else truly.

New mentality: Impress yourself, impress each other. **Be anti-fragile.** For high-quality actions, KNOW THE TIME SCALE REQUIRED