

The Happiness Myth - Jennifer Hecht (Quotations)

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Bu kitaba başladım ama bitirmedim. Yazarın derdi, *mutluluk edebiyatından* çok, mutlu insanları mutsuz etmeye çalışmış gibi geldi. Bir de insicam yok, kafasına estiği gibi yazmış. Pek de editör dostu değil herhalde, düzeltmemişler. Veya düzeltmemişler çünkü düzeltmek için kitabın yeniden yazılması gerek.

Notlara göre 70 sayfa kadar okumuşum. Aklımda bir şey kalmadı. Aşağıdaki notlara bakıp hatırlamaya çalıştım ama yok, kitabın bir fikri yoktu, *mutlu olmak mı iyidir, olmamak mı* diye sorsak, ona bile net bir cevabı yok anladığım kadarıyla. Belki yaza yaza sonunda net bir cevap veriyordur ama oraya kadar da ben sabredemedim. Okunacak dünya kadar kitap var.

“Be not righteous over much,” cautioned Koheleth, “neither make thyself over wise: why should thou die before thy time?” (page 18)

“The attainment of enlightenment from ego’s point of view is extreme death, the death of the self, the death of me and mine, the death of the watcher. It is the ultimate and final disappointment.” (page 19)

For instance: coming to know yourself can make you vulnerable, controlling your desires can make you passionless, taking what’s yours gives you tremendous responsibility, and remembering death can make you too detached to be of full use to yourself and the people around you. (page 20)

Bertrand Russell said that he found the happiness of parenthood greater than any other he had experienced. (page 21)

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience of 1990 argued persuasively that people are happiest when engaged in tasks that they get “lost” in, where time just flows: the talented cellist, creating her own bliss. (page 21)

[P]eople who act with virtue are certain to come into happiness and, very likely, come into money as well. (page 22)

Isn't it possible to be a decent, gentle, productive person without a jot of philosophy or self-examination? The Socratic answer is resolutely no; the examination of oneself and one's manner of living is the only good life and only cause of happiness. (page 22)

How do you do philosophy? Discuss it with others, write about it, get locked away with it. The last is the least effective, but it cannot be entirely rejected, because it does work for some people, some of the time. (page 24)

Someone made you feel some way about being on time; perhaps you were forced to be too responsible too young, or perhaps you were humiliated to be left waiting and vowed to avoid it. If (page 26)

Jung put it this way: "Nothing has a stronger influence on children, than the unlived life of the parents." (page 27)

It is exhausting to be heavily defended. (page 29)

When we feel safe, when we feel we are with someone who basically agrees with us about the symbolic universe, we let down our defenses, confident that our companion understands the symbols that are usually walled up, and will act appropriately. (page 29)

"The secret to happiness is this: let your interests be as wide as possible, and let your reactions to the things and personas that interest you be as far as possible friendly rather than hostile." (page 33)

We should fear our desires "more than poisonous snakes, savage beasts, dangerous robbers or fierce conflagrations." (page 34)

Indulge the mind with its desires and you lose the benefit of being born a man; check it completely and there is nothing you will be unable to accomplish." (page 34)

Virtue as a route to happiness cannot be discounted, but it has its difficulties. (page 35)

Epicurus did not go so far as to say that virtue was for suckers, but he did say that politics and trying to change the world was largely a fool's errand. (page 35)

[B]ut we will here note that it is possible to shut down these desires almost completely, and that doing so is surpassingly liberating. (page 37)

But in the long term, for most people, shutting down your desires is not worth it. (page 37)

All our remembered bards of rejecting fame are, by definition, remembered. (page 38)

[S]ecure this present time to yourself: for those who rather pursue posthumous fame do not consider that the men of tomorrow will be exactly like these whom they cannot bear now." (page 39)

Even if you cannot find any other reason to meet rudeness with generosity, Spinoza has told us one that is hard to reject: you will win in the long run without almost any need for luck. (page 41)

"[H]appy people don't need to have fun," (page 44)

The whole line is *Carpe diem quam minimum credula postero* ("Pluck the day, never trust the next"), (page 45)

Seize the day, yes, but do not live as if every day is your last. Live as you wish you had lived yesterday. (page 45)

It is a bad doctor who explains to patients that a doctor is just someone who once went to medical school, and that a feeling of playing dress-up never quite goes away. (page 45)

“All those things at which you wish to arrive by a circuitous road, you can have now, if you do not refuse them to yourself.” (page 47)

“This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of Nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.” (page 52)

[M]y insistence that you can win: you can. Almost everyone who really tries is able to see some of their goals come to fruition. Just showing up really is a great proportion of success. (page 57)

(The only additional secret is this: when you do show up, don’t announce that you are better than everyone there, or worse than them.) (page 57)

“Set thyself in motion and do not look about thee to see if any one will observe it; nor yet expect Plato’s Republic: but be content if the smallest thing goes on well, and consider such an event to be no small matter. For who can change men’s opinions?” (page 58)

Pay attention to living fully and you won’t worry about death. (page 62)

The ancient philosophers always said that remembering death took active meditations and gestures. (page 63)

A lazy person could not even read the monumental *À la recherche du temps perdu*, let alone write it. The man made choices about how he wanted to fill his days. (page 65)

Again, the way out of this happiness trap is to teach yourself to remember death, a long and laborious process, and then, though it will be almost as difficult, teach yourself to forget death again. (page 68)