

# The Happiness Plunge

## Deciding to Be Happy



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## Introduction

Thank you for signing up for my newsletter. I have provided this free e-book as a token of my gratitude and appreciation for you showing an interest in following my adventure.

## Who this book is for

If you are looking for a formula to transform your life into one that is happier and healthier, this book is for you. This formula is not a cure for depression. It is for people determined to make sustainable changes and pursue the goal of a happier and healthier life through hard work. It is for people who want to live up to their full potential.

The grass is only greener on the other side if you water it and tend to it. This book will show you how to make the grass greener.

Though there is a career-focus throughout the book, your Happiness Plunge may have nothing to do with work or your career. Maybe you want to take the plunge into a healthier life by starting to exercise, or you want to start some kind of group in your community. Whatever the case may be, you can go through the same process presented here. Just know that at its core, the process is about transforming your entire life starting with your career.

## What to expect

Hard work. There's no other way to say it. This will require a lot of hard work and effort on your part. It's not torture! It is soul searching and preparation for a better life.

You also need to expect for this process to take some time. You need to have patience even when you have figured out which direction to take your life in and are more excited and motivated than you've been in years. Be patient! The goal in sharing this process is to empower you to make the changes necessary in your life to be happier and live up to your full potential.

There are four steps to the Happiness Plunge: who am I, planning, taking the plunge, and giving back. We'll explore each step in the coming pages.

## How to get started

By downloading this book, you've already shown that you are interested in changing your life. You are probably already thinking about new possibilities and new opportunities. Great! I am laying out a structured way to approach changing your life, or a formula to follow.

## Theory

### The Three Pillars

I believe happiness is derived from achieving the right balance among three pillars: health, love, and purpose. This book will focus mostly on the purpose pillar, but surely creating a life better suited for you will reduce stress in the long-run and be better for your health.



Think of these three pillars as the adjustable-length legs of a tripod. Life is one big game of adjusting the legs of this tripod to achieve stability amidst a constantly changing environment. Sometimes there is calm and stability, but then there are mini and major earthquakes that strike requiring constant adjustment to achieve balance.

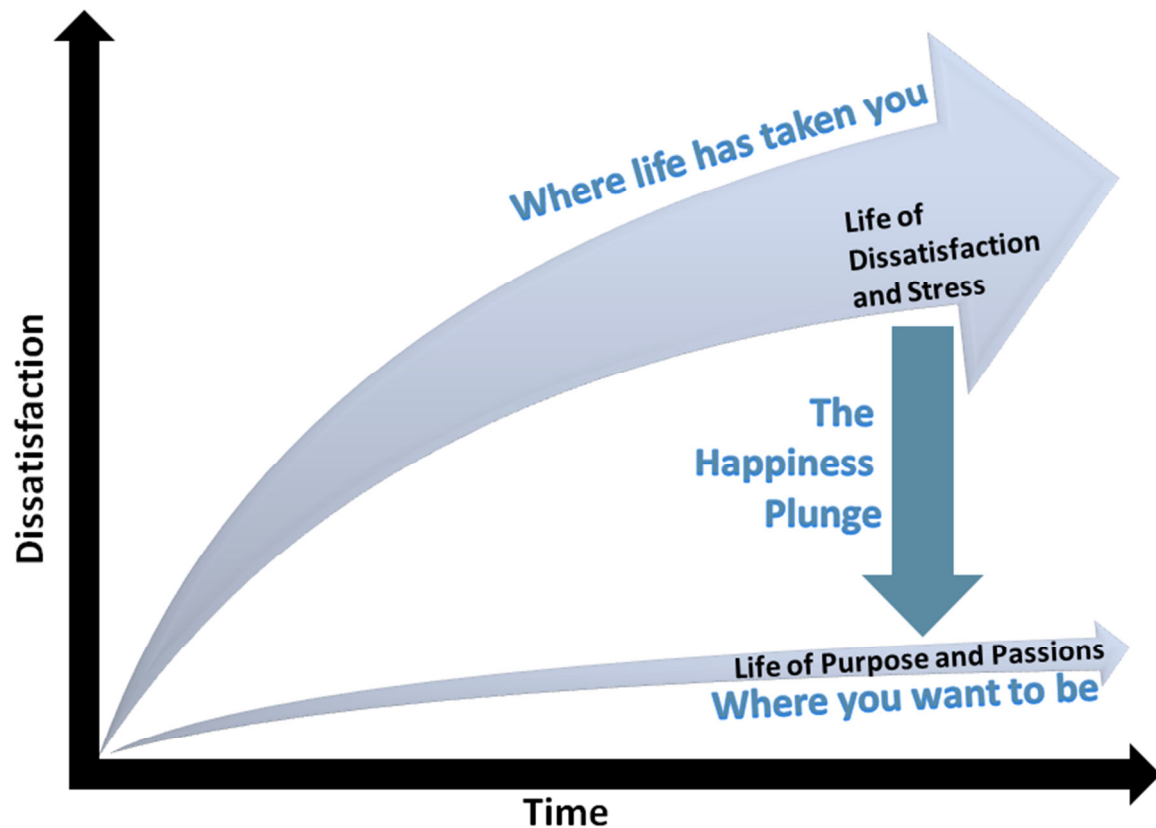
The more you know yourself, the better you can adjust to these changing conditions. That's why the foundation of The Happiness Plunge is built on getting to know yourself better.

### Satisfaction

The key to being happy in life is being satisfied with what you have. Yes, easier said than done. As human beings, we constantly want to improve ourselves and our surroundings. There is nothing wrong with that. But society often puts pressure on us from birth to strive for the wrong things – acquisition of wealth, status, and power.

Obviously, one needs money to survive. But the problem with striving for wealth, status, and power is that there is no finish line. When do you have “enough” wealth, status, or power? It's an ever-changing goalpost and it's easy to get wrapped up in focusing exclusively on arbitrary targets at the expense of the other important things in your life.

The following diagram shows the gap that develops between the life we want to live and the life we have. The life we have is usually far more complicated than it needs to be, hence the thickness of the top arrow. We often know what we are passionate about as children, but we dismiss those passions to be more “practical” and “responsible” adults. That is why the divergence between the simplified life based on our passions and the unfulfilling, complicated life we follow happens quite early on. The Happiness Plunge lets you switch gears and live a more satisfying life.



Now let's get the Happiness Plunge process underway!

## The Happiness Plunge Process

### Step 1 – Who Am I?



These questions are not in any particular order, but they all fit together. They are extremely basic, but rarely do we actively think about them. Forcing yourself to consider these questions and the answers they generate will give you deeper insight into yourself and what your new life/career should be.

#### Why am I here?

This need not be a deep philosophical question, but it gets you thinking about what your purpose is in life. If you have a job, you could explain why you exist within the company. You could explain your role within your family. But what is your big picture purpose in life?



If you don't have an answer for this, don't worry. It is perfectly normal. We are not taught to think like this. But start thinking about it now. Your new life will be built on a foundation made of your purpose and passions.

### **What are my passions?**

What are you passionate about in life? What inspires you and gives you energy?

Your passions form the basis of your new life after you take the plunge. Jobs are often inherently demotivating because they don't match your passions. If you are passionate about basketball, you can watch games season after season and not tire of it. The same can be true of your career.

Write down what your passions are. It may take time to figure out, so be patient with yourself. If nothing comes to mind immediately, don't get frustrated. They are there; we are just not used to asking ourselves these questions.

To get started, ask yourself what would make you excited to get out of bed on a Saturday morning? Whatever that is, it's probably a passion!

### **What am I doing?**

What are you doing with your life? Do you like your job? Do you like your career trajectory? What about your personal life? Are you doing the things in your personal life that you'd like to be doing? Does your job or career prevent you from doing the things you like or the things you are passionate about?

If you know why you are here and what your purpose is, it may not fit with what you are doing. If this is the case, you can start to think of ways to align what you are doing to your purpose.

The longer your life drifts from your purpose and passions, the more your dreams seem unattainable and the more dissatisfied you are with life. The diagram on the previous page shows this visually.

### **What are my goals in life?**

What do you want to accomplish and experience in life? What is your life's motto?

I would caution against arbitrary targets like earning \$1,000,000. Rather, strive for big picture things like family, traveling somewhere, living somewhere, attaining a degree or certification, learning a language, starting a group or organization, etc.

If earning \$1,000,000 is your goal, then ask yourself what you'd do if you achieved that. Would the other problems in your life disappear if you achieved this? What new problems would striving for and achieving this cause? And most importantly, what would your new goal be upon achieving this? \$5,000,000? The cycle would never end. Instead, focus on fulfilling goals that add to your purpose and passions.

### **What do I not like about my current life?**

In order to create a new life you have to understand what it is about your current life that leaves you dissatisfied. Is there too much stress? Are you not challenged enough?

Then you have to ask yourself if a new life would fix these things. Would it really, or are you just escaping from something?

### No pain no gain

Really let these questions percolate in your mind. Do not rush through them. The recipe for the perfect life you are after is within you. You have to ask the right questions and allow the answers, some of which may be surprising, to bubble up to the surface.

### Evolution

As you put more and more effort and thought into answering these questions, your understanding of yourself and who you are will increase. As this self-awareness increases, your ideas and preconceived notions will evolve and you'll find you yourself more and more ready to take the next step.

### Takeaways

The most important part of this step of the Happiness Plunge is what you discover within yourself. Some of your answers may be unexpected and surprising. That's good! And the more patience and time you give yourself in this process, the more confident you'll feel moving on to the next phase in the process.

## Step 2 – Planning



Ok, great. You know why you are here, have a purpose, and know your passions. Now what? Now you need to figure out what to do!

I advocate building a life built upon your passions and purpose since they will supply you with an unlimited supply of motivation. Gone can be the days of pouring your effort into a career you feel no passion for. But you need to put the pieces together to create this new life.

The actual path you take to pursue your passions are completely unique and individual, but below are some things to consider as you plan your journey into a happier and healthier life.

### Some things to consider

#### Family

If you have a family they will be directly affected by your Happiness Plunge. It is important to involve them in your planning and decision process.

#### Finances

Your planning will have to incorporate your financial obligations. If you are planning a new career, this may mean being more patient as you transition out of one job and into another so as to minimize the financial impact. It may also mean simplifying life so you can afford a new life with less income; can you handle that?

*Responsibilities*

Everyone has different responsibilities. If others are depending on you for any reason, you need to take that into account as you plan.

*Health*

Your health is important and you may need to slow things down if you are working full-time, have a family, and are trying to plan your Happiness Plunge. It can still be done, but give yourself more time to plan. Rome wasn't built in a day, and your new life won't be either.

*Sustainability*

Your passion and excitement for your new plan/life may be infinite and unending, but is your plan sustainable? Can you make a living from your idea if you are planning a career change? Can you dedicate the time and effort over the coming years to this if it is a side project or hobby? Does your new path offer the ability to evolve and change a bit over time, which may be necessary to keep the fire burning inside you?

*Time Horizon*

There is no time like the present, but look at the big picture. It took a lifetime to get where you are right now in life. Change takes time as well. I know I keep saying it, but be patient and be realistic when figuring out a timeline. If you have 20 or 40 more years to live, does it really make a huge deal if this process takes one year instead of six months?

*Failure*

Can you handle failure? Even though you go through the steps and design a life based on your passions, will you be able to handle it should things not work out? You should not plan for failure, but a simple contingency plan should be thought of. The depth of your contingency plan should fit your responsibilities. And realize failing can be a happy experience. If you run a marathon and come in 2,534th place, do you get upset for not being the winner, or relish in the glory of completing a marathon? Taking action requires courage and you must never forget that.

*Success*

Can you handle success? You might think that of course you can. But look at all the successful people in politics, business, and entertainment who seem to have it all yet confirm they are depressed. Or worse, you see a story on the news that they committed some crime or acted out in a destructive way. Success can be hard to manage and you should think about how you'll stay grounded and focused – especially if you take on some leadership role.

You should also define what success means to you, whether financial, spiritual, or metaphysical. We tend to measure success against wealth, power, and status. But maybe you are taking the Happiness Plunge to spend more time with your family and pour your professional efforts into something you passionate about.

*Satisfaction*

What level of success will leave you feeling satisfied? Again, there is nothing wrong with striving for success. If you are passionate about something and make a career out of it, chances are you want to maximize your success to the greatest extent possible. You'll see the world being a better place with your product or service. But set realistic goals and be happy and grateful for what you achieve. Treat victory and defeat both as a gifts.



And simply being the change you want to see in the world, to borrow a phrase from Gandhi, will make the world around you a better place.

### Rejection

Prepare yourself for rejection. Sure, rejection is expected when starting a new venture. You will be very excited and full of energy when you start planning your new life. Those around you will be happy for you and encouraging. But don't expect that to last. Be prepared to have no support from those around you for your new plans. If people around you are supportive over the months or years it takes to plan and take the plunge, great. But that won't be the case for everyone and you have to be prepared to dive into this headfirst on your own. And when that initial momentum runs out, the momentum to carry you forward must come from within.

### Self-confidence

When you start sharing your plans for a new life, some people in your life may not understand why you are making the change in the first place. Once that is explained, if your plan is outside the norm then there is another hurdle to cross. Don't let others affect you. Stick to your plans, and let their doubt fuel your motivation for success.

This list is neither comprehensive nor meant to scare you; it is a reality check that what you are planning to do is a life-changing decision. It takes a lot of courage to do something like this and that's why it's important you put as much effort into planning your Happiness Plunge as possible.

### Sacrifice

Nothing in life is free, so you should be prepared to make sacrifices to see your new life come to fruition. This could come in the form of financial sacrifice, where you simplify your life to pursue a not-so-lucrative passion. It could mean less sleep if you are juggling a full-time job, family responsibilities, and planning your plunge. It could also mean the loss of some relationships if some friends or family can't accept your decision. Mentally prepare for the worst, hope for the best, and above all stay positive.

## Step 3 – Taking The Plunge



So, you've done the hard work and figured out what your passions are and opened the dialog between your head and your heart. Then you planned how to make a career, hobby, or lifestyle embodying these passions. Now it's time to take the plunge!

If you've planned properly, this is the easy part. It's also the most exciting part. Certainly unexpected curveballs will come your way, but you feel like nothing can stop you or derail your plans.

Congratulations!

### Now what?

How did you define success for yourself before you started this process? Is it feeling happy? Is it pursuing your dream? Changing careers? If you achieved these things it can

be difficult to live in a post-success world. What are you striving for now that you reached your goals?

That is the beauty of this process. When you reach deep inside yourself, pursue your passions, and live life with a purpose, you need only remember what got you started down this path in the first place to be rejuvenated.

The experience you've just gone through was intense and difficult. Pat yourself on the back for that. But once you start implementing your plans and achieving success, you may find that you miss the intensity of the planning phase. The adrenaline rush of coming up with ideas and working through them can be addicting. Take that excess energy and pour it into your current tasks. Or, perhaps more importantly, pour that energy into the things in your life you have neglected or scarified to get you where you are now. If everything has worked out, you should have more energy. Being dissatisfied with life takes a lot of energy and is a magnet for negativity.

In continuing with the same theme, you have to keep motivated. Things may not have turned out exactly how you thought they would, but make the most of it. You started this journey for a reason, and it's the journey that's important, not the destination. Even if you fell short of your goals, better to shoot for the stars and end up on the moon than to do nothing at all. Also, no one said you couldn't repeat the process. If things didn't work out perfectly, go back to the beginning and reassess everything, or go back to planning and generate new ideas. Just don't give up or lose patience.

## Step 4 – Giving Back



If you have gone through this process and achieved success, you now have the tools to help others around you who are looking to transform their lives. Most people aren't living up to their full happiness potential and/or professional potential. But they have no idea how to change, or that there are other options out there.

You have a responsibility now to go out and help these people – but again, only if they are looking for the guidance and help. As mentioned earlier, being the change you want to see in the world will make the world around you a better place. The more people living up to their full potential, the more problem-solvers there are in the world working to make things better.

## Share Your Story

Having unlocked some secrets in life by going against the norm and blazing your own path, it's also important that you impress upon others, particularly children, that they really can do anything they put their mind to. The teenage years need not be the period in life where the dreams of being an astronaut, artist, or president go to waste. Encourage young people that they can accomplish anything – using your own life story as an example if need be. Your story may be the one held on to as proof anything is possible.

You should also share your story with the community on the site! You can submit your story at [www.HappinessPlunge.com/submit-your-story/](http://www.HappinessPlunge.com/submit-your-story/) so we can all benefit from your experience and be inspired by your story.

## Conclusion

It is my sincere hope that this e-book offers an empowering framework and step-by-step process you can follow to change your life for the better. It is generic enough to apply to almost anyone. It should offer some inspiration that you can then adapt and mold to your unique set of circumstances. The process itself is quite easy and logical. The devil is in the details.

In lieu of adding more pages here explaining how I developed and implemented this process in my own life, I would encourage you to visit my website to learn more about my own Happiness Plunge, the process I went through, and the happier, more purposeful life I've created for myself.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!



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