

How to Get the Most Out Of 'The Happiness Trap'

Reading the Book

There are two ways to read the book. You can either work through it slowly and steadily, doing the exercises as you go. Or you can read it from cover to cover very rapidly, and then go back and work through it at your leisure. You can also enhance the exercises in the book by using the free online resources at

http://www.thehappinesstrap.com/free_resources

Stuck or Confused?

If you ever get stuck or confused, I'd suggest you join the Yahoo list serve, entitled 'ACT for the Public':

http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/ACT_for_the_Public/join

There's no cost involved. You can post emails to the group if ever you are confused, or concerned, or just bogged down – and you will quickly receive supportive responses from other members of the public and/or from the many therapists (including myself) who are also on the list.

Prioritize Your Health and Wellbeing

If you are a typical reader, then you are already a very busy person. You are juggling multiple demands and rarely have any time left over for yourself. Thus, if you want this book to make a real difference in your life, you will have to put your health and wellbeing above some of the other demands upon your time. Can you schedule in some time for reading? Can you schedule in some time for practicing the exercises? Even 30 minutes a day to read and/or practice can make a huge difference. Are you willing to give up 30 minutes of TV or other time-eating activities?

Practice

Whoever said "Practice makes perfect" was lying. But practice does lead to improvement. Like any new skills, the exercises and strategies in this book do require practice – they do not come naturally, or magically happen simply as a result of reading. And like any new skill, the more you practice it, the easier it becomes and the more naturalistic.

Be Patient

Be patient with yourself. As you work through the book, there are times when you will inevitably screw up, fail, and forget things. This is because you are a human being, not a saint or a guru or a superhero. So please, allow yourself permission to be human. And give yourself as much time as you need to get a good handle on your new skills.

Consider Using a CD or MP3 Recording

The CDs and MP3 recordings available from www.thehappinesstrap.com have been specifically designed for use with this book. They will substantially enhance the benefits of the book for you. Mindfulness skills are much easier to develop initially when you have a voice guiding you.

Repetition

I intended The Happiness Trap to be the sort of book that you read not just once, but again and again. My hope is that after you've been through it once, you repeatedly revisit it. The small chapters make it an ideal book for dipping into.

Working With a Coach or Therapist:

While The Happiness Trap is primarily written as a self-help book for use on your own, it is also a valuable adjunct to therapy and coaching. Indeed the book flows along, chapter by chapter, in much the same way as you might typically work with a coach or therapist. If your therapist or coach has done some training in ACT they will be familiar with many of the exercises and metaphors in the book, but probably not all of them, so it is a good idea if they read the book too.

You can use the book as an adjunct in two main ways:

1. You can read a chapter or two (or three) before each session, then discuss in session how the reading applies to you, and then practice the relevant exercises during the session.
2. You can read relevant chapters after a session, to build on what you have experienced or learned during the session.

Whichever way you do it, the worksheets from the free resources section can be very helpful; use them as you are reading the relevant chapter.

To Find an ACT Therapist

If you want to find an ACT therapist in Australia, [click here](#)

If you want to find an ACT therapist in USA, UK and other countries, [click here](#)

*I hope you enjoy reading it and I trust you'll find it helpful
Cheers, Russ Harris*