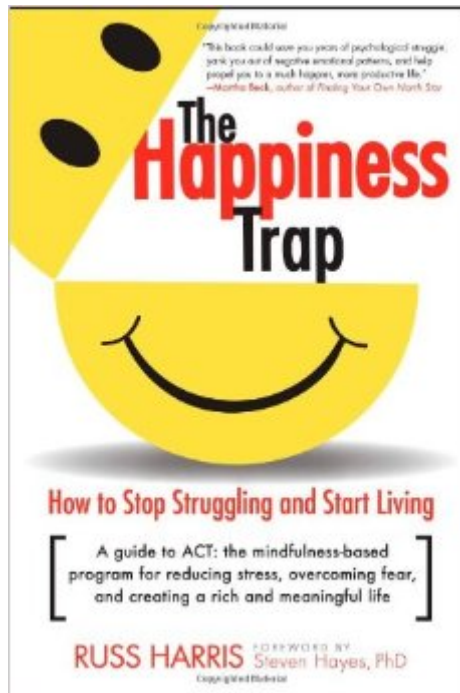


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# The Happiness Trap: How To Stop Struggling And Start Living: A Guide To ACT



## Synopsis

Are you, like millions of Americans, caught in the happiness trap? Russ Harris explains that the way most of us go about trying to find happiness ends up making us miserable, driving the epidemics of stress, anxiety, and depression. This empowering book presents the insights and techniques of ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy) a revolutionary new psychotherapy based on cutting-edge research in behavioral psychology. By clarifying your values and developing mindfulness (a technique for living fully in the present moment), ACT helps you escape the happiness trap and find true satisfaction in life. The techniques presented in The Happiness Trap will help readers to:

- Reduce stress and worry
- Handle painful feelings and thoughts more effectively
- Break self-defeating habits
- Overcome insecurity and self-doubt
- Create a rich, full, and meaningful life

## Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Trumpeter; 1 edition (June 3, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590305841

ISBN-13: 978-1590305843

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (392 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #3,308 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in Books > Science & Math > Behavioral Sciences > Cognitive Psychology #61 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Happiness #217 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling

## Customer Reviews

I don't generally like books with happiness in the title. They tend to be trying to tell me how I can be happy, or otherwise they're so vague and new-age that I wonder whether the author is for real. This book was very different. This book is practical, very well written, and genuine in its approach. It doesn't make grandiose claims. Instead, it is based on a very solid theoretical and empirical foundation, yet it doesn't get caught up in unnecessary jargon. It's also a great example of how Acceptance and Commitment Therapy can be applied to every day life. The importance it places on living a life that you value is excellent, and avoids many of the pitfalls of the contemporary cultural assumption that happiness (or lack of unhappiness) is the goal of self-help/life. People who will find

this book most helpful:- Anyone who suffers from depression or anxiety- Anyone who wants to be happy, but always fails to achieve it- Anyone who wants to learn about Acceptance and Commitment Therapy- Anyone who struggles with their thoughts/thinks too much.- Anyone who's seeking to grow

According to the Declaration of Independence, the "pursuit of happiness" is one of our "inalienable rights." As Russ Harris masterfully points out in this book, however, the pursuit of values over the long haul, rather than happiness, is more likely to lead to a full and meaningful life. The overall approach within the book is based upon acceptance and commitment therapy or ACT, which has increasingly been shown to be helpful in alleviating a wide range of human suffering. Rather than being a stodgy, stuffy presentation of ACT (and believe me, having written some of those myself - I know one when I see one!), the book reads more like a series of short stories which Dr. Harris presents in a conversational and engaging style to illustrate how all of us can adopt a more kind and compassionate approach to our struggles with self-doubts, unwanted emotions, and worrisome thoughts. Indeed, the book could have just as easily been entitled "ACT for Dummies" not because it oversimplifies the approach, but because it makes it so accessible, understandable, and easy to apply. If you've heard about ACT and would like to know more about it, or have never heard of it, but want to check out what all the fuss is about, this is the place to start. I highly recommend the book to not only those of us who have fallen into the "happiness trap," but also to our friends, loved ones, and mental health professionals who have tried to liberate us from it. It can be usefully read and applied by itself or as an introduction to ACT before moving on to workbooks in the area such as "Get Out of Your Mind and Into Your Life." Don't wait for the movie!

I recommend this book to all my clients and colleagues. In a very accessible and captivating way, Dr Russ Harris made us understand how our mind can sometimes be an enemy to living a rich, vital and meaningful life. The book is full of EFFECTIVE, evidence-based strategies to effectively respond to our distressing emotions, thus reducing their impact on us. It also gives us strategies to disentangle ourselves from self-defeating thoughts. As we are able to free ourselves from the impact of unhelpful thoughts and feelings, we stop fighting them, and can invest our energy in living our life. As I read the book, I realize that life is not about having happy, pleasant thoughts and feelings. It is about living a meaningful life consistent with our values. The Acceptance and Commitment Therapy gives us the needed tools to just do that: FREE ourselves from our MIND and have the energy to live a meaningful life. The Happiness Trappy is the most accessible, easiest to

understand book on ACT therapy. It is the first book I recommend you to read on ACT. And if you become passionate about ACT like me, you can continue with many other fantastic and helpful books on ACT by other authors. Dung Nguyen, Psychologist, Adelaide, Australia

My jargon/headache-free gateway to the delights of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) was *The Happiness Trap* by Dr Russ Harris. Before reading *The Happiness Trap*, I knew of ACT as some framework to do with values and mindfulness but the language was all a bit foreign to me and I wasn't enticed to delve into it. I read *The Happiness Trap* in one sitting, disobeying all the suggestions to not rush, because I couldn't put it down. There are these irresistible little carrots dangling at the end of each chapter, snippets about what's coming next, making it compulsively readable. By the time I got to the end I had thoroughly defaced it, underlining all the good bits, all the bits that resonated with me and articulated the suspicions I had about traditional Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and an agenda of control. Reading it I laughed, I cried, I changed. I felt awakened and freed. And I was hungry to know more. It would be no exaggeration to say I could divide my life professionally and personally into Before *The Happiness Trap* and After *The Happiness Trap*. Moreover it prepared me for and eased me into the more technical writing about ACT and Relational Frame Theory (RFT) on which ACT is based. An extra special thing about *The Happiness Trap* is the use of a conversational and interactive writing style. It was as though I was engaging with a therapist through the pages of the book, a therapist who walked me with kindness and gentleness and empathy through the processes and techniques and having some fun along the way. *The Happiness Trap* is the recommended reading for clients at my psychology practice as I am confident that anyone who is literate can absorb its contents, 'get' ACT first time around and be empowered to create their own ACT toolkit for living well.

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