

just one thing

developing a
buddha brain one simple
practice at a time



rick hanson, phd
author of *buddha's brain*

Just One Thing: Developing A Buddha Brain One Simple Practice at a Time

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You've heard the expression, "It's the *little* things that count." It's more than a simple platitude. Research has shown that integrating little daily practices into your life can actually change the way your brain works.

This guide offers simple things you can do routinely, mainly inside your mind, that will support and increase your sense of security and worth, resilience, effectiveness, well-being, insight, and inner peace. For example, they include: taking in the good, protecting your brain, feeling safer, relaxing anxiety about imperfection, not knowing, enjoying your hands, taking refuge, and filling the hole in your heart. At first glance, you may be tempted to underestimate the power of these seemingly simple practices. But they will gradually change your brain through what's called experience-dependent neuroplasticity.

Moment to moment, whatever you're aware of—sounds, sensations, thoughts, or your most heartfelt longings—is based on underlying neural activities. This book offers simple brain training practices you can do every day to protect against stress, lift your mood, and find greater emotional resilience.

Just one practice each day can help you to:

- Be good to yourself
- Enjoy life as it is
- Build on your strengths
- Be more effective at home and work
- Make peace with your emotions

With over fifty daily practices you can use anytime, anywhere, ***Just One Thing*** is a groundbreaking combination of mindfulness meditation and neuroscience that can help you deepen your sense of well-being and unconditional happiness.

Just One Thing: Developing A Buddha Brain One Simple Practice at a Time Details

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Author : Rick Hanson

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From Reader Review Just One Thing: Developing A Buddha Brain One Simple Practice at a Time for online ebook

Shana Simmons says

I love this book!

Stephanie says

Just one thing, read this daily just one time a day ... changes your frame of mind.

Eve says

This little book is designed as a Buddhist practice manual, to be read, not as a novel, but as a once-a-night or once-a-morning dose of practical advice that purports to change your life, one aspect at a time. At first, my reaction was that it was too "pat" or simplistic, and I was skeptical: "Yeah, right, how do I do that?" even though he includes a "How" section with each chapter. Easier said than done. As I always do, I read the book straight through. About half or three quarters of the way through, I realized that it was getting better, and that there were some real gems of wisdom that I should pay attention to. It's a cumulative thing, I suppose. Now I feel that I need to keep the book by my bedside and focus on each chapter for one week - there are 52 chapters, by the way - to work on some of my issues and attitudes. Perhaps it will also inspire me to read Buddha's Brain (which Hanson is most famous for) and to adopt a Buddhist approach to life. We'll see, but the book may be a springboard to some positive changes, and if so, then the book has achieved its goal.

Ongorn says

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Zen Nana says

A couple of interesting thoughts crossed my mind as I began reading this book. The old saying about the teacher appearing when the student is ready was the first one. The second was about how it sometimes seems as if everyone suddenly has the same idea all at once. Maybe it's a "tipping point" thing, or an idea reaching "critical mass" and spreading suddenly throughout a population, just because it's time. As Victor Hugo wrote, "No army can stop an idea whose time has come."

So it was interesting to me how several books I've been reading lately share some similar components; they teach mindfulness in an easy-to-swallow-for-latte-sipping-multitaskers format. It only takes a minute, they tell us; no long meditation sessions or esoteric tomes to wade through. No ashram retreats or minimalist camps; no deep philosophies or dogma to buy into; no east versus west worldview conflicts or religions. Tiny chunks of practice, just sixty seconds at a time, one idea a week for no more than one year. Just keeping it simple and keeping at it, one tiny minute at a time, is the key. This is indeed today's mindfulness.

Just One Thing is the latest addition to the pile of these books on my desk, or rather my Kindle. I liked it a lot and it added a new layer to my decades-long quest for "buddha brain." Recent brain research has opened up new ways to look at practices such as meditation and ideas like mindfulness. The mind and the brain are no longer strangers or rivals for dominance. Hanson's message: change one and you change the other.

Nuggets of information are scattered throughout the book, such as the idea that the brain has a "negativity bias" which makes it automatically gravitate to negative thoughts rather than positive ones, a revelation that might make many breathe a sigh of relief that they are not always replaying negative thoughts and memories in their minds because of some character failing of their own. On the other hand, it points to the need for conscious, deliberate effort to lead our thoughts toward the positive to enjoy life more and effect positive outcomes.

Like some of the other books I've been reading lately, Hanson offers one idea for focus per week, if you spend a year on this book -- one meditation, practice, thought to lead yourself back to or behavior to change at a time. The book is filled with philosophy, psychology, sacred teachings and practical advice along with the occasional foray into biology and brain chemistry, all in an easy conversational tone.

Barrie says

Maybe if I owned this book I could really dive deep into every 52 'things' to truly develop--but honestly, this book just went too fast for me. It was a spitfire approach to making yourself better. I rather the story approach then these brief 'do this and that' approach. I did take a few things away from it, hence the 2 stars and not total suckage, but I actually prefer a book like The Happiness Project over this high-speed do a billion things to make your life better book. It was overwhelming to say the least (although, I do understand that the book said you could take a few approaches at a time and not try to focus on everything--but it still overwhelmed me).

Emma Sea says

i just got really, really bored about 40% in :(

J says

This is not a book you sit and read cover-to-cover. It's a book of 52 mindful practices that require thought and reflection, and of course, practice. Rick Hanson's compassion and wisdom come through on every page.

I originally checked this book out from the library, but after reading his introduction, I went out and purchased two copies: one for me and one for a friend. It's a book I want on my shelves and one I no doubt will return to again, and again.

Stephanie says

This was the April 2018 selection of South Austin Spiritual Book Group.
This book makes a good weekly devotional, although that's not how I read it.

The most meaningful chapters for me were
Dream Big Dreams
Ben Generous
Notice You're All Right Now

And I think the chapter called Smile must have sunk in because everyone is smiling at me now in the grocery store.

Anuj says

Let me add at the onset that I am biased towards Rick Hanson. I had subscribed to his newsletter and was moved by one of his blogs; so I mailed him and he responded back, which I thought was great of him.

I borrowed this book from a friend who was visiting my city and finished it in a couple of days. The book is an extension of his blog - JOT - Just One Thing. Rather collection of his JOTs - fifty-two of them in this book, so it's a treasure.

A wealth of practices to undertake, to follow, so that you have a mindful brain. One that accepts the reality, observes it for what it is and then take action to keep your balance and progress forward.

What I love about Hanson is that he takes on neuroscience and amalgamates with the principles of Buddhism. Being an atheist I liked the fact that this wasn't about any push on a religion or spirituality related to one.

Any one can meditate. Any one can be mindful. But the onus is on you - to keep the awareness and practice to make your mind patterns stronger and on the path of self-fulfillment.

Rick's strength lies in expressing things in an utmost simple manner. You can focus on your area and do those specific practices or do once a week or what ever. His methodology is great - talk about what the practice is about and then talk about action - how to do it.

My friend thought that some of the stuff is too tough to do, but the way I see it, if you practice, or start to, you can only get better. Any thing is better when you have more mindfulness. And any thing that can make your better is simply tremendous.

Now...I have ordered a copy for myself, which I intend going through again and keep following specific ones. In fact, have also ordered his other book: Developing the Buddha's Brain and look forward to reading that one too.

Karen Chung says

Actually I had pretty much figured out much of the stuff in this book through the School of Hard Knocks, but it's still worth reading and contains some quotable quotes.

Amy says

The only reason I finished this book was so I could justify rating it. Everything this book does has been done better else where. I think this book missed its calling in life as a blog.

Bonnie says

Expected Publication Date: 10/1/2011

‘Just One Thing’ was kindly provided to me by Netgalley for Smith Publicity.

This was a well written positive little how-to guide on how to be mindful of your happiness on a daily basis. This is a novel for everyone. It’s an easily understandable guide that doesn’t go into the ‘science’ of anything or even religion. This is definitely a great read for anyone interested in trying to make their days just a bit better.

The first time I read this novel I read it front to back and I enjoyed it. I did understand; however, that some of the situations the author would discuss didn’t necessarily apply to me at the time of reading. This is going to be a great book to keep on hand for whenever I encounter a situation where a little guidance is needed. I have a feeling the ‘Relax’ chapter will have its work cut out for it though. :)

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Becky says

Just One Thing reads more like 52 disjointed, informal blog entries than an actual grown-up book. That wouldn't bother me so much if I had actually learned something -- *anything* -- remotely helpful, but... I'm still waiting for the day I find a self-help book for anxiety / depression that doesn't insult my intelligence by offering nothing but the most vague advice ever.

Self help books be like, "Eat right and exercise! Wake up at the same time everyday! Make time to do enjoyable things! Make friends with reliable, supportive people!" -- and I'm just like, "Yeah, If I had the ability to do that in the first place, do you really think I would still struggle with my depression to the point where I need to read a book about it?"

Michelle, the Bookshelf Stalker Queen of the Undead says

I love this book. It is so easy to use and the advice is really good. In fact, in today's busy world, this book is a useful tool. I usually don't review self-help books because I find the advice and the practices a bunch of useless babble. This book is just the opposite. It confirmed what I knew was already working in my life, and it gave easy, practical advice on how to enjoy the small things, to minimize the negative, and how to survive in a world that is whipping by us at warp speed.

From the book...

In your own mind, what do you usually think about at the end of the day? The fifty things that went right, or the one that went wrong?

I loved this. We are all guilty of thinking about what went wrong and worrying about it. It's not until you encounter something that changes your perspective on life, that you start to appreciate the little things that go right, or the small simple beautiful things that surround your life. For me, it was surviving a violent crime. For others it is cancer, or a car accident or something else that is huge, and life changing. Once you've survived something traumatic, you learn to appreciate the small and not dwell on the negative. Or at least you should.

This book helps you learn to appreciate and value and experience the small things that go right in your life and you don't need a traumatic event to kick start your experiences.

In effect, the brain is like Velcro for negative experiences, but Teflon for positive ones.

How true is that? Think about the last 48 hours? What do you remember? If it is negative or just bad experiences, you definitely need this book.

The book doesn't just tell you what you are doing wrong, it also gives you the practices to change what you are doing wrong. The practices are simple. So simple, you can't help but succeed at them. For example...

Look for good facts, and turn them into good experiences.

So often in life a good thing happens- flowers are blooming, someone is nice, a goal's been attained- and you know it, but you don't feel it. This time, let the good fact affect you.

The book continues to explain how to look for “good facts” and really value and experience them so that you aren’t dwelling on the negative.

Overall

The book is a gem. In fact, I keep it my purse and I’m super happy that the publisher gave me a paper copy instead of the original electronic copy that I had. I plan on reading the practices multiple times. Who knows, it might actually work!
