



# The Future of Happiness: 5 Modern Strategies for Balancing Productivity and Well-Being in the Digital Era

*Amy Blankson*

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Technology—at least in theory—is improving our productivity, efficiency, and communication. The one thing it’s not doing is making us happier. We are experiencing historically high levels of depression and dissatisfaction. But it doesn’t have to be that way. Technology can drive—not diminish—human happiness.

Our brains receive 11 million bits of information every second but can only process 40 bits at any given time. Thanks to the latest technology, you have a say in what information you consume. We now have the tools to train our brains to scan the world for the positive, trumping our genes and our environment to reach our full potential.

Knowing that technology is here to stay and will continue to evolve in form and function, we need to know how to navigate the future to achieve a better balance between technology, productivity, and wellbeing.

In *The Future of Happiness*, author Amy Blankson, co-founder of the global positive psychology consulting firm GoodThink, unveils five strategies that successful individuals can use to not just survive—but to actually thrive—in the Digital Age:

- Stay grounded** to focus and channel your energy with intention
- Know thyself** through app-driven data to strive toward your potential
- Train your brain** to develop and sustain an optimistic mindset
- Create a habitat for happiness** to maximize the spaces and places in which you live, work, and learn
- Be a conscious innovator** to actively shape your future

By rethinking when, where, why and how you use technology, you will not only able to influence your own wellbeing but also help shape the future of your community. Discover how futuristic technologies can transform the idea of “I’ll be happy when . . .” to your way of being *now*.

## The Future of Happiness: 5 Modern Strategies for Balancing Productivity and Well-Being in the Digital Era Details

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# **From Reader Review The Future of Happiness: 5 Modern Strategies for Balancing Productivity and Well-Being in the Digital Era for online ebook**

## **Peebee says**

This was a very helpful book for me at this point in time, as some changes in my job status have changed my dependence on technology, which is guiding me to think about what my ideal relationship would be. Also, burnout is a huge problem in the nonprofit world, as I've personally experienced and see on a number of nonprofit discussion groups, so being able to hack your life so that your use of technology makes you happier will make your world a better place.

This book was written in a very direct and practical manner: there are five principles that anyone can immediately adapt to their lives, and the steps needed to follow them, plus a very handy summary and list of all the technology in the back. It's hard to imagine how it could be written more helpfully than: here's why there's a problem; here's what you need to do to fix it; and here are some tools for you to try to see what works best for you. I very much appreciated that.

The downside is that because it's so tech-dependent, as a how-to manual it will quickly be outdated, but I hope it catches on enough that the author will have an incentive to keep updating and improving upon it.

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## **Bibi says**

"Tech is not a toxin that we need to flush out of our systems-it's a tool. And it's a tool that we must learn to wield effectively."

I found this book extremely helpful with a ton of interesting information. It explored the physical and mental repercussions that can occur in this digital era. It's an addiction that transcends age, race, and status. I'm a firm believer in balance, and too much of anything can be harmful. I have now downloaded an app the author suggested called Moment that tells you your screen time stats....the numbers were shocking even to me. Those minutes add up. It gave me a bit of a wake up call to be more mindful of screen time, posture, etc. a definite must read.

\*\* I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review.\*\*

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## **Erin says**

Despite assurances that the author was going to focus on positive strategies, the first 1.5 hours of the audio book cited study after study of the negative effects of tech on people. Eventually became more balanced. Would not recommend as an audiobook as there were a lot of repetitive sections I would have skimmed with a physical book.

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## **KK says**

I have been reading many books lately on productivity, habit formation and happiness. It's a very interesting topic. I enjoyed this book somewhat, but it wasn't really one of my favorites. I did like some of the tips specifically about decreasing technology use, personally and with families- the end 1/3 of the book had some sections with some good advice regarding that. I am personally not really that interested in using apps and other technology to essentially manage my technology use, and I also listened to the audiobook version of this. So, I sort of tuned out when she was giving all of the run downs of different available apps, etc. that are out there for different purposes. Those parts may have been more meaningful in the print version. I don't mean that it was a bad book or anything, and I'm glad I finished listening to it, but for me it just didn't contain enough of what I was really looking for.

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## **Ancy Walsh says**

Are you addicted to your smart phone? Is your work life encroaching on your personal life because you are always plugged in? This book is an excellent and necessary read in this day and age. It provides insights and strategies on how to manage the technology in your life rather than letting it manage you.

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## **Aimee Jean says**

Well researched with a lot of wearable and app suggestions. The general idea of the book isn't something I didn't already know. I like some of the tips on rearranging offices for higher productivity because it is practical.

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## **Christoph says**

Happiness, ein Begriff der unsere moderne Gesellschaft nicht mehr loslässt. Hand in Hand geht dieses Wort mit Work-Life-Balance, Lebenslanges Lernen, Auswirkungen der digitalen Entwicklungen und verschiedenen Wirtschaftsmodellen und sozialem Wohlstand.

Wie einst auch Stefan Sagmeister damals im Zuge seines selbstexperiments (und dem Abfallprodukten auf dem Weg, welche die Grundlage für die Ausstellungen geboten haben) ist auch hier die Autorin auf der Suche nach möglichen Antworten, speziell im digitalen Sektor.

Warum?

Weil uns diese Entwicklungen seit Jahrzehnten begleiten und die Welt verändern, die Arbeitswelt im speziellen (und in Wahrheit schon länger), der private sowie auch kommerzielle Sektor im Vergleich dazu kürzer, aber wesentlich lauter. Vor allem die Stimmen, welche hier mehr Gefahren wittern als Chancen.

Dieses Buch widmet sich den Chancen, ohne aber den warnenden Stimmen respektlos gegenüber zu treten. Im Gegenteil sogar, hier wird zu einem Diskurs auf hohem Niveau eingeladen. Gleich zu Beginn werden etwaige negative Auswirkungen, Erkenntnisse aus unterschiedlichsten Studien offenbahrt und angeführt -

einfach mal geparkt. Aufbauend darauf bewegt sich das Buch mit klar differenzierbaren Kapiteln durch die Welt der Chancen.

Lesenswert für jene, die mehr über potentiell positive Auswirkungen der digitalen Welt lesen wollen; noch lebenswerter für jene Menschen, deren Pessimismus hier gerne in Frage gestellt werden darf. Eine Grundhaltung, welche - geschichtlich betrachtet - mehr als nur einmal der falsche Weg war.

Ein Bonus, v.a bei der digitalen Version, die Querverweise - hier in Form von Verlinkungen - sind umfangreich, oft kommentiert, genial passend in die jeweiligen Kapitel eingebaut.

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### **Amanda says**

This was a great book with useable suggestions and a logical flow. I would recommend this to anyone who feels like tech may have more control over them than they have over it.

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### **DJohnson says**

My library didn't have the print copy for this book, so I borrowed the audiobook version. The author, who narrates it herself, has quite a juvenile voice, which took some getting used to. The ideas she presents aren't revolutionary or anything, but they're interesting enough.

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### **Chris Wejr says**

3.5 stars. A decent book that provides helpful tips on living in a world that includes technology. I was hoping for more references to research from positive psychology but many readers will likely appreciate her actionable ideas to live a happier life with technology. I appreciate Blankson's message about being purposeful with tech and making sure it's use aligns with our values

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### **Kelly says**

I picked up this book hoping for more strategies on how to be more present and productive without the distraction of tech, but the book's focus is more on how to use tech to improve your life. The result of the book is the suggestion of many, many apps you can use, and none of which really appealed to me. There were some platitudes about how to balance better and lessen distractions, but nothing innovative from my perspective, and not as motivational as I would have liked in that regard. A fine book for what it is, just not what I was looking for.

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### **Claire says**

This was an easy book chock full of relevant "happy hacks" and lots of hopeful and positive ideas about

modern life. I wish Amy Blankson was in my circle of friends, I could use a lady like this in my life. (And she's a milspouse!) In this book she has blended social science, psychology, positivity, and modernity, and some personal stories. I marveled at her skill in choosing metaphors. But one metaphor disheartened me.

Amy Blankson likens living happily with tech to walking a tightrope. How many of us can do such a thing? Had it been a balance beam, I might feel more hopeful, but I really think she has hit the nail on the head: living happily with tech is a balancing act of self-control and self-awareness akin to walking a freakin' tightrope. But since tech is here to stay, we have no choice but to try to be mindful enough to walk the rope without falling off. Sigh. Guess I better re-read the positive thinking parts of the book.....

That said, I do think that there are lots of concrete recommendations that must be implemented if we are to have a chance at happiness with tech. Taking tech vacations. Setting an away message talking about what you are doing offline and when you'll be back to tech. Using new technologies to your advantage. Being a minimalist about tech (ruthlessly purge alla KonMari). Monitoring when you're falling off the "happiness cliff". I will likely re-listen or read it again to capture more, maybe with pen and paper in hand. :) Maybe that will transform my thinking from negative Nancy to positive Polly.

Note: I listened to the audiobook. Mostly in snippets instead of whole chapters at a time.

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### **Debbie says**

An interesting read that takes on the issue of tech dependency and the constant distraction of always having a cellphone at hand. I liked that the author balanced the negative effects with the ways in which we can use tech to improve our lives.

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### **Latasha says**

This was a great review of the current risks and benefits of technology, as well as a more "philosophical" evaluation of the human condition when it comes to using tech. I really enjoyed this and felt that it was motivating in that it made me really develop stronger questions about what I want from my tech.

I will continue to use the tools in this book as I adopt new tech.

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### **Wellington says**

Amy Blankson cheerfully gives us lots of tips and tricks on how to incorporate technology in our lives. I kept thinking how bubbly she is like how my two year old dances in blown bubbles. Any book that would finally get me off my butt and throw out my electronic crap has to be meaningful.

Most memorably, when she explained people's stress levels spiking when looking at the clutter in their lives. Like many American households, we're slowly drowning ourselves in clutter. Back in the day, people were worried about being possessed by the devil, we should be worried about being possessed by possessions.

I plan to go back through the book and check out some websites / apps.

