Chapter 1: The First Answer: Choose Life

Chapter 2: An Easy Answer: Be Happy

Chapter 3: Sociality: Seek Status, Fame, and Fortune

Chapter 4: An Inspired Answer: Find Meaningful Work

Part One, The First Question: “What is Success?”

Part Two, The Second Question: “Who is Happy?”

Notes compiled by Oliver Lovell. www.ollielovell.com
1688: Term: ‘Phi Beta Slackers’-Po Bronson, describes smart people content to follow the conventional career path of least resistance

1693: Bronson’s conclusion: “I used to think that certain jobs were ‘cool,’ and more likely to inspire passion, Now I know that passion is rooted in deeply felt experiences, which can happen anywhere… and at any time in your life”

1705: Many professions use symbols to create and evoke these ‘deeply felt experiences’ such as rites of passage and tokens such as stethoscopes and white coats

1743: We mustn’t overlook the +ve psychological effects of having even the most basic form of employment, and the -ve effects of none

1750: The ‘Golden Handcuff Problem’-Those with high pay get addicted to a high flying lifestyle, thus become handcuffed to their careers


Chapter 5: Discover What You Can Do Better Than Most: Capabilities

2117: Tell your child once they already know the answer to a question that you are teaching them: “The more I cook, the more I like to cook”. How does placebo work? Researchers believe that the brain changes in response to the suggestion and releases dopamine etc. How We Construct Beliefs and Reinforce Them as Truths

Chapter 6: Set Yourself on Fire: Motivation

2680: Andrew Wiles on solving Fermat’s Last Theorem. It is like exploring a mysterious, unlit mansion with many rooms: “One enters the first room of the mansion, and it’s dark. Completely dark.” after bumping into various objects, “you learn where each piece of furniture is.” Finally you find the light switch and at last you can see exactly where you are and where everything is…” Then you move into the next room” and repeat the process. The moments of illumination come suddenly; the work to achieve them is slow, methodical and painstaking; and the experience of finally discovering the solution is deeply satisfying.

2870: Richard believes that reward-based motivation is a useful tool.

2710: Angela Duckworth has done research that suggests that the promise of external rewards can even raise an IQ score

2764: Adam Grant of Wharton College documented that different personality types require different motivations boosts for the same work

2800: James Herr’s motto (A Chicken Farmer) “Always try to be a blessing to people.” ask yourself: “for whom is my life a blessing?”

Chapter 7: Learn to Fail: Self-Confidence

2997: Quote: “Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must first set yourself on fire.”-Fred Shero

3107: Someone you respect believes that ‘you can do it’

3146: Studies show that people prompted to think more about their ‘true self’ tend to experience more meaning in their lives.

3155: One definition of success: “resourceful attainment of one’s set aim in the cognizance of a clear conscience”

3166: There are three different ways to attain level one confidence: (ie: confidence in your true self)

3191: How does placebo work? Researchers believe that the brain changes in response to the suggestion and releases dopamine etc.

3203: Columbia scientist Tor Wager suggests that ‘Your expectations can have profound impacts on your brain and on your health’

3215: “Pygmalion in the classroom”: Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson told teachers that some of their students were gifted (at random. Result: 8 months later, these “gifted” students (20% in each classroom) tested higher than classmates with many showing 30-point gains on IQ tests. ie: Teacher expectations

3221: A group told averaged 550 cards punched per day, others: 2100

3242: “Pygmalion in the classroom”: Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson told teachers that some of their students were gifted (at random. Result: 8 months later, these “gifted” students (20% in each classroom) tested higher than classmates with many showing 30-point gains on IQ tests. ie: Teacher expectations

3250: “Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers, you cannot be successful or happy.”-Reverend Norman Vincent Peal

3262: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”-Philippians 4:13. Story of how Peale told a bloke to use this and it helped

3289: “The greatest secret for eliminating the inferiority complex is to fill your mind to overflowing with faith. Develop a tremendous faith in God and that will give you a humble yet profoundly realistic faith in yourself.”-Reverend Norman Vincent Peal

3295: “Mind Power Schools”-the name given to the schools (success, religious, scholarly, etc) of thought that refer to the power of belief

3303: “Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve”-Napoleon Hill, author of Think and Grow Rich

3316: Level two confidence. The success mindsets

3317: Different terms: ‘self-efficacy’-Stanford’s Albert Bandura, ‘positive core self-evaluations’-Notre Dame’s Timothy Judge; “fixed vs. growth mindsets”-Carol Dweck

3330: All level two confidence theories share four practical characteristics

3336: “People with Level Two Confidence exhibit the desire to learn”

3337: “People with level two confidence are willing to put themselves to the test”

3338: “People with level two confidence focus on effort as much as results”

3339: “People with level two confidence have learned to fail

3340: From test above: Those praised for being ‘smart’ lost interest when test Qs got hard, 40% of them lied about their scores, neither of these were the case for those praised for their effort

3346: Amendment: “Deliberate practice”, well-defined, appropriately difficult, repeat evaluate

3347: Don’t generalise your failure from one area to another!!! Review what went wrong (specifically) and plan for next time

3406: Author Maya Angelou pulls out her ‘yellow pad’ and writes positive her gratitude in order to overcome her anxiety

3412: Book: The Gift from the Sea-Anne Morrow Lindbergh, written by a woman who experience intense sorrow “The problem is… how to remain whole in the midst of the distractions of life; how to remain balanced, no matter what centrifugal forces tend to pull one off centre; how to remain strong, no matter what shocks come.”

3428: Religious chant “This is my Bible: I am what it says I am; I have what it says I have; I can do what it says I can do…”
5175: Every human society in recorded history has had a religion, from the book: The Faith Instinct-Nicholas Wade
5211: Book: Discover Your Inner Economist: Use Incentives to Fall in Love, Survive Your Next Meeting, and Motivate Your Dentist-Tyler Cowen
5626: Books on understanding motivation
- Why We Do What We Do: Understanding Self-Motivation-Edward Deci and Richard Flaste
- Walking Together Forever: The Broad Street Bullies, Then and Now-Jim Jackson and Ed Snider
- Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us-Daniel Pink
- Science and Human Behaviour-B. F. Skinner
- Work and Motivation-Victor Vroom