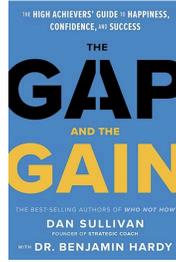


Your Kindle Notes For:



The Gap and The Gain: The High Achiever's Guide to Happiness, Confidence, and Success

Benjamin Hardy and Dan Sullivan

88 Highlight(s) | 0 Note(s)

Location: 128

These admirable men and women provided us with overwhelming proof that measuring progress backward quickly and easily becomes a fundamentally positive and permanent human skill.

Location: 173

“The way to measure your progress is backward against where you started, not against your ideal.” —Dan Sullivan

Location: 193

By saying happiness is something we’re pursuing, the direct implication is that we don’t have it now. You don’t pursue something you already have.

Location: 199

But ideas can create culture, and culture is perhaps the most powerful force shaping human identity and decision-making.³

Location: 260

Maybe you too, like Thomas Jefferson and Edward, have continually reserved “happiness” and “success” for your future, but never your present. If so, you will never “find” happiness.

Location: 318

Measuring yourself against an ideal is an endless race to nowhere.

Location: 322

“If you focus on what you lack, you lose what you have. If you focus on what you have, you gain what you lack.”⁶

Location: 329

Psychology has a term for this moving horizon, hedonic adaptation. It’s the tendency of humans to quickly adapt to where they are and what they’ve got. It leads to never being satisfied, and to constantly seeking the next thing. ⁷

Location: 336

The reason the hedonic treadmill exists is because people aren’t taught how to be happy.

Location: 338

Our society has trained us to measure ourselves against our ideals, which by definition are unreachable. Goals, conversely, are reachable. But our society is driven by continually inflated and unreachable ideals. And that is why we live in a consumer-driven culture.

Location: 352

You measure your own progress. You don’t compare yourself to something external. You don’t measure yourself against your ideals.

Location: 367

“I’ve discovered that when something very emotional happens to me, it stays with me until I’ve converted it into lessons. Before I knew this was the case, I could become paralyzed by negative experiences for long periods of time.”¹¹

Location: 374

Many people have lots of experience but very little learning.

Location: 375

The word trauma may sound extreme, but trauma, by nature, is an experience you’ve framed as negative, which you avoid, and which creates ongoing dysfunction and debilitation in your life.

Location: 387

Everything in life happens FOR you, not TO you.

Location: 393

When you’re in the GAIN, you become unstoppable.

Location: 424

Everything that psychologists know about how to create a high-functioning and successful person can be achieved using The GAP and The GAIN. It's the ultimate simplification, or what Dan would call an "intellectual shortcut."

Location: 442

When I measure him thoughtfully right now against where he was when we first met him, it's incredible how much progress he's made. Not only intellectually, but emotionally, physically, and in all other ways.

Location: 488

Decades of scientific research is clear on this point: happiness is where you start, not where you finish.²

Location: 496

Positive emotions facilitate higher performance, which increases confidence and filters back more positive emotions. It's a virtuous cycle.

Location: 512

"The future isn't a reality—it's a projection. And because it's not reality, it can't be part of any real measurement of your progress. The only way to measure goals is backward, against the past. Use the reality of where you currently are and measure backward from there to the reality of where you started."

Location: 525

Needing anything outside of yourself is a form of being in the GAP.

Location: 532

The problem is that "needs" are unresolved internal pain, not something you can solve externally. Bill Wilson, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, said, "All progress starts by telling the truth."

Location: 542

Happiness cannot come from something outside of yourself.

Location: 548

Happiness is a byproduct of realizing that you are the destination. You are enough and you have enough.

Location: 606

Consider Trevor's words: "I think you can have both." What he meant by "both" is: Having an intense commitment to succeed, and Having a healthy detachment from what you're doing

Location: 622

Obsessive passion is highly impulsive and fueled by suppressed emotions and unresolved internal conflict.

Location: 641

Harmonious passion, on the other hand, is intrinsically motivated and healthy.

Location: 660

This brings up a highly nuanced and crucial distinction: you can want something and be 100% committed to that thing without needing it.

Location: 661

This is the counterintuitive reality: by no longer needing what you want, you are actually far more enabled to get it.

Location: 677

Something Dan Sullivan has noticed in coaching tens of thousands of entrepreneurs since 1974—over 47 years!—is that most of them are mentally "here" but wanting to be "there."

Location: 717

When you're in the GAP, you're desperate to get "there," because you're trying to escape being here. You're bouncing around, rather than getting real and getting traction. When you're in the GAP, you aren't thinking long-term. You're impulsively trying to fill an unresolved "need."

Location: 777

The GAIN gives you freedom. You must choose to be freed from the GAP. That's the first step we're inviting you to take in this book. Free yourself FROM the GAP. Free yourself from lack or need. You can never have autonomy and agency until you free yourself from the GAP.

Location: 827

Children are trained to measure themselves against external reference points. These reference points are not generally chosen by the child themselves, but by society and the education system. As these children grow up, they're not taught how to determine their own reference point or "measure of success." Instead, they adopt the reference points that society deems as

“success”—money, fame, social media likes, etc. Because all of these reference points are external—and become increasingly based on unreachable ideals—people’s lives become the desperate and failing race to “measure up” to external and changing ideals. Hence the hedonic treadmill so many spend their lives on, trying to measure up and “be happy.”

Location: 843

Being self-determined means that you’ve made yourself the reference point, rather than measuring yourself against something external.

Location: 865

Put more directly, social media is designed to stop people from becoming self-determined.

Location: 877

The reference points for your own success are being created for you, not by you. If you’re not paying for the product, then your behavior change is the product.

Location: 894

Your happiness as a person is dependent on what you measure yourself against.

Location: 942

Give this a try for yourself. Spend 20 to 30 minutes with no distractions writing down your answer to this question: “I know I’m being successful when . . .” Be as honest with yourself as you possibly can. No one else can define success for you. Defining your own success criteria is how you become self-determined. This is how you develop an internal reference system. You decide how you will measure yourself. Be flexible with this list. View it like the draft of a book that can be edited and improved. Chances are, you’d define success differently now than you would have 5–10 years ago.¹⁷ That’s a good thing!

Location: 981

There’s a quiet confidence that comes from running your own race, from no longer measuring or comparing yourself to others.

Location: 1,040

Exposure to short-term stress can actually strengthen your cellular response (i.e., “hormetic stress”). Hormetic stress promotes longevity by activating defense mechanisms in your body.

Location: 1,047

Research shows that optimistic people often live 10+ years longer than pessimistic people.³

Location: 1,056

When these nuns were 20 years old, they weren't basing their happiness on how long they thought they'd live. Instead, they lived longer lives because they were happy.

Location: 1,062

The way you mentally filter experiences shapes your emotional and physical response to those experiences. There's an entire field now based on this premise: epigenetics, which shows that our perception of events and situations shapes how those events affect us.⁷

Location: 1,067

The way you interpret an experience literally affects how your body metabolizes that experience. Perception shapes biology.

Location: 1,109

So much of experience comes down to the meaning or framing a person gives to it. When you change the context, you change the meaning. The meaning determines the psychological and physical impact of the content.

Location: 1,163

"Comparison is the thief of joy." —Theodore Roosevelt

Location: 1,274

Now that you have language for The GAP and The GAIN, you can use this amazing tool to improve your life. Start using the GAP and GAIN language in the following ways:

Location: 1,296

The results are clear: mental subtraction is one of the most effective science-based techniques for boosting gratitude and happiness.²²

Location: 1,340

Think about it for a second: What if you literally and immediately lost whatever you went into the GAP about? You complain about your job: now you've lost it.

Location: 1,351

Give Yourself 5 Minutes in the GAP, Then Move Forward "One thing that makes it possible to be an optimist is if you have a contingency plan for when all hell breaks loose. There are a lot of things I don't worry about, because I have a plan in place if they do." —Randy Pausch²⁵

Location: 1,424

Remember, the goal isn't to never go into the GAP. Instead, the goal is to get yourself out as soon as you can.

Location: 1,478

From Jill's standpoint, progress is everything. If we're not progressing as people, then we're giving up on ourselves. If we don't believe someone else can make progress, then we've given up on them.

Location: 1,525

When you get to the fourth stage of the conscious competence learning cycle, you operate in the world differently than your former self did.

Location: 1,535

When you draw on a memory, you always do so from the perspective of your present self. Psychologists call memory a "reconstruction," because it is always reconstructed based on your present views, which influence how you see and perceive past events.14,15,16

Location: 1,599

They see that they are in the GAP about their team, their spouse, and their kids—because they are measuring them against where they want them to be, rather than against where they were before.

Location: 1,610

Being in the GAIN is the most powerful way to measure yourself and your life.

Location: 1,617

"The only way to measure the distance you've traveled is by measuring from where you are back to the point where you started." —Dan Sullivan

Location: 1,696

To be clear, it is GAP-thinking to be "embarrassed" of your former self. There is no reason to have any negative emotions or energy toward your past.

Location: 1,776

There is one specific hour—the "sweet spot" of your day—that has the biggest impact on both your short-term and long-term success.

Location: 1,795

What you do during the hour before bed sets the tone for the rest of your life.

Location: 1,809

Staring at your phone right before bed is one of the worst things you can do if you want to live an effective, present, and happy life. It has a negative impact on your identity and mindset.

Location: 1,812

But your behavior also influences your identity.¹⁰ Psychologists have a term, self-signaling, and it means that you judge yourself based on your behavior.

Location: 1,816

All behavior is addictive. All behavior seeks more of itself.

Location: 1,826

In a podcast interview with Tim Ferriss, Josh Waitzkin explains the importance of having a “proactive day architecture vs. a reactive day architecture.”¹¹ What he means by this is: your day can be designed proactively—meaning by you—rather than designed reactively—where you’re bounced around by distractions.

Location: 1,837

As Thomas Edison said, “Never go to bed without a request to your subconscious.”

Location: 1,869

3 Wins Each Day “Never begin the day until it is finished on paper.” —Jim Rohn¹⁶

Location: 1,896

Make the three wins for tomorrow important wins, not urgent ones.

Location: 1,985

Chapter Takeaways What you do during the 60 minutes before bed has an enormous impact on your sleep quality, as well as the direction and quality of your next day. Reactivity begets reactivity. If you’re staring at your phone before bed, mindlessly scrolling or consuming, not only will you sleep worse, but you’ll continue that same unhealthy addictive behavior the next day. To get better sleep, unplug from your phone and put it on airplane mode at least 30–60 minutes before sleep. Write in your journal three wins from that day. Write down the three biggest wins you’ll get the next day. No more than three. Do this every day for the rest of your life. Pearson’s Law states: When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is

measured and reported, the rate of improvement accelerates. Having a daily accountability partner combines tracking and reporting. Keep your accountability partnership simple. It shouldn't take more than 2 minutes per day. Report your three wins for today and your three wins for tomorrow.

Location: 2,051

Taking Ownership of Your Experiences “Life is simple. Everything happens for you, not to you. Everything happens at exactly the right moment, neither too soon nor too late. You don't have to like it. . . . It's just easier if you do.” —Byron Katie²

Location: 2,063

Whenever you frame an experience in the GAP, you lose power and ownership over that experience. It's just a “crummy thing” you wish hadn't happened. Hence, being in the GAP puts you in the passenger seat of your own experiences. You're reactive to whatever happens—and when things don't go how you expected or wanted, then you're the powerless victim.

Location: 2,085

Being psychologically flexible means you can move forward through uncertainty. It means you control the meaning of your experiences. When you're in the GAIN, you become more psychologically flexible. You take every experience life gives you—difficult or easy, scary or exciting, challenging or accelerating—and you become better as a result.

Blue highlight | Location: 2,088

You're either winning or learning.

Location: 2,122

When you go through a valley, you can learn from that valley or be frustrated by it. The choice is yours. Lessons are repeated until they are learned.

Location: 2,128

CONTROL YOUR RESPONSE “Successful people don't control events; they control their response to events.”

Location: 2,174

VALUE CREATES MEANING “With increased value comes greater meaning. The things that we value or appreciate the most also have the greatest meaning. Value and meaning in the world, then, are totally created by appreciation.”

Location: 2,181

“Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past.”
—George Orwell, 1984¹⁸ “Your past is just a story. And once you realize this, it has no power over you.” —Chuck Palahniuk¹⁹

Location: 2,196

To apply The Experience Transformer, pull out your journal and follow these instructions:

Location: 2,210

You view your past as a goldmine that you can tap into again and again.

Location: 2,216

The more you transform your experiences into learning and growth, the objectively better your experiences will become.

Location: 2,226

Trauma occurs when a person is avoiding and resenting their past, rather than approaching and transforming their past.²³ Your past is not fixed, but flexible. Your view of your own past actually evolves over time, even imperceptibly.

Location: 2,234

“Proactive gratitude is about appreciating everything in the world around you. It’s not initiated by something special the world first does for you, but rather by something special that you first do for the world.”

Location: 2,251

Post-traumatic growth occurs as you proactively find benefits from former hardships. You also actively frame tragedies or challenges in a way that gives you greater strength and empowerment than you had before the experience.²⁹

Location: 2,259

The GAP is passive. The GAIN is active. When you’re in the GAIN, you extract uses, lessons, and purposes from your experience.

Location: 2,286

Seeing every experience as a GAIN makes you antifragile.

Location: 2,303

Thomas Jefferson's formula of "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of happiness" makes happiness an unachievable ideal. Jefferson wasn't wrong in having ideals. He was wrong, however, in measuring his happiness against his ideals. When you're pursuing happiness, then you're measuring yourself against whatever you're pursuing.

Location: 2,308

The reason is simple: ideals are not something you ever actually achieve. Trying to achieve an ideal always puts you in the GAP. Ideals are like a horizon in the desert. They illuminate the path up ahead, and give you direction for setting achievable and measurable targets. But like the horizon, the ideal itself is immeasurable, unreachable, and constantly moving.

Location: 2,326

Right now, you can make the choice to be happy. This very instant, as you read these words: you can choose to be happy.