

INTRODUCTION

Every decision you make now paves a path toward a better or worse version of your future self. Every action you take leads you closer to or further from your goals. Your mindset is the guiding star that directs what you will do in life.

Jack was a hardworking stockbroker. After working for over twenty years in a renowned investment brokerage firm, he climbed the corporate ladder and took a senior position. Jack did not really like his job, and from time to time, he experienced stress from its rigorous demands. However, the pay was high. That was what kept him in the company for so long. After all, he couldn't be sure he could get another job with so great a salary.

Now, in his sixties, he has accumulated enough wealth to retire comfortably and has left the workforce. Despite that, he does not feel fulfilled. He remembers not spending a lot of time with his children since he had to spend more time in his cubicle. He missed his “moment” with his children—they are grown up

now and not very close to him. Pretty sad. “But that’s to be expected from children nowadays,” he mutters to himself.

He once dreamed of traveling to Alaska and living in the wild for a few days, but now he is too old for that. Besides, his doctor has prohibited him from cold-weather travel because of his high risk of hypothermia. He retires rich but not delighted with his life.

Johnny worked in the same investment company as Jack. Johnny too was overwhelmed by the work and did not enjoy the spreadsheets nor the stress of corporate culture. He wished to move back to his rural hometown and make a living by farming. But strapped for funds, he knew he needed to continue working for the time being. He started learning about agricultural systems on the weekends. By the time he had enough capital to leave the company, he had amassed a lot of agricultural knowledge.

And so, the summer after he quit his job, he made a pilgrimage to his old village to start his own farm. Despite the exhausting workload, he enjoyed his farming life and couldn’t wait to wake up every morning to watch his piglets frolic in a pasture and his hens lay eggs and to harvest ripe tomatoes. Despite not earning as high an income as when he was in the investment company, he enjoyed the freedom of using his time as he wished. He even made time to visit Spain to savor his favorite *jamón ibérico* with his family.

After ten years of getting caked with soil and sweat daily, he developed a successful farm that now enables him to export his produce worldwide and has landed him multiple big restaurant accounts. He earns a much higher income now than he would

have thought possible as a farmer. Still spry in his sixties, he continues working on his farm and has a lot of fun with his grandchildren. When asked what makes him happy, he says, “The ability to rear my goats, milk my cows, collect eggs, and transplant seedlings. These are my sources of joy and the only things keeping me together. I couldn’t imagine living otherwise.”

Jack and Johnny started at the same spot but ended up with vastly different outcomes and happiness levels. One adopted a mindset that maximized his potential to prioritize long-term happiness, while the other hinged his happiness on life’s chance circumstances.

I myself have trained and adopted a mindset that allows me to realistically achieve most of the things that I want in life—including things that I never thought I could possibly do—to progress as much as I want to in both my personal and professional lives and to be as productive as I can. Now I wish to share my findings with you. They have benefitted me, and I hope they do the same for you.

In this book, I will cover how to use your subconscious mind—the most powerful part of your mind, which guides your life decisions and actions. I will also show you how to handle daily stress and adopt a mindset that will minimize future unhappiness while helping you inch closer to your goals day by day. I will unravel commonly believed misconceptions on stress cures and happiness to help you develop realistic thinking while pursuing your dreams.

THE SUBCONSCIOUSNESS

“ Just have a little faith.

— MICHAEL SCOFIELD, *PRISON BREAK*

BENEATH OUR CONSCIOUS MIND LIES OUR SUBCONSCIOUS. IT stores every desire, thought, and belief you hold. Experiencing gut feelings, hunches, an inner voice, instincts, a sixth sense, and intuition are your subconsciousness in action.

A team of firefighters in Chicago, Illinois, went into a living room to extinguish a fire in a kitchen. Strangely, though, the fire would not go out. One firefighter had an uneasy feeling and ordered everyone to get out of the house. Shortly afterward, the living room floor where they had stood collapsed.

When the firefighter was asked how he knew the floor would collapse, he said he didn't know. His gut feeling had told him

something was not right. His subconsciousness that had been collecting a lifetime of experience saved his and his teammates' lives.

Although you may not realize it, your behavior, thoughts, judgments, preferences, and feelings are governed by your subconsciousness. You may meet someone new and for no reason feel strongly connected to them. Perhaps they said something or behave in some way that your subconsciousness recognizes as friendliness or closeness. Likewise, you may meet someone and instantly feel something is not right, although you just can't reason it out.

While your conscious mind can be seen as the commander of your being, your subconscious mind can be seen as the soldiers. Your conscious mind gives an order, and your subconscious mind carries it out without discriminating whether the order is good or bad or real or imagined.¹ Your conscious mind is your subjective mind, while your subconscious mind is your objective mind.

Any belief, regardless of whether it is true or false, held by you influences you to act as if it is the truth. If I tell you that Jack cannot be trusted, without evaluating the accuracy of my statement, you will begin to distance yourself from Jack and treat him as a cagey person. You will not want to open up to Jack and will refuse to smile at him. In reciprocation, Jack notices your inability to trust him and thinks you are malevolent. Your body language says it loud and clear. Jack begins to stay away and avoids sharing personal information with you. You now witness that Jack is not to be trusted. Your expectation becomes a somber premonition.

Listening to a pre-war speech raises the build-up of energy in your body. Even a single word can influence your subconsciousness. Social psychologist John Bargh conducted an experiment in 1996.² Participants who were shown the word “elderly” walked slowly compared to others who were shown other words. You have no awareness of this process happening because it lies within your subconscious level.

Your subconscious mind could turn a fairly neutral situation into a calamity. When it sees a negative statement as the truth, it carries on as if that statement is fact and will sometimes turn it into reality by bringing on hindrances, delays, and excuses. What if you could reverse this phenomenon and use this psychological effect on yourself positively? You can certainly create a far more pleasing outcome. Let’s exploit your subconscious power to your advantage and bring out the best in you.

How Does the Subconscious Mind Work?

Your subconsciousness relies on your consciousness to process messages.

- When your conscious mind desires something badly enough, your subconscious mind knows it and will muster your resources to see that wish fulfilled.
- When your conscious mind believes in something genuinely—even if it is not the truth—your subconscious mind responds to the belief and will spur you to act as if it is the truth.
- When your conscious mind thinks negatively, your

subconscious mind accepts those thoughts and keeps you living negatively.

Imagine that you are at work and your colleague tells you that you look sick. Your subconsciousness lets that message sink in, and suddenly, the blood vessels in your face constrict, making your face turn pale. Now, you look really sick, even though you aren't.³ If your consciousness believes a message, your gullible subconsciousness will believe it. If your consciousness doesn't believe a message given to you, however, the message does not affect you. For example, if you tell an experienced pilot that he looks like he has airsickness, he will probably laugh at you.

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1. Bargh, J. A., & Morsella, E. (2008). The Unconscious Mind. *Perspectives on Psychological Science: A Journal of the Association for Psychological Science*, 3(1), 73–79. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6916.2008.00064.x>
 2. Bargh, J. A., Chen, M., & Burrows, L. (1996). Automaticity of social behavior: Direct effects of trait construct and stereotype activation on action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(2), 230–244. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.71.2.230>
 3. Scrutton, T. (2018). Can being told you're ill make you ill? A discussion of psychiatry, religion and out of the ordinary experiences. *Think*, 17(49), 87–101. doi:10.1017/S1477175618000131

THE STRESSFUL MIND

“ Stress is a modern diseases.

— SAID HASYIM

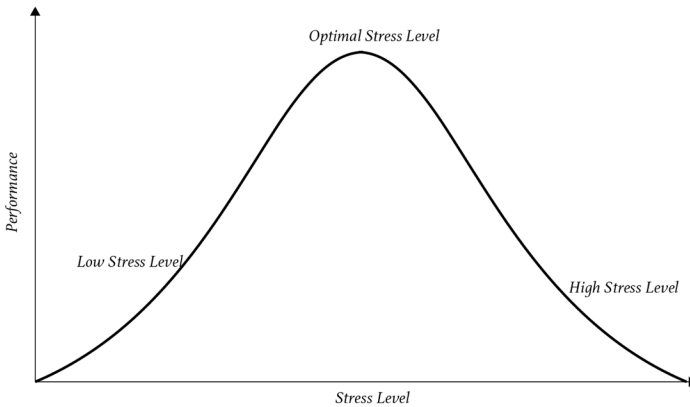
WHEN OUR PRIMITIVE ANCESTORS MET PREDATORS, THEIR BODIES secreted cortisol (a stress hormone), triggering their fight-or-flight instinct—increasing their blood sugar level, adrenaline, and reaction time to prime their body to fight or run from the predators. They might have retreated to their cave to escape the threat, and then, once safe, their cortisol hormone levels would have returned to normal.

You can't eliminate stress; you can only manage it. There is no stress-free life, no matter how hard you struggle for one. Even a peaceful monk experiences stress over possible health problems or other worries.

Some stress is useful for your mind—it keeps you motivated. Living a life with too little stress leads ultimately to boredom and low productivity.

- Military training is stressful, but it increases your toughness.
- An approaching deadline is stressful, but it motivates you to focus on your work.
- Physical exercise is stressful, but it keeps your body healthy.

Let's call this type of stress “productive stress.” You need a moderate amount of this stress to keep yourself going and improving.



Low, Optimal, and High Stress Level Against Performance

THE HAPPINESS DECEPTION

“ Happiness is the absence of the striving for happiness.

— ZHUANG ZHOU

EVERYONE IN THE WORLD WORKS HARD FOR HAPPINESS AND DOES everything in their power to attain it. Many psychologists, scientists, and experts conveniently ascribe 90 percent of your happiness to what's inside your mind, not external factors. They've used success stories of those who claim to be happy, coupled with some scientific studies, to package advice aimed at working on your mind in order to reach happiness.

Positive psychology has inexorably taken the world by storm, influencing people to internalize all their problems into their internal lives. The general message is that if you are unhappy, it

is your problem. It is your lack of strength in handling your mind. All unhappiness is reduced to being the by-product of problems in your mind. When you are unhappy, you are told to fix your mind by meditating or thinking positively and that happiness cannot happen by itself and must be earned. Sadly, this is a *prima facie* belief, and the concept has created a tumultuous reality.

Happiness has been commercialized into a multibillion-dollar industry. Apps have been developed to measure your level of happiness using games that have no way of knowing what makes you happy. These companies often use the profundities of medical experts to back their claims in promulgating their happiness products, courses, or books.

PLAN TO MAXIMIZE THE MIND'S POTENTIAL

“ Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.

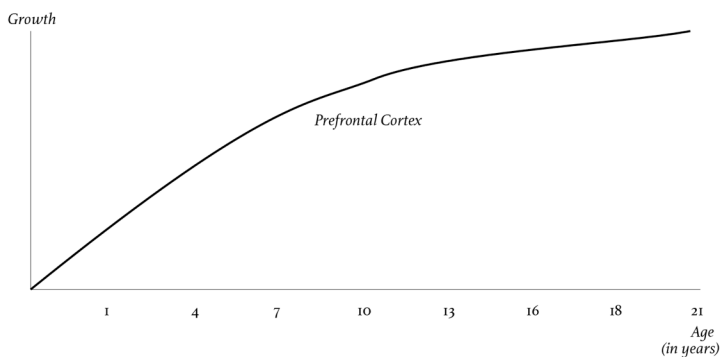
— ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

WATCH FOR IMPORTANT MILESTONES THROUGHOUT YOUR LIFE AND your children's lives to maximize the right mindset formation in them. We have learned that one misstep could snowball into long-term problems. The earlier you tackle a mindset problem, the longer you will enjoy the fruition of your hard work.

CHILDREN

BETWEEN THE AGES of zero and eight, a child's frontal lobe, which includes the prefrontal cortex, is not fully developed

enough to think critically. The prefrontal cortex starts to develop between eight and twelve. Until then, children are amenable and easily believe what you tell them. They are also the most vulnerable to brainwashing and the instillation of negative beliefs. It is crucial that you instill positive beliefs in their subconscious minds before their logical brains mature.



Prefrontal Cortex Development

Source: Casey et al., 2008

CONCLUSION

After learning that your subconsciousness can steer your life for the better or for worse, I hope you will put a deliberate effort into fertilizing it with the right messages now, for when you do, you will begin to see your life moving toward your expected goals. Use this gift to your advantage in every aspect of your life. Indeed, luck plays a vital role, but you can use your subconsciousness to increase your success rate.

Use a realistic mental attitude when facing your problems. Accept that stress will follow you to your last breath. There is no escaping it. No matter how much sunshine you strive for, you will still face unpleasant things in life. Embrace this and prepare yourself to face them. Learning to manage your stress can help you cope with life more easily.

Don't obsess over reaching happiness at the achievement of your goals; instead, strive to work on things you love to do or are good at. Aside from the fulfillment you will gain from your work, most of the time, the money will take care of itself.

Having the right mindset increases your happiness and motivation, which in turn helps fuel long-haul journeys toward reaching difficult goals. You are certainly capable of achieving what you set yourself up for.

Thanks for completing this book.

ALSO BY SAID HASYIM

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