

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

Amy Blankson

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This insightful work offers five strategies to live a happy life in concert with, and sometimes in spite of, modern technology.

Were it not for her optimism, Amy Blankson's relationship with the digital era might be easily summed up: Technology is the biggest disruptor of happiness in human history.

Thankfully, Blankson, a happiness consultant to organizations and individuals, has a solution that she conveys in this impressive, thought-provoking book: five specific strategies to help humans cope with and benefit from technology. Each of the five strategies the book covers is elegantly explained and summarized.

A strategy to "Create a Habitat for Happiness" very directly addresses the manner in which technology, including televisions, computers, and smartphones, can intrude upon and pervade one's personal space. The author poses a compelling question: "Does this tech truly make me happier and/or more productive?"

Blankson discusses technology's impact on the home, the workplace, and schools. Most importantly, she ponders where to build invisible fences "to create healthy boundaries for using tech that will help us avoid temptation, keep us out of trouble, and lead to greater happiness in the long run."

Most of the chapters are augmented by sections called "Happy Hacks to Get You Started," which are in and of themselves gems of helpful advice. When it comes to "computer clutter," Blankson prescribes the Cloud, file cleanup, and archiving, among other things.

Concluding, Blankson stresses to her audience, "These strategies require nothing but an open mind and an earnest desire to shape the world around you for the better." It is this calm, reassuring message, communicated in the old-school style of a handwritten letter, that lends authenticity to Amy Blankson's book and makes it essential reading for a connected populace.

Throughout *The Future of Happiness*, Blankson demonstrates a keen ability to bring clarity to the often perplexing subject of achieving balance and not becoming consumed by technology. Blankson's voice of reason is not just pragmatic, but humanistic.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (May/June 2017)

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