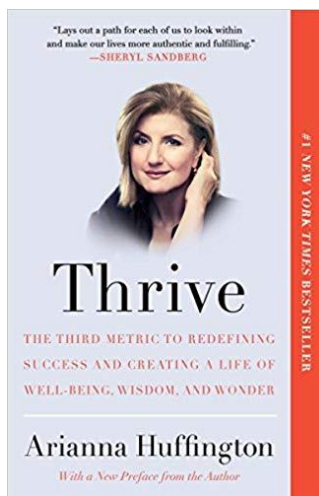


## Recommended Reading

If you are interested, please read *Thrive* by Arianna Huffington prior to the “Revive and Thrive” Women’s Leadership conference on September 13. Or we have provided summary notes of the book. Over the conference lunch we will host a “Work/Life Balance Panel” where various women faculty will discuss their own ideas that allow them thrive in today’s world as a working woman.



### *Thrive: The Third Metric to Redefining Success and Creating a Life of Well-Being, Wisdom, and Wonder*

- **Publisher:** Harmony; Reprint edition (March 17, 2015)
- **ISBN-13:** 978-0804140867
- **ASIN:** 0804140863

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## Thrive Summary Notes

### **Preface/Intro:**

Arianna Huffington (journalist, author, founder of the Huffington Post) describes a life changing wake-up call she experienced in 2007 that sparked the beginning of this book. She’s an internationally known journalist and creator of the Huffington Post. She’s spent a career climbing to the top of the proverbial ladder and found herself totally exhausted in ’07, so sleep deprived and stressed that she passed out and fractured her face – had a huge workup but found it was just lack of sleep. The event made her take a close look at her life – was a crazy state of existence worth it?

We take better care of our smartphones than we do of ourselves! Making sure they are charged, charging docks all over the place, we care that they are not wet/dropped, etc! We don’t do anything like this for ourselves.

Humans need downtime, tons of it. We are not like machines that can be “up” 99.9% of the time. 40% of Americans leave paid vacations unused. Majority of folks don’t completely unplug while on vacation.

Different businesses and governments around the world are looking at ways that jobs can be more sustainable, less stressful, more fulfilling. (gap year of adventure after college, banning

email after hours and on weekends) Goal is finding a job where you'd never like to retire because you love what you do so much.

People are eager to take back control of their lives.

**Measure of success: wellbeing, wisdom, wonder and giving**

While we as women have made substantial strides in the workplace we are much more stressed than in past decades.

**Studies show that sleep deprivation reduces our emotional intelligence, self-regard, assertiveness, sense of independence, empathy towards others, quality of relationships, positive thinking, impulse control. The only things that get better with less sleep are “magical thinking” and reliance on superstition!**

We need to change our relationship with time. We feel a “time famine” all the time. This robs ourselves of “wonder” = our sense of delight in the mysteries of the universe, as well as everyday occurrences and small miracles in our lives.

In order to thrive we must reconnect with ourselves, our loved ones, and our community.

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**Well-Being Section:**

Current notion of success leaves many people driving themselves into the ground – exhaustion and burnout are badges of honor.

Working women have more sleep deprivation, stress and burnout than their male counterparts. Sure we've had a women's revolution that started in the 60s, but we need another revolution to change what's happening to women in the workplace. There's been a new surge in eating disorders in women ages 35 -60 that appears to be related to high-powered jobs and stress.

Women are leaving the workplace due to childcare and elder care, but what is cited next is lack of engagement and enjoyment in the job. When you are fully engaged and happy at work, the juggling act is worth it. So when a mother leaves workforce to be with child, it's often much more complicated than that she just wants to be with the baby – she's often highly stressed, fed up with the ways of succeeding that lead her to be burned out.

If we want high achieving mothers in the workplace “don't give us an office and a work week filled with facetime, give us something to get done and tell us when you need it by.” This is not just true of mothers – women without children feel these same things.

“The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another”

**If you notice your mind wandering, gently escort it back to the present moment without any negative judgment that it wandered.**

You wander from room to room  
Hunting for the diamond necklace  
That is already around your neck - Rumi

Meditation can be done in very short windows of time – just focusing on breathing, etc. Regarding mindfulness, to reap the benefits of it, all we have to do is become present and pay attention.

“Meditation is not just blissing out under a mango tree. It completely changes your brain and therefore changes what you are.”

People look for retreats all over the place (beaches, hills, etc) but really there’s no more peaceful or trouble free retreat than one’s own mind.

Lots of advice on meditation. I found most helpful just this basic first step if you want to try it. ... When you find you are “off” or have lost your center/your patience/fill in the blank – be it stressed at work, cursing at a Lego you just stepped on, ready to wage war on your car keys when you finally find them, etc. Then you just need to take deep breaths, and have an awareness of your palms and soles, just a quick way to check yourself and realize you’ve lost your center – and then gently bring yourself back.

Gazelles are Arianna’s role-models – these animals recognize a lion approaching them and run at mach speed for cover, but as soon as the danger passes they go about grazing peacefully without a care in the world. Humans are not able to do this much of the time and we spend entirely too much time in the “fight-or-flight” mode – “I must get to these work emails NOW, I must use these 4 minutes of downtime to return 6 phone calls, I must respond to this Evite immediately etc.” Much of our life is structured so that we permanently live in a state of fight or flight.

**OVER-CONNECTEDNESS** – the average smartphone user checks their phone once every 6 minutes – or 150 times a day. Since our brains are wired to connect, it’s not easy to turn away from this stimuli. There’s tons of bad stuff happening when we do this...

**“Continuous partial attention” – the state of always being partly tuned into everything which results in never being completely tuned into anything.”**

80% of us have episodes of “email apnea” where we actually hold our breath while reading email.

This is nuts.

Turn off all notifications of email/text/Twitter/Instagram/FB/etc! Go to these sites when you want the info, not the reverse.

“Unless you are an on-call doctor, etc, pulling out your cell phone at a meal with family, coworkers, friends and especially kids, at home or in a restaurant, pierces the sanctity of mealtime, or, as I like to think of it, the invisible-ceremonial-dome-under-which-humankind-forges-civilization. Hopefully there will come a day where having your phone anywhere near a meal is looked upon as repugnant as picking one’s nose, scratching ones balls, or chain-smoking in public.” How awesome is that quote?”

Some companies are setting quiet time (PTO – predictable time off) at work where employees know that they are not allowed to send/receive emails/no smartphone allowed and also time during the day at work where everyone allowed to work uninterrupted – this has lead to higher productivity, happier employees.

Uni-tasking is very important and now must be scheduled! Because so much of our time is spent multitasking, whether we like it or not. Put one task on your schedule and turn off all tech gadgets.

Take time off from email – ex. only check it during business hours. Some companies are switching off work emails from 6pm-7am so folks don’t feel the need to be constantly plugged in.

**The better we take care of ourselves, the more effective we will be at taking care of others – kids, parents, patients, the residents, the grad students, the mentees, and med students we supervise.**

Generation Y (ie the millenials) could also be called “Generation Stress” - They have mass amounts of stress, anxiety, and not surprisingly there is immense over-connectedness in this crowd.

“Sleep your way to the top” – and no, it’s not what you think :)

Lack of sleep has an effect on our brains that can literally remodel it making us more anxious and literally not as intelligent and prone to dementia; and also it makes us more prone to weight gain, stress, illness, traffic accidents. When we get more sleep we are literally smarter/have better memory/are more in control of our lives/ feel more competent.

The light from a computer screen can obstruct our body’s production of melatonin.

We should set our alarms to go off AT NIGHT – to remind us to get the heck in bed. This works for Type A(!!) deadline type folks like many of us. Figure out how much sleep you need (for some it’s 7, others it’s 8 or even 9 hours/night) and then practice good sleep hygiene and most importantly just get in bed with lights out so that you can get the number of hours you need. We treat sleep time as “flex-time” when really it should not be touched. We carve off 45 extra min for our favorite mindless TV show, or wake up 30 min early to get a run in /charts completed/ lunches packed for kids.

Dreaming happens when we are in REM more and this only happens when we are getting enough sleep. Dreaming helps organize our memories/have better memory/organize our thoughts better. There is a lot of advice about sleep hygiene and ways to get to sleep if you have trouble with that.

Muscle growth occurs during rest and down time.

Some studies show that sleeping will actually do more to take-off weight than exercise!! (I imagine this is related to cortisol, stress eating, eating for energy/etc but book did not go into the science here.)

Walking (not sitting in dull conference room) often helps our minds focus and slow down. If anyone has read Steve Jobs bio (great book) he did essentially all his good work/meeting/ideas on walks.

Time in outside/in natural settings decreases anxiety/depression.

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### **Wisdom Section:**

Other than family we should carefully chose the people on our “train” of life – we need to be vulnerable and real with them, no room for masks and games. These people should strengthen us when we falter, remind us of our journey’s purpose when we become distracted. Usher people off the train of your life (dissemblers/folks your gut doesn’t like) when you notice them. But forgive and forget them and don’t hold grudges, there’s nothing more draining.

**Disconnecting and spending time alone allows us to have an inner connection and allows us to proceed from the inside out.** There are a lot of ways she discusses helping us return to a state of calm and balance (mini meditation/focus on breathing/simply being aware of fact you have lost center and guiding yourself back) Getting back to your center becomes easier and easier as you get familiar with the path.

Gratitude helps us move from struggle to grace. Practice gratitude exercises (ex dinner at night or at bedtime with family or just yourself) think of 3 things you are grateful for from that day.

**Wisdom – when your inner voice speaks, shut up and listen.** Wisdom = intuition = inner knowing. Technology can get in the way of our intuition – beeps/growing inbox/texts to return/running between patients

“You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working, and just so you learn to love...by loving” – Francis de Sales

Learning the wisdom of slowing down, of truly living, is itself a life journey.

The feeling of “time affluence” is actually attainable.

- Give yourself time to think about decisions/let them marinate, don't always rush yourself.
  - o small acts, simple emotions such as awe, doing small tasks for other people, can actually give us the sense of time affluence.
  - o Instead of doing everything faster, do everything at the right speed
  - o Don't obsess about saving every last scrap of time

Studies show that the more money Americans have, the more they feel time famine.

Many cases of ADHD in kids are actually due to sleep deprivation.

It started with the “slow food” movement and now we are moving to slow travel, slow living, slow sex, slow parenting, slow cities, slow thinking. Ideas need time to simmer on the back burner.

Evict the obnoxious roommate in your head. So much of what women hear (be sexier, look younger, get thinner, be a better mother/wife/lover) – often it's wrapped in a “You go girl” message but the undertone is clear – we have fallen short in many ways and need to step up our game.

What you focus on, you become. Hold your mind on what you want more of.

There's a great old adage about an old Cherokee and his grandson. The Cherokee describes that we all have a fight going on inside of us between two wolves – one is evil: anger, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, ego and the other wolf is good: joy, peace, hope, serenity, kindness, benevolence, truth, compassion, generosity, faith. The grandson asks which wolf wins in this fight? The old Cherokee replied “The one you feed.” So beautiful.

We need to be aware that often our emotions are on autopilot –we need to be aware of them able to reprogram our own autopilot.

Create habits/keystone habits with friend/husband to help you stick to them. Sleep is good keystone habit to fix – makes you rely less on willpower and fix other keystone habits like exercise, meditation.

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### **Wonder Section:**

Wonder is not just a product of what we see, it's just as much a product of our state of mind, our being, the way in which we see the world. Our sense of wonder is often stronger when it's provoked by things that are ordinary and unassuming. A child's face, rain, a seashell.

“Happiness is love. Full stop.” This is the conclusion of a large research study over 75 year and cost 20 million dollars (and same conclusion as a number of other studies on this topic).

**“The only thing people regret is that they didn’t live boldly enough, that they didn’t invest enough heart, didn’t love enough. Nothing else really counts at all.”**

Nature, music, and art are the most fertile grounds for experiencing wonder.

Fully giving our attention to anything-or anyone-is precisely what is becoming rare in our hyper-connected world.

“What is success? It is being able to go to bed each night with your soul at peace.” –Paul Coelho  
Discussion of one’s own death – this is something that is rarely discussed in our society. And yet it’s a sure thing, the ultimate equalizer. There is no single thing that can teach us more about life than death. If we want to redefine what it means to live a successful life, we need to integrate into our daily lives the certainty of our death. The fact that our time is limited is what makes it so precious. To redefine success we need to redefine our relationship with death. In the West by avoiding conversations about our own death we have separated ourselves so much from what death can teach us. That sense that there’s something bigger than the world we live in (no matter your spiritual beliefs) can dramatically change our priorities about what is truly important in life.

70% of people say they want to die at home and yet 70% die in the hospital. We talk about death in sterile places like lawyers’ offices, doctors’ offices/hospitals. Where we should be discussing it is over food and with humor. There’s a “Death over Dinner” movement.

One body of research showed “The difference between a good death and a difficult death seemed to be whether the dying person had shared his or her wishes.”

Studies show the last thing we lose is our hearing – there should be more music at time of person’s death.

The more you talk about death the more you can be joyful about day to day life.

When people are more open about death they show more compassion for other groups, are less racist and more fair.

A mindful life can fuse with a mindful death.

Three basic practices that help you live more in the moment:

1. Focus on the rising and falling of your breath for ten seconds when you feel tense, rushed, or distracted. This allows you to feel present.
2. Pick an image that ignites the joy in you. It can be your child, pet, the ocean, a painting - something that inspires a sense of wonder. Anytime you feel contracted, go to it to help you expand.
3. Forgive yourself for any judgments you are holding against yourself and then forgive your judgments of others. (If Nelson Mandela can do it, you can too) Then look at your life and the day ahead with newness and wonder.

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### **Giving Section:**

There is such power in the act of service – volunteering needs to be a regular part of the life of a family. Power of compassion is all around us. Serving others helps people rebuild their own lives after they've lost job/loved one/sense of purpose.

It shouldn't take a natural disaster to make us tap into our own humanity.

Our giving instinct needs to be part of our everyday lives. "The great opportunity is where you are. Do not despise your own place and hour. Every place is under the stars, every place is the center of the world." Every place is full of openings to make a real difference in the life of another human being.

Gravity makes us stand tall. It is when we give that we feel the most abundant.

"From everyone to whom much is given, much shall be required."

Compassionate empathy is a skill that we can nurture, and one that leads to action.

Giving (service, kindness, volunteering time, etc) is a miracle drug with (no side effects) for health and wellbeing.

Senior citizen who volunteer have much lower rates of depression and are much more likely to engage in activities that lower risk of dementia

Fill your life with giving moments – simple acts like talking to strangers, reach out to others. We often focus on what giving does for the community – but what is most profound is what it does for us!

Transforming our narcissistic habits and awakening our giving nature is the work of a lifetime. But it starts with daily small steps – once again our daily life is the ultimate training ground.

She includes lots of apps to block distracting websites, help you focus, stay calm, etc.

Other suggestions:

1. Make small gestures of kindness and giving a habit, and pay attention to how it affects your mind, your emotions, and your body.
2. During your day make a personal connection with people you might normally tend to pass by and take for granted: the checkout clerk, the cleaning crew of your office, the barista in the coffee shop. See how this helps you feel more alive and reconnected to the moment.
3. Use a skill or talent you have (cooking, accounting, decorating) to help someone who could benefit from it. I'll jumpstart your transition from a go-getter to a go-giver, and reconnect you to the world and natural abundance in your own life.

"Onward, upward, and inward!" - How she ended a recent college commencement speech and how she ended the book.