



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

Arianna Huffington

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In *Thrive*, Arianna Huffington makes an impassioned and compelling case for the need to redefine what it means to be successful in today's world.

Arianna Huffington's personal wake-up call came in the form of a broken cheekbone and a nasty gash over her eye -- the result of a fall brought on by exhaustion and lack of sleep. As the cofounder and editor-in-chief of the Huffington Post Media Group -- one of the fastest growing media companies in the world -- celebrated as one of the world's most influential women, and gracing the covers of magazines, she was, by any traditional measure, extraordinarily successful. Yet as she found herself going from brain MRI to CAT scan to echocardiogram, to find out if there was any underlying medical problem beyond exhaustion, she wondered is this really what success feels like?

As more and more people are coming to realize, there is far more to living a truly successful life than just earning a bigger salary and capturing a corner office. Our relentless pursuit of the two traditional metrics of success -- money and power -- has led to an epidemic of burnout and stress-related illnesses, and an erosion in the quality of our relationships, family life, and, ironically, our careers. In being connected to the world 24/7, we're losing our connection to what truly matters. Our current definition of success is, as *Thrive* shows, literally killing us. We need a new way forward.

In a commencement address Arianna gave at Smith College in the spring of 2013, she likened our drive for money and power to two legs of a three-legged stool. They may hold us up temporarily, but sooner or later we're going to topple over. We need a third leg -- a third metric for defining success -- to truly thrive. That third metric, she writes in *Thrive*, includes our well-being, our ability to draw on our intuition and inner wisdom, our sense of wonder, and our capacity for compassion and giving. As Arianna points out, our eulogies celebrate our lives very differently from the way society defines success. They don't commemorate our long hours in the office, our promotions, or our sterling PowerPoint presentations as we relentlessly raced to climb up the career ladder. They are not about our resumes -- they are about cherished memories, shared adventures, small kindnesses and acts of generosity, lifelong passions, and the things that made us laugh.

In this deeply personal book, Arianna talks candidly about her own challenges with managing time and prioritizing the demands of a career and raising two daughters -- of juggling business deadlines and family crises, a harried dance that led to her collapse and to her "aha moment." Drawing on the latest groundbreaking research and scientific findings in the fields of psychology, sports, sleep, and physiology that show the profound and transformative effects of meditation, mindfulness, unplugging, and giving, Arianna shows us the way to a revolution in our culture, our thinking, our workplace, and our lives.

From the Hardcover edition.

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

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From Reader Review Thrive: The Third Metric to Redefining Success and Creating a Life of Well-Being, Wisdom, and Wonder for online ebook

David says

Content: 4 stars

Audiobook: 2 stars

Arianna Huffington, the founder of the Huffington Post, has written a useful book about achieving a successful life. She recommends thinking about your life from the end, moving backwards. What do you want to be told in a eulogy at your funeral? People don't say, "he was rich, he was powerful, he had a corner office, he gave good PowerPoint presentations, he climbed the corporate ladder, he made lots of money." Instead, people talk about the values of that person, the good he did in the world, the lives he touched.

So, Huffington writes that success is not measured just in wealth and power, but in the sense of well being, the capacity to be compassionate and giving. The cumulative sharing of memories, experiences, and wisdom is what counts.

This is basically a self-help book. Huffington warns of the dangers of burnout. In order to avoid burnout, she recommends a host of actions for achieving a successful life, including getting enough sleep, meditating, turning off social media. She recommends helping yourself to achieve serenity and a sense of wonder, before launching out to help others.

I didn't read this book; I listened to Huffington narrate her audiobook. While her voice is pleasant, her heavy Greek accent makes it quite difficult to understand what she is saying at times. So, I do NOT recommend this as an audiobook, but to read the print version.

Monika Gierszewska says

I bought this book at the airport and it's short enough to finish it before the end of your long-haul... Arianna gives us a valuable reminder that there is more to life than wealth and power, and provides practical tips on how to have a more meaningful life, how to be healthier, have a better balance, sleep more, meditate and give to others. Sounds obvious and I felt like skipping through some pages, but the reminder to thrive is exactly what I needed right now.

Robert says

During a recent road trip, my wife and I listened to the audio version of Thrive, read by the author's sister, Agapi Stassinopoulos. I quickly overcame the heavy Greek accent and focused on the words and the message. But Stassinopoulos's phrasing, voice inflections, and heartless delivery made some words unintelligible and many important phrases downplayed. It's worth mentioning that I was only able to sit through a handful of chapters - I did not finish this book.

It's immediately obvious to the reader that a book will ramble when the title is one word and the subtitle is

eleven words long. But that lengthy subtitle still doesn't offer any focus to Huffington's long-winded points. Metric #1 to defining success? Money. Metric #2? Power. Metric #3? Physical and Emotional Well-Being, Wisdom, Wonder, and Giving.

Thrive's biggest take aways are that in this world today, we need more sleep, less social media, a satisfaction in living, and an acceptance of death. But similar to the muddiness of the audio delivery, Huffington's message is mired down by quote after quote after quote. In one paragraph, she references Aristotle, Ovid, Benjamin Franklin, and a modern-day researcher. Don't get me wrong: Huffington has some excellent self-improvement tenets. But she doesn't make them.

Don't frustrate yourself with this book or torture yourself with the audio version. There are many other self-help books with similar messages that are conveyed better.

Mason says

When I looked over a couple of the harsh reviews for *Thrive*, I felt like they missed the point. One said that it read like a Pinterest board, but is that really a bad thing for a self-help book? That's the kind of world we live in today; ease of access, simple layouts. Would you rather it read like *War and Peace* or a doctoral dissertation? That wouldn't appeal to nearly as many people and a self-help book should, in essence, appeal to a lot of people. I think *Thrive* succeeds at doing that. Other reviews thought it was hypocritical that she recommends apps that can help you disconnect from technology, but again, look at the bigger picture. If you're already addicted to technology and obsessed with apps, why not use an app to get your foot in the door to disconnection? I think everybody can find something in *Thrive* that they connect with and can easily implement in their daily lives. And if you're sitting there saying you couldn't even bring yourself to finish the book then, ironically, you probably need self-help more than any of us.

(Disclaimer: I received a free, advance copy of this book for review.)

Hope says

This is the third book in a row that I've read on secular soul care.

Arianna Huffington, co-founder of the news and opinion website The Huffington Post, writes of her journey to redefine success. "It is not always about doing more, but also doing better – and we do better when we are connected to our inner wisdom, strength and intuition." She emphasizes the third metric of success (the first two are money and power) as personal well-being. "We cannot thrive and lead the lives we want without learning to go inward." (p. 260)

She's spot on when she says we take better care of our cell phones than of ourselves (always being careful to recharge them, but ignoring our bodies' similar need). "Disease happens when the repair process is not keeping up with the damage process."

The book's best advice for de-stressing is common sense. Get plenty of sleep, take walks, own a pet. But Huffington goes further. The reader is encouraged to grow in wisdom by practicing mindfulness, gratitude, yoga, meditation, stoicism, and breath consciousness. Slow down, take happiness classes, listen to your inner voice.

This inward spiritual journey, however, is completely untethered from specific truth. This quote from David Foster Wallace explains, “Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship. And the compelling reason for choosing some sort of god or spiritual type thing to worship – be it JC or Allah, be it Yahweh or the Wiccan Mother Goddess, or the Four Noble Truths, or some inviolable set of ethical principles – is that pretty much anything else you worship will eat you alive.” (p. 259)

So as long as you don't worship money or power, but some other supernatural being, you're good to go. Sadly, what appears to be a call to spiritual depth is really a call to a religion of self-realization through personal effort, which is something that can never meet the deepest needs of the human heart.

Lucy says

Best self-help/memoir/non-fiction book I've read in a long time. Not only inspiring but the book also provides plenty of small, practical changes, how to enact these changes without too much effort (including suggestions of good tools/apps to use) and how to make habits out of them. Arianna manages to balance religious beliefs, scientific findings, spiritual epiphanies and personal experience well and neither sounds too preachy nor too academic, combining well-told stories and anecdotes with modern science and psychology studies to back them up. Would highly recommend to anyone wanting to reduce their stress and/or looking for a happier, more meaningful life.

Kathryn West says

In these times we seem to wear busyness and stress as a badge of honour. In Thrive Arianna Huffington of the Huffington Post tells of the challenges she faced as a mother and business woman and the personal issues that drove her to find a better way to live. Sleep, mindfulness, meditation and unplugging are all covered. While the ideas are not new the book is well researched and the author uses data to back up her ideas. It made me take notice and has made me decide to make some big changes. I am taking a new direction in my health coaching practice as a result of reading this book.

Debbie "DJ" says

Won through Goodreads First Reads. Thank You!

I have always admired Arianna Huffington for her sheer tenacity in overcoming "the good old boys club" and helping women find their way to the top. In her latest book she recounts her breakdown after working 18 hours a day, seven days a week, focusing on money and power. After her breakdown she discovers a need to take a good hard look at her life. She is finally forced to ask the question, what is the true meaning of success?

She begins with describing three metrics in life: money, power, and a third metric which has four pillars. These pillars include well-being, wisdom, wonder, and giving. I felt that most of these ideas have been around for decades and were simply put into new formats. There just simply wasn't much new here, though it was interesting to see how she came to employ them in her life.

While I am probably not the target audience for such a book it may be helpful for those just entering the

work force. There are a few gems to be taken away from this read, but for the most part it was not helpful for me.

Amy says

To be honest, I couldn't bring myself to finish this book. It reads like a shitty Pinterest board

Ryan Dejonghe says

My co-worker gave me one of the most profound statements, “you shouldn’t have to pay for serenity.” And though many may balk at Huffington’s wealth, to her credit, she lays out a plan to embrace “the third metric” free of charge. Not only does she dispense hearty advice, but she also points to a plethora of other resources (including free apps) that can continue your path toward free serenity.

Forgetting the buzz words, THRIVE boils down to two main things: sleep and meditation. Don’t shirk a full night’s sleep, and remember to pause. Again, to Huffington’s credit, these two things will make HUGE differences in your life. Through her careful distribution of facts and personal story (including vulnerable moments like her own blood-pooling fall and her daughter’s addiction), Huffington presents a case that is near impossible to refute. Sleep and meditation WILL improve your life.

And, yes, while it is not spelled out, there is no discredit to Huffington’s first two metrics. She uses the illustration of a three-legged stool, this book being the third leg. The other two legs are wealth and power. For those that have it, good for you. Thankfully this book sticks to topic and doesn’t obfuscate the task at hand: sleep and mediate more. Money is good, but these others things you can have immediately.

Huffington also speaks about having a sense of wonder and giving, but she goes back to how these things are improved with the first two: sleep and meditation. They are vitally important to your own thriving life; you can’t help others (such as her example with the airplane oxygen masks) before you help yourself.

As mentioned before, the resources included in this book are aplenty. She has a chock-full bibliography and three appendixes listing free apps, but there are many more resources included within the text itself. You’ll find quotes, books, online resources, and apps that will further your study into a better life.

Yes, it was convenient that Huffington made a ton of money before her “ah ha!” moment, but don’t let that bother you. We all come to these moments at different stages of our lives and there is plenty here that we can benefit from. Don’t let your head hit the figurative (or literal) desk before you find out—find out now.

Thanks to Harmony and Crown for sending me this book to review. I’ve had almost a week to implement some of the things I’ve learned and I feel great.

Melanie says

This book is a mishmash of pre- and re- digested advice about getting enough sleep, becoming mindful, meditating, and changing one's value system to honor "the third metric": a redefinition of success to include values beyond money and power.

Ms. Huffington spends many pages telling the reader to unplug from digital devices, and then spends as many pages listing and annotating apps to meditate by, unplug by, control one's multi-tasking by, or even do nothing by. **

She praises and damns social media, makes generalizations about what physicists believe about time, and makes enormous generalizations about being guided by one's intuition or inner sense of rightness. (Note: terrorists believe in their sense of rightness, too.) Other generalizations are more annoying. Sorry, I don't buy the idea that sleep is a feminist issue, and I disagree strongly that people do not bond over moments of shared mortality. Our national experience and personal experience belie that assumption.

Much of the book is not this annoying, but so much of it is that the reader almost misses some genuine insights - such as the observation that the algorithms that govern the user's "personalized" experience at sites such as amazon.com provide a very shallow interpretation of who the user is.

Note to Arianna's editor: Metaphors work better if they're not, dare I say, counter-intuitive, or downright wrong. The iceberg did not hit the Titanic. The Titanic hit the iceberg. Just saying.

I received this book as an ARC. This is my honest review.

**Literally. As in, watch this app for 2 minutes if you want to do nothing.

Sharon Profis says

Arianna's advice is worth taking. The first two chapters are the strongest, especially the commentary about meditation and well-being. The catch is that if you don't have an interest in the most current research, and are perturbed by too many reference quotes, it will be hard to get through. (I enjoyed it, but will share this caveat with anyone I recommend it to.)

I found myself enjoying her personal anecdotes the most, even getting misty-eyed reading stories from her childhood. Especially those about her mother.

Solid advice. Worth reading. The appendixes are also great resources on their own.

Miz Lizzie says

Arianna Huffington has achieved the two metrics that signal success in our society: money and power. But when she broke her cheekbone after collapsing from built-up exhaustion, stress, and lack of sleep, she reawakened to the idea that there needs to be a Third Metric for defining success. That third metric is made up of well-being, wisdom, wonder, and giving. Pairing bits of personal experience with the latest research, Huffington argues persuasively for a new paradigm of work and society. What she says is not new but it is perhaps notable for being addressed to high-powered executives in private enterprises, the already successful in the money and power metrics, in other words. There is still value here for those of us in the public sector, public service, and/or struggling to get by even if our workplaces are unlikely to allow us to take an afternoon nap, though some of the book pairings below might hit home more directly. It is certainly encouraging to see that there are some with money and power who are working to create a new paradigm for society.

Book Pairings:

Gretchen Rubin's *The Happiness Project* and *Happier at Home*.

Brene Brown's *Daring Greatly*.

Austin Kleon's *Steal Like an Artist* and *Show Your Work*.

Cat (cat-thecatladylady) says

DNF at 45%

since I like non fiction so much I decided to give self help books a try but nope, this isn't for me. it bored me to death even if it did have some good points

Sarah O'Flaherty says

Disappointing. I liked the sentiment, but was very underwhelmed by the content - a mish-mash of quotes and scientific references. The book felt like it was written by many authors - or perhaps no author at all - with all the snippets grabbed from other sources. The most useful element was the appendixes - contributed not by the author but by Carolyn Gregoire.

It is also important to note that over a third of the book is appendices, notes and an index. Unfortunately, something you can't tell when purchasing on a kindle.
