



Resisting Happiness

Matthew Kelly

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A true story about why we sabotage ourselves, feel overwhelmed, set aside our dreams, and lack the courage to simply be ourselves... and how to start choosing happiness again! Are you happy? It may be the wrong question. Most of us think we are relatively happy, while at the same time knowing that we could be happier -- maybe even a lot happier. Ordinary people and the finest philosophers have been exploring the question of happiness for thousands of years, and theories abound. But this is not a book of theory. Resisting Happiness is a deeply personal, disarmingly transparent look at why we sabotage our own happiness and what to do about it. Are you overwhelmed? Do you procrastinate? Do you sometimes feel like you are your own worst enemy?

Resisting Happiness Details

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Author : Matthew Kelly

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From Reader Review Resisting Happiness for online ebook

Amber says

A short, simple walkthrough with reflections that are helpful for many people. A huge turn off again, as is a turn off often with Kelly's work, is the shameless self-promotion that is two advertisements mid-book, and several plugs for himself and his company in the name of teaching other Catholics how to better their spiritual lives- mostly through buying his books and going on retreats with his group. Things better left out of the book altogether, or at least kept to the back of the book.

Gillian Brownlee says

When I first checked this book out from the library, I didn't realize that this was such a religion-heavy book. It almost made me not want to read it, because I didn't want to be preached at. But the description resonated with me, so I stuck with it. And I'm glad I did.

If you look between all the bits about finding God and surrendering yourself to God and whatnot, there's actually some really fantastic advice in this book. It's the kind of book that I almost want to buy just so I can highlight and underline and take notes in the margins, and I'm not usually someone who writes in books.

And even the overly religious parts manage to not be preachy. Kelly has found his happiness through his God, and he wants to share his methods with everyone because he truly wants everyone to be happy. I wish all Catholics were like him.

Amy Marie says

A decent little self-help book, with some Catholicism thrown in. It isn't tremendously great writing, but some really good nuggets of practical truth.

Tracey says

I received this book as a Christmas gift from our parish. It was just what I needed to read during Lent. Each chapter inspired me to take a more active role in my relationship with God.

Hannah says

At Christmas Eve mass this year, my church was kind enough to gift a copy of this book to all parishioners. I'll admit, upon receiving the book as we were leaving church, I had no intention of opening its pages. On the drive home, though, I started to read the back cover and immediately the message resonated with me. Matthew Kelly's latest book is about overcoming resistance in all facets of your life and becoming the best-

version-of-yourself. Each chapter ends with a recap of its fundamental message and a way that you can engage with that particular message. Yes, it is heavily influenced by Catholicism and you will encounter many passages about exploring your own relationship with God, but I can guarantee that every single page of this book has a universal message that transcends your particular religion or spirituality. This book was exactly what I needed in this moment in time: not only as a reflection on my life as the year draws to a close, but also as a call to action to start living the life I want to lead as I struggle to discern just what that entails. I didn't finish this book and miraculously have all the answers, but I did leave with a surprising amount of clarity and insight into myself, my ambitions, and my faith.

Virginia Lieto says

I cannot thank my brother Ed, enough, for gifting me with *Resisting Happiness*, by Matthew Kelly. This book was a real eye-opener for me! As human beings, we naturally resist happiness, and when we do so, we resist God, the source of all happiness. “Why do we resist God? Because deep down we don’t trust Him...deep down we think that God is trying to limit our freedom” (p. 214). Kelly tells us throughout the book that we need to become “the best version of ourselves.” How do we do that: by stopping the resistance.

Throughout the book, Matthew Kelly shows us how we can find happiness by tackling our urge to be resistant. Let me share with you just two golden nuggets, gleaned from reading this wonderful book, that I believe will make me happier – just a couple of things I can do to fight the resistance to be happy.

Idea #1: Prioritize Your Life in Accordance with God’s Plan

Matthew Kelly comments in the book that when he conducts his various speaking engagements, he comes across people he has met in the past. Since Mr. Kelly always brings up the concept of setting aside 10 minutes a day in prayer with the Lord, he always asks “How many days last week did you spend ten minutes in quiet conversation with God” (p. 53)? Kelly goes on to tell the reader how he, himself, spends his ten minutes conversing with God about what is on Kelly’s plate for the day, looking to God to tweak the plan, if necessary.

What an awesome idea! I’ve taken Matthew Kelly’s advice, and every morning as I lay in bed, I thank God for another day to serve Him. I think about what is on my agenda and seek affirmation. On several occasions additional tasks pop into my head. These tasks get priority, as I believe they are things God wants me to address within the upcoming day. What I have come to realize from this experience is that I am getting through all of my tasks by mid-afternoon! These are tasks that would have normally crept over into the following day.

Lesson learned: Prioritizing my day in accordance with God’s plan makes me more productive, and that makes me happier!

Idea #2: Do Without, For Someone in Need

Matthew Kelly speaks of his love for food. That is something we share in common. Weight gain is another thing we seem to share in common, as he describes his struggles to resist unhealthy foods. In *Resisting Happiness*, Kelly endorses fasting. He suggests that we start small, by denying ourselves of one item a day. When we do so, we should offer it up for a cause. As we begin to deny ourselves, we leave room for God to make changes for the better in our lives. We can offer our sacrifices for the benefit others. Through self-

denial, we grow in the virtue of self-control.

Another awesome idea! I can do that! I started with small things like giving up a dessert, and when I do, I offer it up as a sacrifice for a friend who is suffering from aggressive breast cancer. When we put purpose behind our actions, we are more inclined to keep up the good habit.

Lesson learned: I am more inclined to do without, if I can do it for someone in need. Bonus points: I will lose the weight!

These are just two of many golden nuggets of information packed in this book waiting for you to discover. If you are looking for happiness, then look no further than “Resisting Happiness.”

John Sutton says

This is the 2nd Matthew Kelly book I have read. My wife is a big fan and we actually did get to go to one of his events. He keeps things very basic in his writings, but by doing that makes it easy to understand and actionable. Some religious books are written at a level that are hard to relate. This book tackles happiness and why we do things that we know will not make us happy or we think will bring us happiness, but never do. Some of what Matthew Kelly talks about in this book is basic productivity advice, but it is well spoken and with a Catholic bent to it. Below are some key takeaways I had reading the book.

Resistance- This is pretty much the main theme of the book and how resistance saps you of your potential and what you are trying to accomplish. It prefers the easy path and contributes to how we justify the things we do even when we know they may not be good for us or make us happy.

Do a good job to be fulfilled, you can not be happy doing a bad job- Working hard helps us improve and become the best version of ourselves. When we don't do a good job and slack at work, we are not happy and not getting better. For example we stay in jobs and do things for money, yet we do not like what we are doing. You work at least 40 hours a week, if you do not like your job how are you supposed to be the happiest you can be?

Little things over time lead to big results- This is one of the hardest things I think for all of us to realize. The get rich quick schemes and change your lifestyle in a day items do not work because it is little things and little habits over time that lead to big results and happiness.

Continuous learning- This is something that is essential for happiness because things change over time and when you do not know what is going on it is hard to be happy. This is something I have taken to heart after graduating from college. I have probably learned more in the past 6 years than I have in the first 21 years of my life.

Relative truth- This is a topic that is getting more and more attention, but it basically goes like this. There are no firm truths anymore. Whatever I believe is what I believe and whatever you believe is what you believe. This works in some circumstances, but in most cases it causes you to not believe in anything. With nothing to believe in or be passionate about, being happy becomes an even harder thing to do. There are some things in the world that are right or wrong. If you feel strongly about something, believe and do something about it.

Delay gratification- I think this is something people get confused on with celebrities and athletes. While there might be aspects of their lives where they do not delay gratification, to be the best at something you have to make sacrifices and delaying gratification is a part of that. If you are a professional athlete your body is your main attribute. You need to keep it in the best shape possible which means eating right and working out even when you do not want to.

Do not trust God- The last point I liked from the book is that we do not trust God and because of sin try to take him away from our lives and not make him the focus. When we lose sight of what he is trying to do in our lives, happiness is much harder if not impossible to find. I think regardless of whether you believe in God or not you can not discredit what is in the bible and the principles it teaches. We get it twisted that getting rid of God will give us freedom yet instead it just leaves us lonely and unhappy.

You do not need to be catholic to read this book and still pick up great tips and techniques for finding happiness. However if you ignore that part of the book then I would probably say there are better productivity and happiness books. Matthew Kelly weaves both the catholic side and the happiness side together very well. You see the similarities and how they relate. I think you will be better for reading the book and as pointed out in the book, 57% of people give into resistance and do not finish a book when they start it. I am glad resistance did not get the best of me.

Genevieve says

This book is full of lots of practical tips to overcome laziness and learn to be more free and self-disciplined, always with the end in mind- striving for holiness and doing God's will!

Jami Murphy says

Totally disappointed. I have always enjoyed his writing. I have found inspiration in his words during some dark times in my life. I think he needs to step away from his work and find his true voice, because the one in this book is tired. I'll always read his books- too bad this one is such a flop.

Caroline Honn says

The first 40 pages were pretty spot-on. As others have said, Matthew has a way of simplifying things - taking them up to the 30,000 foot view for a little much needed perspective. It works for him and for most of us too. But as the pages went on, there was less and less of substance. The most repeated message was that Matthew Kelly has been writing and speaking and traveling for a loooong time. I lost the plot after awhile and was looking for more relevance and less repetition about how long Matthew has been doing this.

Steven R. McEvoy says

The subtitle of this book is "A True Story about Why We Sabotage Ourselves, Feel Overwhelmed, Set Aside

Our Dreams, and Lack the Courage to Simply Be Ourselves... and How to Start Choosing Happiness Again" and that is quite a mouthful. But having read a number of Matthew Kelly's books over the last few years I was very excited to read this one. I must admit I read this book while rereading Rediscover Jesus, I read it through once and could not put it down, and am now reading it through a chapter a day. It was very interesting reading these two books in parallel. Matthew Kelly states in the introduction that this book is the most personal book that he has written to date. Having read a number of the others I completely agree. He has opened up and been transparent about his own faith journey, his successes, growth and failures. He is teaching by example, his example. And what a brave, courageous and motivating example it is.

Matthew also shares a number of stories that he has shared before. But this is the most exhaustive collection of them, and some of them go into more details or extended versions of the stories. So this book is part autobiography, part spiritual history and part a guidebook for those of us who wish to grow in the Christian life. Matthew states in the introduction: "The hardest war to win is one you don't even realize you are fighting, and the hardest enemy to defeat is the one you don't even know exists. Every day you are at war with resistance." And he goes on from there to show us this pattern from his own life. And like many of Kelly's other writings the focus is not on him but on God, and our relationship with God, "When I did something that I knew was God's will, something that would clearly help me become a-better-version-of-myself, I was filled with joy. When I did something that I knew was wrong or was clearly not good for me, that joy began to evaporate." And is that not what Jesus promised in Matthew 5:6 'For the thief comes to steal, kill and destroy, but I have come that you might have life and have it abundantly.' How many of us would say we are truly living the abundant life? That we are living from a place of Joy? Kelly also declares "It is clear that God does not want us to be negative thinkers. But he also doesn't want our thinking to be neutral. He wants us to be positive thinkers on an epic scale." Would you say you are living that way? If not this book might open your eyes and your heart to following the Holy Spirit more.

In speaking specifically about parenting and working with children Kelly says "I suppose we all need a chance to get outside ourselves and serve other people. It seems the earlier in life we get this chance in a real and tangible way- a chance to serve others, know that we have worth, discover our innate ability to make a difference in other people's lives- the better off we are." And I think about my own children and How I want them to learn to live to become the best version of themselves. We regularly read Kelly's Why Am I Here as a family, and my children often talk about decisions that help them or hinder them from being that best version of themselves. But by growing in it from the learning in this book, hopefully and prayerfully I can be a better example.

One of the key takeaways I got from read this book was about self discipline, even self discipline in the little things. Matthew says "These realizations about denying ourselves, self-control, delayed gratification, and fasting are not new. They are wrapped up in two thousand years of Catholic genius. Saint Augustine wrote, "Conquer yourself and the world lies at your feet."" And learning from his examples we can start small and build to bigger disciplines. But on that same note Kelly says if we are striving to grow in discipline we will also experience greater resistance "Resistance hates discipline. It hates self-control. Resistance abhors delayed gratification and any type of self-denial that makes your heart, mind, and soul strong." He also advises us that if we want to see change we need to be part of making that change happen. "If you want to be part of an excellent parish, stop waiting for someone else to make it one. Get involved and make it an excellent parish. Resistance encourages us to take it easy and settle for mediocrity. But God created us for happiness, and he fills us with great joy as we strive for excellence, especially in the spiritual life." Matthew insists:

"God wants you to live an excellent life. In that quest for excellence you will find a rare happiness."

He also stresses the importance of being gentle with ourselves as part of the processs. "One of the most

important reasons to be gentle with ourselves is because if we cannot forgive ourselves, we will struggle to forgive others. And if we cannot forgive ourselves or others, we will resist even God's forgiveness. When we are gentle with ourselves, when we are patient with ourselves, we develop awareness, and awareness breeds compassion. And every person who ever crosses your path needs a little compassion." And also "Be gentle with yourself, be gentle with others, and never stop striving to be all that God created you to be: the-very-best-version-of-yourself."

And again he always cycles back to being who God calls us to be. He says "God designed human beings for specific purposes. When we stray from them, things tend to go wrong and we start to feel dissatisfied at best and miserable at worst. You were made for mission. You will never have lasting happiness until you realize this and act on it."

This book was an excellent read, and I know already that I will read it again soon. Matthew draws examples from his own life and a few examples from outside his life. Each chapter has a main teaching followed by a reminder of the Key Point and Action Step at the end of the chapter. This is a great read and it will inspire you.

On a side note I am still waiting in anticipation for The Narrow Path that Dynamic Catholic promoted for almost a year but keeps getting pushed back but books like this one and Rediscover Jesus. But both Rediscover Jesus and this book are excellent reads, that will have immediate impact on all areas of your life if you read them with an open hear. So give this book a read or a listen all you have to lose is your resistance. And you have a world of joy and happiness to gain, true joy found only in God.

Read the review on my blog [Book Reviews and More](#) and reviews of other books by Matthew Kelly.

(Note: This book is part of a series of reviews: [A Year of Reading Intention - Catholic Reading!](#))

Lisa Basile says

This book was a freebie in my son's CCD class, plus it's a book about happiness (what's not to like?) so I figured I'd give it a try. I rarely don't finish a book, but after a few pages of this one I could not stomach the rest. The opening page preaches that pressing the snooze button is a moral failure. On page 3, the author shares how many books he's written and how many copies he's sold (excuse me while I roll my eyes, Mr. Narcissist). This book is just too much of a sermon to continue.

Robin says

Uplifting and inspiring

I really liked how he interwove his personal story with the points he was trying to make on how we resist our own happiness. It really made me think on the many ways I had resisted my own happiness and had not realized it. Highly recommended.

Bruna says

worth reading. Uplifting and encouraging.

Jill says

It came in the mail today and I started it and found I couldn't put it down and just finished it. I suppose that there was nothing earth-shattering here, but it was all good wisdom that I longed to hear said out loud, at least in my head as I read the words. I needed the encouragement and direction and challenge. I needed to be asked to reflect on the statements made. I think I'll read it again someday. This book was written by Matthew Kelly.
