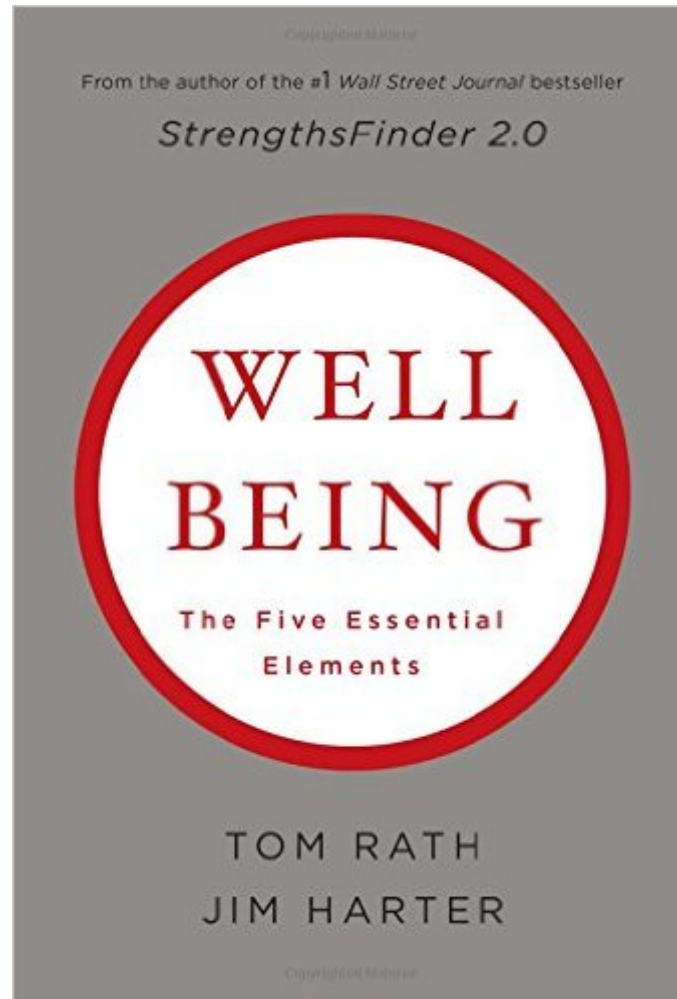


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# Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements



## Synopsis

Much of what we think will improve our wellbeing is either misguided or just plain wrong. Contrary to what many people believe, wellbeing isn't just about being happy. Nor is it only about being wealthy or successful. And it's certainly not limited to physical health and wellness. In fact, focusing on any of these elements in isolation may drive us to frustration and even a sense of failure. When striving to improve our lives, we are quick to buy into programs that promise to help us make money, lose weight, or strengthen our relationships. While it might be easier to treat these critical areas in our lives as if they operate independently, they don't. Gallup's comprehensive study of people in more than 150 countries revealed five universal, interconnected elements that shape our lives: The Five Essential Elements Career Wellbeing Social Wellbeing Financial Wellbeing Physical Wellbeing Community Wellbeing Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements will provide you with a holistic view of what contributes to your wellbeing over a lifetime. Written in a conversational style by #1 New York Times bestselling author Tom Rath and bestselling author Jim Harter, Ph.D., this book is filled with fascinating research and novel ideas for boosting your wellbeing in each of these five areas. By the time you finish reading this book, you should have a better understanding of what makes life worthwhile. This will enable you to enjoy each day and get more out of your life -- and perhaps most importantly, boost the wellbeing of your friends, family members, colleagues, and others in your community. (Each copy of this book includes a unique ID code for Gallup's online Wellbeing Finder, a program designed to help you track and improve your wellbeing over time.)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is Tom Rath's latest book, co-authored with Jim Harter whose previous book, *12: The Elements of Great Managing*, Harter co-authored with Rodd Wagner. Rath explains that in addition to their own research for this book, he and Harter consulted an abundance of research conducted by the Gallup Organization with which they are associated. Moreover, "Gallup assembled an assessment composed of the best questions asked over the last 50 years. To create this assessment, the Well-Being Finder, we tested hundreds of questions across countries, languages, and vastly different life situations." For me, some of the most important revelations include those that help to explain how people (in 150 countries, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe) experience their days and evaluate their lives overall. More specifically, as Rath and Harter explain, five distinct statistical factors emerged. "These core dimensions are universal elements of well-being, or how we think about and experience our lives - the interconnected elements that differentiate a thriving life from one spent suffering." Although 66% of those surveyed are doing well in one of the five areas, only 7% are thriving in all five. "These five factors are the currency of a life that is worthwhile. They describe demands of life that we can all *do something about* and that are important to people in every life situation we studied.

I work for a company that promotes wellness. I was actually really confused when I first heard of these "five essential elements of wellbeing" and thought someone must have made an error in the presentation I was listening to because there was absolutely no mention of any psychological or emotional wellness contributing to wellbeing. I found out it's not one of the five components. So I bought the book, thinking surely it would explain the absence in some reasonable way to me. Not so. It's just... missing. As if the 57.7 million Americans with mental disorders could just get a better job or improve their social lives and perhaps their illness would disappear? I'm not saying the components mentioned aren't important- all of those things contribute to the authors definition of wellbeing: "the things that are important to how we think about and experience our lives." But I found that the authors' "advice" even on these other topics was pretty flimsy. In the career wellbeing section we are advised to "avoid sustained periods of unemployment (over a year) when you are actively seeking a job but unable to find one." Since most unemployed people are not unemployed by choice, and the author is actually acknowledging that they are unable to find a job...I fail to see how that is at all helpful (and it's actually a bit insulting... to the unemployed person and my intelligence). Basically, the views here are quite simplistic. We found out that people with "high wellbeing" are passionate about their work...so everyone should have a job they are passionate

about. What a lovely idea! How exactly, does that work?

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