

# The Fun Habit by Mike Rucker

Post by "Kalosyni" of August 15, 2025 at 8:50 AM

## [Quote from Don](#)

The basic premise of Rucker's book is that focusing on happiness (as it is often discussed in relation to the popular conversation in light of positive psychology) is that it emphasizes the gap between how we feel now and how we're \*supposed\* to feel. Why aren't we happy? Why are they happier than me? We try to - are encouraged to - quantify our level of happiness, then \*work\* on being happier.

What Rucker recommends is prioritizing "fun" - I'd paraphrase him by saying "prioritize taking pleasure in your life and your experiences." Of we prioritize "fun" , happiness becomes a welcome by-product. I'd rephrase saying "if we prioritize finding the pleasure in both our everyday experience and in the extravagant pleasures we occasionally experience, well-being / eudaimonia / happiness will be a welcome by-product of living that way."

I happened to find this book at my library, and I am skimming through it now. Lots of thoughts coming up.

An interesting idea that Rucker presents is the PLAY model - where you have four quadrants (four categories) that all of your activities fit into: pleasing (high fun, and easy); living (high fun; and challenging); yielding (low fun, but easy); agonizing (low fun, and hard). I've only read the first few chapters of the book so far.

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I feel like I need more categories than those four, so made up my own:

- "mundane fun" - provides a lower level of enjoyment, but still more pleasure than pain - things like reading the news online, or any repetitive old fun habit that lacks a sense of novelty.
- "easy fun" - provides relaxation, exercise, mental stimulation, or bodily enjoyment together, and requires a low level of effort while still providing an overall sense of enjoyment.
- "novelty of exploring and travel fun" - requires driving or travel (and money to pay for gas or airplane ticket, restaurant, hotel, or camping gear and campsite fee) and which provides more pleasure than pain
- "meaningful fun" - engagement with people (friendship, teaching, giving aid) and which provides more pleasure than pain

- "researching, learning, studying" - intellectual fun and philosophy!
- "challenging fun" - requires time, effort, money, or skill development and may or may not come with some level of risk or uncertainty regarding the outcome, and it may not end up providing more pleasure than pain
- "not really fun" - pleasure and pain are equal (50/50) and doesn't seem worth the effort
- "very boring" - you'd rather be doing something else
- "very-not-fun" - physically exhausting or painful, or mentally disturbing or agitating

The thing is that sometimes we need to do things that are in the last three categories, because it may be necessary in order to prevent greater pain from arising in the future, or for the sake of procuring basic necessities, or sometimes as a basis that leads to greater pleasure in the future.