

WELLBEING: *Curated:* **Lived**



Malgorzata Pasko-Szczech

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For Max

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My deepest appreciation to the very special woman in my life – my late grandmother Zofia Wanic, who introduced me to the beauty of nature.

My deepest thanks and gratitude to my husband Slawek and son Max for their unwavering love and support I always receive.

My heartfelt thanks to my Mum Lucy for her love and support all my life.

**“I write what I live,
And I live what I write”**

Etel Adnan

PREFACE

Wellbeing:

“The state of being comfortable, healthy, or **happy**”

My Note:

In this book, I often use the term ‘**wellbeing**’ interchangeably with **happiness**.

Curated:

“Carefully chosen or thoughtfully organized or presented”

My Note:

This book is very personal, but it’s by no means arbitrary. I have chosen the topics very carefully, and only those that I believe will apply to All.

Lived experience:

“Lived experience is the things someone has experienced themselves, especially when these give the person a knowledge or understanding that people who have only heard about such experiences do not have”

My Note:

This book is based on my life philosophy and lived experience for the past 50 years. I quote others simply to supplement my point of view.

Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness... famous words from the US Declaration of Independence^[1].

The authors of these words came probably as close as possible in defining our relationship to Happiness when they declared that all humans are “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and pursuit of Happiness”.

We can define 'Life' and we can define 'Liberty', but what about *Happiness*?

The clue is in the word 'pursuit' because you cannot define happiness as it means different things to different people.

It cannot, therefore, be automatically guaranteed.

But we all have the right to our own *pursuit* of Happiness! And a responsibility to do so ourselves. No government, institution, family or friends can guarantee your happiness – they can facilitate access to resources, but the actual work is up to you.

This pursuit of happiness (wellbeing) isn't always simple, and it's most definitely not passive.

Sometimes it requires rejecting habits and systems designed to keep you stressed and unwell.

What constitutes wellbeing?

It is said that happiness comes from within. And it is true (to a certain extent) that no other person, place or thing can give you happiness. They may give you cause for happiness, but a true joy of living (happiness) is a mental ability, which comes from within. *However, ...*

“Wellness is the complete integration of body, mind, and spirit – the realization that everything we do, think, feel, and believe had an effect on our state of well-being.”

Greg Anderson ^[2]

We will always be influenced, to at least some degree, by the world around us, and that is why we need to discover the

relationship of the various elements in our environment that make us into who we are. We need to pause and reflect on what is our perception of the world around us, because it is our perception that dictates how we interpret our past, how we view ourselves, and even what we find beautiful in our daily life. We need to authentically know ourselves.

Authenticity is the central principle of **wellbeing**. This is closely followed by our connection to nature and the food we eat.

And equally, an unhealthy lifestyle and blind conformity are the main saboteurs and *the* Nemesis of Happiness.

I acknowledge that what is ‘authentic’ for me may not necessarily resonate with you, and I don’t expect you to embrace my ‘authenticity’. What I sincerely hope for is that I can point you in the right direction, so you can curate your own authentic wellbeing.

I chose topics which I believe apply to all:

- We can all stop buying unhappiness, and become more mindful of what resonates with our personalities
- We can all reclaim our biological right to Nature
- There is medicine we can always self-prescribe – it’s at the end of our fork or spoon

This book is designed as notebook – please utilise the *Notes* sections to capture your thoughts and reflections as you read each chapter. Write them down as they come. Spontaneous reflections are often most authentic, but they tend to appear as fleeting moments of ingenuity which disappear as quickly as they come.

CAN YOU BUY HAPPINESS?

We live in a highly paced and materialistic world, and our need to demonstrate to this world how relevant we are, is painstakingly clear from numerous social media posts:

‘X is attending an event near you...’

‘Y is travelling from... to...’

‘Z is shopping in...’

We live in an era, in which, if you do not have Facebook/X (previously known as Twitter)/Instagram account, you do not exist.

The fear of missing out is always present, so we keep following and posting, and posting and updating, and following...

Occasionally, we are unnerved when we discover that our favourite influencers are being paid handsomely to promote things to us, but we also quickly forgive them and, almost by default, bounce back into ‘following’. And conforming to, and buying, whatever happens to be the latest mass obsession.

We live in a world of instant gratification, with amazon deliveries within few hours of that ‘buy it now’ click. And yet, happiness is the only thing that we are unable to buy.

So, can you buy happiness?

‘Money Buys Happiness When’

For the purpose of this book, I selected a study presented in the research article *“Money Buys Happiness When Spending Fits Our Personality”* by Sandra C. Matz, Joe J. Gladstone and David Stillwell, University of Cambridge^[1].

The researchers endeavored to demonstrate that people with a better fit between their personalities and their overall purchases report higher levels of life satisfaction – this was in fact one of the hypothesis of their study. They analyzed concepts such as:

- What is participant personality?
- What is product personality?

Before we dive into the specifics of the study I selected, let's look at the two main types of personalities referenced in that study and a simplified summary of their characteristics:

Extroverts	Introverts
• Recharge and get their energy from spending time with people • Crave social stimuli • Seek greater stimulation • Thrive in teams, crowds • Like to talk things out with others • Seek large social networks • Enjoy being a centre of attention • Value broad experience	• Recharge and get their energy from spending time alone • Crave solitude • Seek less stimulation • Prefer to work independently • Prefer to process internally • Value 1:1 friendships • Avoid being a centre of attention • Value deep experience

The study was a controlled study, meaning there were two groups of participants for comparison purposes. The participants were given vouchers to spend on products that either matched or mismatched their personality.

Study Participants (*individuals who took part in the study*)

- There were **79 participants** recruited via university mailing list.
 - ➔ **36** of these participants identified as extroverts and were assigned to extraverted group.
 - ➔ **43** participants identified as introverts and were assigned to introverted group

Measures (*methods/tools used to collect and analyze data*)

- Participants were randomly allocated £7 (about \$10) vouchers for either a **bookshop** (introverted proxy) or a **bar** (extroverted proxy).
- Personalities of the participants either matched or mismatched the personality of the product they were assigned.
- Participants were asked to complete a specific questionnaire at 4 different points in the study.

To track each participant's changes in mood during the study, researchers used the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) questionnaires.

The self-report scales measured participants' **feeling of satisfaction** at four different time points in the study. Questions were the same in all 4 questionnaires, but at time points 2, 3 and 4, the participants were instructed to answer these questions in consideration of the exposure (experience) they had just had.

Time Point 1 (Baseline/starting point) – Questionnaire 1

Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire **before** receiving any information about the study.

- ➔ After completing Questionnaire 1, participants received a Voucher for either a bookstore or a bar, and they were required to stay at the bar or read the book for at least 30 minutes.

Time Point 2 – Questionnaire 2

Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire again (with the same questions), but in consideration of their satisfaction in receiving the Voucher.

- ➔ Participants were now instructed to use the Voucher within the next two days.

Time Point 3 – Questionnaire 3

Participants completed the questionnaire **after** cashing the voucher at the bar or bookstore.

At this point, participants received the 4th (final) questionnaire from a member of staff at the bar or the bookstore.

- ➔ Participants were required to stay at the bar or read a book for at least 30 minutes (depending on allocation).

Time Point 4 – Questionnaire 4

After spending at least 30 minutes at the bar, or reading a book, participants completed the 4th and final questionnaire on their feeling of satisfaction.

The interesting bits:

All **79** participants completed Time Point 1 and Time Point 2 questionnaires – before knowing anything about the study and then after receiving a Voucher.

75 participants completed Time 3 questionnaire – after cashing the Voucher at the bar or bookstore.

74 participants completed Time 4 questionnaire – after spending at least 30 minutes at the bar or reading a book.

Those who dropped out were from mismatched conditions.

Would an introvert enjoy 30 minutes at a bar? It's a rhetorical question, I know.

Study conclusions:

Extroverted participants reported higher level of happiness when

they received the experience (spending time at the bar)

Extroverts benefit more from social experiences they can share with others.

Introverted participants reported higher level of happiness when they received the material thing (book).

Introverts benefit more from material goods or experiences they can consume on their own.

Do you agree with these conclusions? I *do*.

I also know that, sadly, our ‘unhappiness’ is good for business. We become prime targets of collective advertising of all sorts. And when we feel under the weather, it is very easy to convince us to spend money on things we don’t need nor want, but buy anyway, in a mirage-d hope that we can buy happiness, if only for a day. We end up with cluttered space and an abundance of unwanted objects – and what is widely recognized as both the symptoms and results of unhappiness.

It is time to de-clutter your life. Only buy things which resonate with your true self. Be considerate when buying for others – don’t gift a leather bracelet to your vegan friend.

Beauty-happiness connection

“Beauty is the promise of happiness” – Stendhal [2]

Can beauty be a function of our Happiness?

Can it truly contribute to our well-being?

A study conducted by University College London found that looking at things, which we find beautiful, makes us happy. Numerous other studies reached the very same conclusion:

finding beauty in normal activities and surroundings can bring happiness.

But what is beauty?

If I asked ten people to bring to their minds a picture of something that they consider beautiful, it is very likely that it would be a very different image for each one of them.

That's the voice of perception wanting to be heard.

It also means that beauty is nothing tangible. It only exists in our heads as a pleasant feeling, but it can, in a subtle way, contribute to our wellbeing.

Surround yourself with things YOU find beautiful.

Clothes speak volumes

Clothes speak volumes, and what we buy, and wear, matters – not only for the planet or economy, but also for our own wellbeing.

Our clothes and accessories speak volumes because they are part of the visual communications that we send out daily. They help us to convey ideas and beliefs which are part of our identity, they add a finishing touch to who we are.

The first female US Secretary of State, late Madeleine Albright, was famous for wearing her pins and brooches throughout her life. During her years of public service, she used them as “gentle implements of statecraft” and her stylish envoys on foreign policy. In 2009, she published her book *Read My Pins: Stories from a Diplomat's Jewel Box* ^[3]

Queen Elizabeth II also wore brooches – for sentimental reasons, as diplomatic gestures, or to convey a powerful message to the world in the most elegant way possible.

I wear pins and brooches every day. My enamel Dormouse brooches are my personal tribute to these enigmatic and endearing creatures, and they help me to highlight the fact that dormice are currently critically endangered. I wear *Protect The Wild*^[4] pins to voice my support to end fox hunting once and for all.

Yes, clothes and accessories speak volumes. Have you ever wondered what are yours saying?



Enamel Dormouse Brooch by Fable England
Photo: Malgorzata Pasko-Szczec

‘Know Thyself...’

The concept of ‘knowing thyself’ ^[5] has been studied and referenced extensively by many philosophers and modern influencers alike, but it is still one of my favourite aphorisms. No other two words spell out in such concise way what is the essential element (the keystone if you like) of the foundation of wellbeing and happiness.

To ‘know thyself’ means having such deep understanding of who you really are that every single decision you make is automatically in harmony with what you truly desire. It is essentially the ability to determine your own behaviour and feelings without being emotionally affected or restricted by outside influences. And that includes what to buy, or not.

To reach this level of self-awareness, try to analyse different (various) aspects of your life and ask yourself; ‘is this truly me or am I pretending to be someone else?’

Most people don’t know much about themselves, and they don’t care about understanding how they see the world. Even if they acquire extensive knowledge, they lack self-knowledge, and that eventually leads to dissatisfaction with life and burnouts.

How do you get to the stage when you can feel that truly ‘know thyself’?

- ✓ Every day, learn something new about yourself.
- ✓ Always measure yourself against your own ‘normal’, not someone else’s. What other perceive as ‘normal’ is merely an opinion.
- ✓ Don’t disregard your past – learn from it! You are not heading in that direction, so consider your past to be like a lecture from which you embrace what serves you and politely disregard what doesn’t. And that includes traditions that no longer serve you.

There are so many realities within us, all complementing each other and congruent to who we are – find yours! This is what I wrote in my diary in October 2022:

'Is it possible to love fashion and also passionately love Nature? I was reminded yesterday that I get the same level of serotonin boost from a walk in one of the RSPB nature reserves as I would get from shopping for a beautiful scarf. I guess, there are so many realities within us.'

We discover things when we start paying attention.

Remember:

Authenticity
Is
The *central principle*
Of
Wellbeing

I can pinpoint the exact moment when it hit me that I like being me. Some years ago, during a job interview, a question came unexpectedly and it had no relevance, not even remote, to the post I applied for:

- *'If you had a chance to be born as someone else, who would you like to be and why? Think of a person you admire and are inspired by.'*

My reply was equally unexpected, I suspect:

'I could think of two women at this moment who have either shaped my life or contributed in some ways to me being the kind of person I am today.

My first choice would always be my grandmother Zofia Wanic ^[6], who played a crucial part in my upbringing after my father's tragic death. To this day, I see and analyze the world largely through her eyes.

I never met my second choice – Simone Veil ^[7], who was a prominent French politician, French Minister of Healthcare and who became the first female President of the European Parliament. I read her books twice and I know I am going to read them again.

Their lives were also tragic.

Zofia lost most of her family during WW II, her infant son died shortly after he was born and her whole life was always slightly overshadowed by a deep nostalgia for the era long gone.

As a teenager, Simone survived Nazi concentration camp where her parents and brother were murdered.

Both women prevailed despite having to confront and overcome unimaginable catalogue of life adversities. Both women could not possibly be more different, and at the same time, both have secured permanent place in my heart and mind.

But would I want to be one of them?

- *'These are great examples. If you could choose one of them, which one would it be?'* – comes the prompt...

'If I truly have to choose, well, I would like to be born always as **me**.'

They did not even pretend to hide their disappointment; it was all over their faces.

'I am quite happy being me, because...'

I was not given the chance to expand on my answer. And I did not get the job.

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THE NATURE-WELLBEING CONNECTION

There is an aspect of wellbeing that only our connection to Nature can address. Access to nature is our biological right and spending time in nature should be part of our daily self-care.

I consider nature the most effective ‘superfood’ for our nervous system, and I hope that in this chapter I can provide compelling evidence to convince you to reconnect with Nature.



Spending as little as 15-20 minutes a day in nature offers undisputed benefits to our mental and physical wellbeing. A simple walk in a local park improves mood by reducing feelings

of stress or anxiety, improves heart health and even boost immunity.

UK charity Fields in Trust^[1] is dedicated to protecting the future of parks, playgrounds, playing fields and other green spaces around the country. In 2018, the charity published their report *Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces: Measuring their Economic and Wellbeing Value to Individuals*.

The wellbeing value was measured by “directly asking people to rate their subjective wellbeing (life satisfaction) and general health”. It was “based on measurements of life satisfaction including physical and mental health benefits that stem from park usage”.

The participants were asked to disclose if they are park (and green spaces) users, including frequency of using these spaces.

The researchers explored the links between parks and green spaces and health and wellbeing as measured through the following four Office for National Statistics (ONS) subjective wellbeing measures questions and one general health question:

1. **Life satisfaction:** “Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?”
2. **Happiness:** “Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?”
3. **Anxiety:** “Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?”
4. **Sense of purpose:** “Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?”

Subjective wellbeing (life satisfaction) responses were measured on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 was “not at all”, and 10 was “completely”, except the anxiety question where a higher value indicated lower subjective wellbeing: 0 = “not at all anxious”; 10 = “completely anxious”

The **general health question** used had a five-point scale: “In general, would you say your health is Poor/Fair/Good/Very good/Excellent?”

The findings confirmed that “both wellbeing and self-reported general health are significantly higher for frequent park and green space users compared to non-users.”

“The primary survey results show that higher levels of engagement with parks and green space is associated with higher levels of life satisfaction, happiness and a sense of worth (against a reference of those who never use their park or green space).”

The report rightly points out that urban parks and other green spaces are typically free to access and enjoy.

The Gardens Trust ^[2] is the UK national charity dedicated to ‘ensuring our heritage of historic designed landscapes can continue to contribute to the quality of life of existing and future generations’.

The charity recently published their report *Harnessing Parks and Gardens in the 21st Century: How historic landscapes can support and enhance our today and tomorrow*, which offers comprehensive overview of the vital role woodlands, historic parklands, and urban parks and gardens play in our quality of life.

The report highlights the fact that a nature-wellbeing connection is not a new concept:

“Government recognised the value of a park for the East End, where mortality rates far outstripped the rest of the capital, when the 1839 Annual Report of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages said that “a Park in the East End of London would probably diminish the annual deaths by several thousands... and add several years to the lives of the entire population”. Victoria Park was created in Tower Hamlets in 1841.”

“The use of parks in contributing to wellbeing and good health is now well established and recognised by the Department of Health and community GPs, with latter prescribing green gym

sessions and exercise activities in parks as a response to health problems”.

“Parks and green spaces are estimated to save the NHS around £111 million per year based solely on a reduction in GP visits and excluding any additional savings from prescribing or referrals”.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

“This country is a country of garden-lovers...”
Vita Sackville-West ^[3]

I love gardens, all of them - from the spectacular Rothschild gardens of the French Riviera, through my childhood memories of my grandmother's humble countryside rose garden in southern Poland, to the inspiring English gardens I have the pleasure to visit these days. I visit historic gardens, and I collect books on gardens.

Linden Groves ^[4] is the co-author of one of the most beautiful books on gardens: *‘The Gardens of English Heritage’*. I spoke to Linden about her book, gardens and wellbeing in March 2015. Here are some excerpts from that interview, with timeless wisdom so relevant today:

MP-S: The first thought that comes to mind while looking at the photos of gardens featured in your book is that... yes, humans and nature can actually join forces and create something truly spectacular. The ingredients are always there, nature is abundant, but what can we do in today's computer dominated world to help people re-discover gardens? And I don't mean preserving nostalgia for the times long gone, but a genuine fascination that would produce new gardens for future generations to enjoy?

Linden Groves:

We need to raise awareness of just how much gardens have to offer, how important they are to our quality of life. They can offer physical health through getting people outdoors and active, spiritual wellbeing through the calm that a connection to nature brings and cultural richness through their design and the 'stories' that they tell. And the best thing about these amazing assets? As a resource, they are simply so accessible as they are all around us, from little window boxes, to pockets of greenery on street corners, to public parks to large visitor attraction gardens, we all have the opportunity to see and even make a garden. If we can get people to understand all this, then more value will be attached to producing new gardens, and caring for existing ones.

MP-S: Did you always like outdoors as a child? How do you inspire your own children?

LG: *As a child, I always liked being in the freedom of outdoors and was also very romantic with a big imagination, and as historic gardens come with lots of amazing stories, I guess they enable me to indulge those childhood enthusiasms! I inspire my own children by never forcing them to be interested, but by giving them lots of opportunities to be outdoors if they would like. I like to think I tread a fine balance between not dumbing down, whilst always holding on to a love of silliness.*

It doesn't take much to create our own private green oasis. Microdoses of nature are equally effective.

RSPB

If you love nature and wildlife, live in the UK, and are able to contribute financially towards a membership, I recommend joining the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). There are over 170 RSPB reserves around the UK, offering full sensory immersion during long walks in nature.



Mandarin duck
Photo credit: Marta Cyzio

Every Garden Needs a Fox (or two... or three) – *My Notes*

Once upon a time (in November 2021) a certain garden romance was brewing... (and the rest is a story for a separate book...)

Fast forward to autumn 2025, and my husband and I are feeding and researching the fifth generation of urban foxes. We study their behaviours and personalities, we are fascinated by the interactions we witness between parents and siblings, and between our 'resident' foxes and 'outsiders' that venture into the garden occasionally. Sometimes we are surprised by their decisions about who stays in the garden as 'resident', and who has to move on to find a new territory. And sometimes we are amazed by their remarkable compassion towards orphaned kits...

Watching wildlife is transformative. Give it a try and see for yourself...

(If you are not keen on having foxes in your garden, there are humane ways to discourage them from visiting your garden. Please contact any wildlife charity for advice – you can find some resources at the back of this book ^[5])



Darcy the Fox
Photo: Małgorzata Pasko-Szczech

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YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

In October 2016, I found myself in Vienna attending a clinical trial symposium. Our host, University of Vienna, organized dinner at the renowned Plachutta ^[1] restaurant and the main dish was Emperor's favorite – the Tafelspitz.

It was my first ever visit to this famous restaurant, but it was not the first time I had Tafelspitz. My memory went back to my childhood and my grandmother cooking this beef dish almost every Sunday. When I think of family dinners, I fondly recall my childhood and Tafelspitz.

Sitting there and staring at the food in front of me, I was both tearful and excited at the same time. I took photos of my dinner and I now call it this event my 'ratatouille ^[2] moment'.

So, what does the Tafelspitz have to do with wellbeing?

Nothing and EVERYTHING at the same time.

Tafelspitz represents a traditional dish going back to the Austrian Empire, which is as popular today as it was during Emperor Frantz Joseph's reign. This simple dish is a testament to the ingenuity of local cuisine, and a lesson in how food can shape our wellbeing.

Few months later, I came across a very special book by anthropologist Stephen Le and was taken on a culinary journey to discover what a "100 Million Years of Food" ^[3] can teach us about wellbeing. How different food affects different people and why we should stick to eating traditional cuisine enjoyed by our ancestors. The following arguments are especially convincing (emphasis added):

"In studies, traditional diets typically do at least as well as nutritionist-approved low-fat, low-salt diets in maintaining health. In part, this is because **the functions of dietary fat, cholesterol, and salt throughout the body are numerous**, while nutritionists have necessarily devoted their limited time and resources to narrow views on the harmful effects of these

substances.”

Mother Nature always gets it right after all.

Le explains further:

“Traditional eaters didn’t bother with scientific studies; they cooked and combined food in ways that maximized their health. The older the cuisine, the better: Five-hundred-year-old-cuisines are a good starting point, because at that point industrially processed foods had not yet made significant inroads into people’s diets”.

“Traditional cuisines were moderate in fat, cholesterol, and/or salt and therefore tasted good; thus getting ourselves to stick with these diets is not difficult”.

And this is why the Tafelspitz that my great-grandparents enjoyed circa 1900, is the same Tafelspitz people still enjoy today.

I must confess, I never thought about my dietary habits until I read Le’s book. I now believe that my good health is linked directly to what I eat. I do not follow a specific diet and quite happily venture outside my ‘comfort zone’ while on holidays or out with friends and family. But I always come back to my staples, which is superbly simple and traditional food, once popular across the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. The only change for me is that I don’t eat meat anymore, so no Tafelspitz during my next trip to Vienna.

What about you?

Your genes carry everything ever needed to process nutrients required to nourish your body. You must, however, deliver the right elements, not foreign objects in the form of various junk food. If you are a vegetarian or a vegan, think what would your

grandparents choose; a vegetable stew cooked from fresh produce picked up at a local market or a pre-packed gluey something advertised as 'vegan'...

Start eating whole foods and avoid the processed stuff.

It could be your game changer!

The Timeless Touch of Chives – *My Notes*

A day without fresh, finely chopped chives is a day when I'm on holidays and enjoying local cuisine. Unless of course chives are part of that cuisine.

For breakfast: I add chives to omelette, scrambled eggs or Viennese soft-boiled eggs.

For lunch: I sprinkle finely chopped chives on open face sandwiches, add them to tuna with mayo paste or any salad I fancy.

For dinner: Absolute must for any form of potatoes or to add a bit of flavor to soups.

The numerous health benefits of this humble herb are undisputable; chives are extremely rich in antioxidants, which help fight inflammation, colds and even cancer.

I eat them, because thanks to my grandmother, I love them!

Your homework:

*Research The Art of Your
Grandparents' Cuisine.
What would be your ancestors' typical
breakfast, lunch, dinner or supper?*

Russet apple – another jewel from my childhood...



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REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

PREFACE

Definitions of 'wellbeing', 'curated' and 'lived experience'

[Cambridge Dictionary | English Dictionary, Translations & Thesaurus](#)

[1] US Declaration of Independence

[Declaration of Independence: A Transcription | National Archives](#)

[2] Greg Anderson is a bestselling author and wellness advocate.

CAN YOU BUY HAPPINESS?

[1] *'Money Buys Happiness When Spending Fits Our Personality'*

research article by Sandra C. Matz, Joe J. Gladstone and David Stillwell

<https://www.researchgate.net>

[\(PDF\) Money Buys Happiness When Spending Fits Our Personality](#)

[2] Stendhal, real name Marie-Henri Beyle was a French writer.

[3] Madeleine K. Albright (1937–2022) was a professor, author, diplomat, and businesswoman who served as the 64th Secretary of State of the United States. She was a seven-time New York Times bestselling author. Her stylish memoir *Read My Pins: Stories from a Diplomat's Jewel Box* was published in 2009.

[4] Protect The Wild is a UK non-profit organisation that works tirelessly to create a world where wildlife is free from persecution. Below is one of their stylish pins.

<https://protectthewild.org.uk>



[5] 'Know Thyself' originates from ancient Greece. The phrase emphasizes (still does) self-awareness and was inscribed on the

forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

[6] Zofia Wanic was my maternal grandmother. She introduced me to the beauty of nature and continues to have a profound influence on how I view the world around me.



Zofia Wanic in 1930s

[7] Simone Veil (1927 – 2017) was a French politician and the first female president of the European Parliament from 1979 to 1983.

THE NATURE-WELLBEING CONNECTION

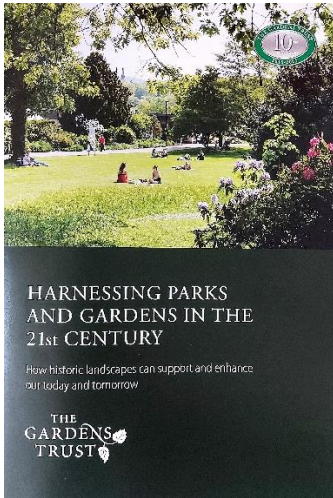
[1] Fields in Trust is a UK charity which protects parks and green spaces in cities and towns around the country.

<https://fieldsintrust.org>



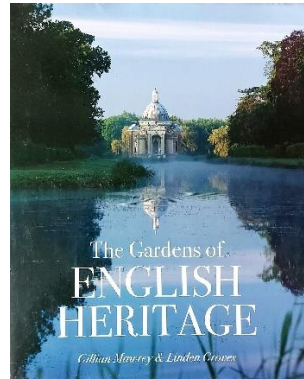
[2] The Gardens Trust is a charity dedicated to protecting and conserving historic parks, gardens and designed landscapes in the UK. <http://thegardenstrust.org>

Their new report *Harnessing Parks and Gardens in the 21st Century: How historic landscapes can support and enhance our today and tomorrow* is available as a free download via <https://thegardenstrust.org/gardens-trust-launches-report-21st-century-gardens/>



[3] Vita Sackville-West (1892 – 1962) was British aristocrat, poet, novelist, and gardener. She was widely considered to be the finest gardening writer of the century.

[4] Linden Groves is the co-author of *The Gardens of English Heritage*. The book won the Golden Media Guild's 'Inspirational Book of the Year' award in 2010. Linden has worked in the landscape conservation sector for 25 years, and is currently the Gardens Trust's Head of Operations & Strategy.



One of the most inspirational books on gardens

^[5] UK-based charities to contact for advice on injured or sick foxes and other wildlife:

Fox Angels Foundation

<https://www.foxangelsfoundation.org>

Kent Wildlife Rescue Services

<https://kwrs.uk>

Tel 07824893399

The Fox Project

<https://foxproject.org.uk>

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

^[1] PLACHUTTA WOLLZEILE, Wollzeile 38, 1010 Vienna, Austria, Phone: +43 1 512 15 77

^[2] In Disney's cartoon 'Ratatouille', food critic Anton Ego tastes stewed vegetable dish ratatouille and is taken back in time to his childhood and his mother's delicious cooking. I refer to my Tafelspitz experience in 2016 as my 'ratatouille' moment.

^[3] '100 Million Years of Food. What Our Ancestors Ate And Why It Matters Today' by Stephen Le

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Malgorzata Pasko-Szczeczek is a writer, photographer, healthcare professional working in research, dedicated campaigner to improve animal welfare worldwide, and a wildlife enthusiast and researcher with a focus on the behavioural ecology of urban foxes.

Malgorzata is the author of an insightful 4-lessons manual to finding one's own happiness, the Protocol of The Art of Happiness: Because Happiness is a Skill and the updated edition for 2021, The Art of Happiness. At the core of the Protocol is a solid belief that regardless of heritage, race, religion or economic status, there is one element that unites all human beings: it is the desire to be happy.

This is her third book on the subject of wellbeing.

