

INTRODUCTION

IT'S STRANGE to look at a screen and see a number that represents your life.

My dad had died three months earlier and I was grieving in my own way. Like a lot of people dealing with loss, that way involved distraction. The number I was looking at was a score from a service called Klout, a self-described “authority for online influence.” On Twitter, Facebook, and other social networks, a series of algorithms determined a number between one and one hundred, a representation of the digital me.

I don't remember my score. I just remember being wounded. I felt cheated that the number seemed low and someone I didn't know was controlling the way I was valued. I tried to pretend the number didn't bother me, but it did. I felt anxious, and began planning how I'd write a certain number of tweets or Facebook posts to

game the system. I'd comment for the sake of increasing my influence, whether or not I really had anything to say.

Then I stopped. I wondered who I had become if I was scripting my life in such a way that I was shaping my insights to either fit into 140 characters or be pithy enough to play well on Facebook. I realized I was living my life in spurts long enough to get a good sound bite.

I thought of my dad. I thought of my kids. I thought of what I'd leave behind as a legacy, and I took a moment to reflect on my life, instead of commenting on it. This was a risk. I knew reflecting meant dealing with the raw truth of who I was, but I genuinely wanted to understand the measure of my life. Fortunately, my answer came fairly quickly, and from a very deep place—I wanted my life to count.

My perspective changed immediately. I felt an internal shift, where my desire to create influence was supplanted by a need to create impact. This realization transformed my anxiety into a sense of well-being. Creating impact meant I'd pursue actions that had potential for helping others, versus focusing on digital influence, where I'd always be seeking immediate attention. Focusing on impact also felt pragmatic. When I pursued influence, I always felt exactly as I did when I pursued happiness just for the sake of it—narcissistic and exhausted. Intrinsic joy for me had always come from pursuing actions where happiness came as a *result* of dealing with adversity or meaningful challenge.

And regarding the measure of my life: I realized I meant the phrase literally. In the realm of technology, where I thought I was an expert, other people were making decisions that would determine how I'd be valued in the digital world. And I realized that similar decisions about online or mobile behavior made by other organizations would start to aggregate around the idea of people's data. Data, I knew, that was already being sold in convoluted ways online, with people giving away their digital DNA in exchange for a onetime offer.

I saw a path toward an inevitable future where our digital identities were becoming tangible currency and our worth would be determined by algorithms. I saw that technologies like augmented reality would create an atmosphere where people would see the digital representations of other people before getting to know them in person. I saw that a tiny population of individuals determining digital rankings would literally alter how we would view the world, and how others would view us.

And that's when I got mad. I got deeply, deeply pissed.

I should get to determine my identity. *I* should get to determine how the digital journal of my life in the form of my data gets broadcast, sold, or valued.

And so should you if you want your life in the digital world to count.



As you may already have guessed, the happiness described in this book is not focused on mood but is the result of an introspective examination of what brings you purpose or meaning. In other words, you have to take action regarding what defines your life to truly see what brings you joy.

That's where the idea of "hacking" comes into play. The main definition of hacking involves cybercrime. This is not my focus. I'm referring to a different sort of "hacking" that involves the creative reimagining of a long-held idea for the sake of joyful discovery. That's the spirit in which I invite you to read this book. I see data and technology, when leveraged via informed choice, as being instrumental toward insightful living.

The idea of self-examination, focused on your digital as well as real self, is where the subtitle for the book comes from—*why your personal data counts and how tracking it can change the world*. Your data counts because it represents who you are, and has value intrinsically and economically. I'm sure you're aware that other people are already tracking your data—marketers, governments,

and organizations of every size around the world. That's why a primary goal for me in writing this book is to simply help you do the same, so you can enjoy the benefits of managing your data to gain insights that can increase your well-being.

The (app) part of *Hacking H(app)iness* refers to the number of apps and other technologies I cover in the book that can measure or track your emotional and physical health and well-being. I've also broken up the book into three parts based on the (app) acronym, which I explain in detail later in the introduction. While this isn't a traditional self-help or how-to book, I have provided numerous examples and case studies of how technology applied to emotion and economics can improve your life and help define what brings you meaning.

Here's what I've set out to prove in this book:

- **Data is getting personal.** Data about people's sleep, dietary, and work habits, sex lives, and emotions is being collected online and analyzed. Our current online economy is built on the managing of people's data without their full knowledge of the process. It's a dangerous precedent that needs to be reversed.
- **Happiness can be quantified and increased.** The science of positive psychology is empirically based. Mobile sensors in our phones and data from the world around us can contribute information about our lives that we can utilize to increase positive well-being and essential, long-lasting happiness. While emotions are ephemeral and subjective by nature, data-identifying triggers leading to or around them are being leveraged to improve people's lives in revolutionary ways.
- **The happiness economy is redefining wealth.** Countries such as Bhutan, the United Kingdom, Brazil, China, and the United States are using happiness indicators that reflect multiple metrics beyond money to measure and improve the lives of their citizens. People are being encouraged to leverage skills and talents for

civic engagement that are providing previously untapped stores of resources that are changing the world for good.

Here's why you'll benefit from reading *Hacking H(app)iness*:

- **Informed Choice.** What you do with your data is your decision. But I want you to see vividly that complacency about giving away your digital identity is not a choice you should allow for yourself or loved ones any longer.
- **Joyful Discovery.** Measuring your life isn't easy, but with mobile tools and positive psychology, there's never been a better time to start the journey. There's not a one-size-fits-all formula for this process, as it's inherently your own, but your life will be richer by examining your value, and a great deal of this book is dedicated to showing you how.
- **The Currency of Connection.** Economics at its core is not about numbers or statistics as much as it's a way of measuring and expressing value. You care about what you count—where your treasure is reflects your heart. People invent economic ideals. You're allowed to evaluate what money and time mean for your life outside of established mind-sets. Soon, currency will revolve around your positive actions and reputation more than around wealth or words.

I'll explain these concepts more fully before describing the breakdown of the book.

Unpacking the Hacking

Your Identity in Data

Let me be clear about a critical aspect of your digital identity—your data is being sold and you're giving it away for free.

The model of tracking and behavioral targeting prevalent in the online world is accelerating the sale of your data, or your digital identity. While the companies involved in this form of commerce may not be mendacious in nature, this current advertising model erodes trust and is primed for disruption. If you're like most, you may be accepting of this model because you don't see all of its implications. Shane Green of Personal.com calls this phenomenon a form of the "Stockholm syndrome" in *Power-Curve Society: The Future of Innovation, Opportunity and Social Equity in the Emerging Networked Economy*.¹ The actual syndrome occurs when a victim identifies with their captor over time, fostering feelings of empathy and submission. In our current Internet economy, citizens willingly sign away data that's used in a variety of exploitative ways by government and business. The fact that they're agreeing to byzantine legal agreements not understandable by most attorneys has faded in importance for the perceived benefit of "freemium" services offered in exchange for previous personal information.

Your data has value. Your actions, in aggregate with other people like you, provide clues to behavior that are a form of market research. To give an example of how our personal data has a *monetary* value, Steffan Heuer and Pernille Tranberg provide the following example in their e-book *Fake It! Your Guide to Digital Self-Defense*:

So how much are all of us worth online? The estimates vary, depending on whom you ask and what method you use to calculate. Lawyers in the U.S. representing users who felt their privacy was violated by apps that stole their address books from their mobile devices, estimated a price for each contact uploaded without permission. Their guess: between sixty cents and three dollars for each stolen contact, because services such as Path or Instagram can use them to acquire

new users and sell their information, or use it for targeted advertising down the road.²

Where you are comfortable revealing this data or sharing rights to access it, that's your call. In the near future, you'll have more choices on how to use your data, as Shane Green told me when I interviewed him on this subject:

In the current world, there's a shotgun approach toward monetizing data online. This practice will begin to shift toward the individual so they're not "selling their data" but will be "compensated for access to their data." This new world will be a place where the individual is empowered and becomes savvy about how data reaches them.³

But that time has not yet arrived. In December 2012, the Federal Trade Commission announced it would be studying the data broker industry's collection and use of consumer data, based on an earlier FTC report, *Protecting Consumer Privacy in an Era of Rapid Change: Recommendations for Businesses and Policymakers*.⁴ The report noted that data brokers often don't interact directly with consumers, even though they're collecting and selling information about them. This means the average person isn't even aware data brokers exist or who may be buying and selling their data. As the FTC press release notes, "This lack of transparency also means that even when data brokers offer consumers the ability to access their data, or provide other tools, many consumers do not know how to exercise this right. *There are no current laws requiring data brokers to maintain the privacy of consumer data unless they use that data for credit, employment, insurance, housing, or other similar purposes*" (italics mine).⁵

Sadly, it's not just data brokers who are ignoring data privacy. The release of Facebook's Graph Search in March 2013 allows any

Facebook user to type in a name and see photos of other users who may not have wanted those photos to be public. As Sarah Perez notes in TechCrunch, Graph Search deepens confusion around privacy because other people's posting behavior affects you whether or not they've asked your permission.⁶ As an example, she explains how a college friend had posted and tagged a slightly embarrassing picture of her without her knowledge or consent, and notes how complicated Facebook's privacy settings are to figure out, and how time-consuming it can be to remove tags around images other people have posted of you.

Facebook users tagging friends without consent moves the muddled state of online commerce to a whole new level. Now the Stockholm syndrome of people identifying with their captors has shifted, so consumers are inadvertently expediting the rise of a personal data economy dictated by advertising. Our complacency toward behavioral targeting means we're not only giving our data away for free but also accelerating and improving how advertisers and strangers access the digital breadcrumbs of other people in our lives.

I interviewed Kaliya (aka Identity Woman), executive director of the Personal Data Ecosystem Consortium, on this idea about losing control and giving data away and she noted, "The metaphor of slavery or feudalism is appropriate—the power dynamic between 'us' and the institutions that have our data is the problem that needs to be rebalanced, and until it is—we are slaves to our digital masters."⁷

The Future Value of Your Connected Life

The idea of data as related to identity has shifted in the past few years. Most of us grasp the concept of our online actions being tracked by cookies, or the notion that GPS can track our location. But the rise of wearable devices like Fitbit or the Nike+ FuelBand

has begun to show average consumers visualizations of their data like they've never seen it before.

For athletes or the health-conscious, workout tracking used to rely on things like stopwatches and clipboards. Now sensors in wearable devices output data that can be tracked passively. This means users don't need to constantly input the specifics of their activities—devices do this for them. Connected to an iPhone or directly accessible by their doctors, this real-time aggregate assessment data is creating a revolution in the health industry. But it's also creating a stir akin to the online situation I've described above: Who owns your data? Who can sell it? How is it being used?

The trend of tracking data via wearable devices is commonly referred to as the quantified self (QS) movement (a term coined by Kevin Kelly and Gary Wolf of *Wired*), which typically involves individuals knowingly measuring their own behavior. This passive tracking ability has also moved offline to the devices and world around us, a trend known as the Internet of Things (IOT). There are a number of variations of this term, like machine-to-machine (M2M) technologies being utilized by the auto industry, or the Internet of Everything as coined by Cisco. The combination of QS and IOT results in a vast scope of information being recorded about our lives at all times, a trend referred to as Big Data.

What's so critical to understand about this data evolution is the logical transference of existing online norms around privacy and advertising that will likely be utilized in the *Outernet*, the virtual extension of the Internet that exists around us at all times but remains hidden from sight. The advent of a technology called augmented reality (AR), however, changes this dynamic as it allows for people to see data overlaid on the screen of their mobile phones or lenses of a device like Google Glass.

While many tend to focus on the applications of augmented reality mainly for gaming, I see its primary significance as a browser for this impending virtual world. I've written about AR since 2009

and its many benefits for business, health, and commerce, but, like any technology, it's the context of how it's used and by whom that is critical to establishing trust.

Google has faced numerous instances of eroding trust over the past few years relating to data usage and privacy. In 2012, the Federal Trade Commission fined Google \$22.5 million for bypassing privacy settings in the Safari browser, the largest civil penalty ever levied by the FTC. And in March 2013, Google publicly acknowledged that it violated people's privacy during its Street View mapping project, as reported by David Streitfeld of the *New York Times*.⁸ The company agreed to settle the case with thirty-eight states that rejected the unauthorized collection and use of people's data.

The case is of special interest as a precedent with regard to Google's Glass technology. If Google had no problem outfitting cars to collect people's data, why would they fret over wearable computers that can do the same? And if users have become complacent over privacy, as demonstrated by Facebook Graph Search behavior, then all the better for companies like Google and Facebook. People can continue to be the free conduits of evolving online commerce, believing their data is worth the cost.

It's when augmented reality becomes ubiquitous that these issues of data privacy and commerce will become visible. They'll literally be right in front of our eyes. And a final technological component people are already utilizing will cause widespread cultural concern. Facial recognition technology lets the user point their phone or device at someone's face and instantly obtain their name and other available data. And remember—Facebook has allowed millions of people to tag themselves and others for years in pictures they've posted to their pages. While the idea of crowdsourcing users to stay in touch with and tag friends may or may not be of concern to you, what will likely be upsetting is when strangers can access photos and data instantly by simply looking at you in public. Remember the tagging idea from Facebook Graph Search?

Now strangers will see those pictures floating above your head while you're waiting in line at Starbucks.

The good news about this existing digital economy is that many consumers have stopped being complacent about the misuse of their data. A recent Edelman study⁹ found that 90 percent of consumers are concerned about the data security and privacy of their online information, and roughly 70 percent reported that privacy and security was a concern they had regarding their social media accounts. In the same study, respondents stated that they were, on average, 67 percent likely to switch their social media providers or stop using such services entirely if their information were accessed without permission.

So there's a reason to Get H(app)y—people are beginning to feel their data has renewed value, and are claiming the right to know how it's being used. There are dozens of companies like Personal or Reputation.com providing a model of data for people to store all the elements of their digital identity safely in one place, a model known as “personal clouds” (also called “data banks” or “data vaults”). Likewise, there is a greater sense of desired accountability from companies who are, by and large, controlling the data economy.

But here's a sticky wicket—the same standards of accountability we apply to Facebook and Google will be measured against us. How we conduct ourselves in the realm of the Outernet will leave digital fingerprints that will define our character while leaving a trail of identity-defining data. I refer to this trend as the rise of accountability-based influence (ABI), in which scores similar to eBay's detailed seller ratings gauge individuals' actions versus their words. Tracking trust will soon become akin to seeing a person's credit score, and the lines between Klout and commerce will blur even further. Will people benefit more from being popular and having influence, or by demonstrating positive character as defined by the digital portraits of their actions?

Both models will likely evolve in unison. And the growing

adoption of virtual currency platforms will mean people will become more comfortable with the idea of exchanging specie (market-based money) for currency (social capital in the form of trust or influence).

The Science of Happiness

A maturing field of science known as positive psychology is helping people see themselves in a new light. Measuring ourselves by our virtuous potential rather than focusing on our brokenness is transforming the nature of therapy in the modern world. We all have pain, but it doesn't have to be a stigma—actions and behavior associated with that pain are also *data*. When allowed the opportunity to optimize our lives unhindered by condemnatory scrutiny, we can use data and new digital tools to make ourselves happier.

This science of happiness, which encompasses the fields of psychology, physiology, and economics, is proving that we aren't born with set levels of well-being. Unlike the medieval idea of humors, we're not predetermined to suffer throughout our lives based on rudimentary assessments of temperament. Some call it "well-being." Some called it "eudaimonia." Some call it "flourishing." Some call it "flow." Some call it "life satisfaction." However you phrase the idea of a deeper, intrinsic, and long-lasting increase of happiness, I have great news—you can increase it no matter who you are. Science is proving this fact. When we better protect and manage our personal data, we'll also be able to decide who gets access to and benefits from the specific attributes of our emotional lives.

Happinomics—or the Economics of Happiness

There is an economy of happiness. This isn't figurative. In the sense that our actions, moods, and collective behavior can be tracked with greater nuance than ever before, monetary and policy

decisions can be made that affect the economic standing of a population. Note that “happiness indicators” in economics typically don’t refer to just the mood of a country—these indicators are metrics referring to multiple aspects of “well-being” which typically comprise details about things like the environment, education, and physical and mental health. Countries such as Bhutan, the United Kingdom, and the United States have all begun exploring how these metrics, which measure a wider breadth of attributes than GDP (gross domestic product), can give a clearer picture regarding the health of their citizens. These indicators typically focus on measuring increased well-being, a term that goes beyond mood and refers to a state of balance between multiple factors that affect you overall. On an individual level, well-being comprises your physical, mental, and emotional health. On a national level, well-being examines issues like education, the environment, civic engagement, and citizen health.

Multiple experts who study the science of happiness believe the positive increase in mood many associate with happiness comes as a result of action. In a sense, happiness is an output you experience after achieving a goal. On a national level, metrics gauging happiness are utilized to best understand how the actions of a government are improving people’s lives.

Does it seem strange to measure people’s happiness as an indication of a country’s success? It is a newer idea, but has become a global trend because of increased sentiment that the measurement of gross domestic product (GDP) isn’t working. First developed in 1934 by Simon Kuznets, a Russian-American economist, the GDP metric was adopted as the main tool for measuring a country’s economy in 1944 after the Bretton Woods conference. This gathering of 730 United Nations delegates was tasked with trying to regulate the global economy after the Second World War. And in the sense that the model was adopted globally and used as a standard measure, it’s been helpful.

But the GDP is primarily focused on financial measures—things like increases in goods production and salary levels. It doesn't account for the quality of a country's educational resources or care of the environment, and it wasn't designed to. In many ways, the GDP has become the primary measure of a country's success, casting a value judgment on citizens based primarily on wealth.

But a focus on increased productivity as measured by the GDP hasn't increased happiness. As Jeffrey Sachs, the renowned economist from Columbia University and one of the editors of the *World Happiness Report* created for the United Nations, notes: "The U.S. has had a three-time increase of GDP per capita since 1960, but the happiness needle hasn't budged."¹⁰ Happiness measurement in this regard is based on something called subjective well-being, which means asking people to rate their happiness on a numbered scale.

It's remarkable that the GDP has become such an influential measurement of value considering all the things it doesn't account for. Famed New Zealand politician and author Marilyn Waring pointed out in her book *If Women Counted* that the GDP systematically underreports work performed by women who take on the traditional role of primary caregiver in the home. In this context, in a very real sense, according to the GDP's assessment of value, *women don't exist*.

What we choose to measure matters.



I want to pause here and remind you of something. The measures of subjective well-being and GDP produce data. Traditionally these metrics have been collected largely through survey responses. But with the advent of social media, wearable devices, and ubiquitous computing, capturing happiness data will become commonplace. This is significant because in a world where fiscal wealth has been the predominant measure of value, the hidden strengths and attributes of people as revealed by technology will allow for a form of

“merrytocracy” based on personal design. Quantified happiness, determined by individuals, will begin to drive a new form of economics based on data.

Let’s be clear—in the same way that I can’t tell you what makes you happy, no technology can necessarily fully quantify your emotional state. But technology can provide what’s known as a “proxy” for behavior or emotion, and it’s the insights gained from these examples that can imply happiness or well-being, especially as related to health.

As an example, the Georgia Tech Homelab did a study with seniors living at home alone in which a simple sensor was placed on their bathroom doors, indicating when it opened or closed. Over the course of a longitudinal study they discovered that a 1 percent increase or decrease in the movements of that door suggested upwards of a 50 to 60 percent deterioration in health. Bathroom visits are a prime indicator of physical well-being—fewer visits could indicate bloating or more frequent trips could suggest dehydration.

Mobilyze is a platform designed to help people suffering from depression, employing mobile technology and context sensing to help with time-specific interventions. As described in the *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, the team behind the project developed an app where algorithms predicted patients’ moods, activities, and environmental and social contexts based on thirty-eight different types of mobile sensors.¹¹

The study, conducted in 2011, was one of the earliest attempts to use context sensing to identify mental health-related states. The relevance of context here also means the insights that can be gained by comparing different sensor data. For instance, did a patient register a more negative mood indoors than outdoors? Noted once, this observation is merely information. If the behavior is repeated, a caregiver could suggest a patient spend more time outdoors to quantify whether that behavior would have ongoing positive results.

The algorithm reference for the app above is also critical in this description. If any quantified behavior is repeated on multiple individuals in a study with enough data to categorize a pattern, a machine-learning model (algorithm) can be generated. This algorithm could help identify behaviors in new users and predict how they may react—in a sense, the tool “gets to know” a patient and can help them *before they even have a negative incident*. Combined with a voice recognition and search platform like Apple’s Siri, the “personal digital assistant” model is evolving rapidly. Where patients or individuals are part of shaping how their data is studied, privately and in context, this technology is transformative. When people are kept out of the loop, and intimate data is exploited, algorithms may be driven solely from the intention of profit versus benefit.

As a final example, a research team at the University of Cambridge built Emotion Sense for Android, an app that lets you “explore how your mood relates to the data your smartphone can invisibly capture as you carry it throughout the day.”¹² Using the highly articulated microphone in an Android phone, the app identifies multiple emotional states from users based on the inflections of their voices.

This passive quality of information capture, where users don’t need to actively input data, is what is transforming modern measurement of people and their emotions. A report written by the researchers, “Emotion Sense: A Mobile Phones-based Adaptive Platform for Experimental Social Psychology Research,” emphasizes this point: “Mobile sensing technology has the potential to bring a new perspective to the design of social psychology experiments, both in terms of accuracy of the results of the study and from a practical point of view. Mobile phones are already part of the daily life of people, so their presence is likely to be ‘forgotten’ by users, leading to accurate observation of spontaneous behavior.”¹³

Until now, anyone attempting to measure emotion via traditional means has always confronted the problem of what’s known as

survey bias—people respond differently to questions when they know their responses are being measured. Passive sensors and ubiquitous computing mean that the objective or quantified measure of people's data will become more accurate. And the subjective assessment of their well-being (asking if they're happy) will still be utilized to determine people's responses to whatever is being measured.

What I've demonstrated with these examples is that we're in an era when people are beginning to realize that technology will help them accurately assess their emotions and the actions that contribute to them. We've all thought we were in love with someone who turned out to be wrong for us. We've all had jobs we thought would be great and we ended up not being fulfilled by the work. What if you had a Mio Alpha watch that measures heart rate that you wore on multiple first dates to see who, literally, made your heart skip a beat? What if the watch worn at work could help you identify the stress patterns brought on by an abusive manager, so you'd know the real reason you didn't like your job?

The hidden is becoming visible. Culture will shift. The rules have not yet been set.



So let's recap—people are now tracking their own behavior, moods, and health via quantified self tools. Objects around us (our cars, appliances) are outputting data directly related to how we move through the world. Soon, devices like Google Glass will let consumers record the world around them, tagging and posting massive amounts of content further relating to people's data.

Are you beginning to see the future I envisioned during my epiphany with Klout? Like the GDP's singular focus on wealth creation to determine value, Internet economics will continue to be driven by the accelerated exploitation of consumer data if a newer model isn't adopted soon. Behavioral targeting via passive tracking

means the intimate measure of all your actions can more easily be utilized for sale. The data economy is more personal than ever, and if things don't change, our identities will be determined by algorithms controlled by someone else.

The H(app)y Hypothesis

Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living. The bad news is, your examined life, in the form of data, is worth *selling*. So if you want a say in the future of your identity in the Connected World, complacency is not an option. It's time to take action.

Here are the three parts of *Hacking H(app)iness*:

- A—be Accountable
- P—be a Provider
- P—be Proactive

PART 1: BE ACCOUNTABLE (IDENTITY AND MEASUREMENT IN THE CONNECTED WORLD)

The first part of living an examined life in the digital world is to understand how you're represented within it. In Part 1 we'll discuss the nature of connected identity and compare the trend of social influence (Klout, or "word-based sentiment analysis") to accountability-based influence (digital representations of action and trust). We'll explore how the emerging field of personal identity management provides a way for consumers to protect their data while maintaining flexibility in how they want to project their digital identity.

Then we'll get our geek on and explore the role of sensors, quantified self, the Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence as they relate to identity and happiness. We'll spend some time discussing the effects of machine-learning algorithms and how they relate to our digital future, and conclude by reviewing how our

actions reflected in the connected world reveal a clearer portrait of identity than our words alone.

**PART 2: BE A PROVIDER (BROADCASTING VALUE
IN THE PERSONAL DATA ECONOMY)**

There's a relationship created when we think of ourselves as consumers—while the word reflects the fact that we live in a transactional society, is it the primary identity we want for ourselves? A primary way to escape exploitative practices (like our tracked behavior being used primarily to enhance advertising models) is to change the vocabulary around an established idea.

In this section, we'll discuss how the concepts of shared value and conscious capitalism relate to the connected world. Where people's data is seen as commerce, its value should be distributed. In the personal data economy that will be made visible by augmented reality, we can inspire innovation while honoring privacy.

Rather than worrying about strangers filming and tagging without permission, people can broadcast their identities in public while notifying how they'd like to interact with the world. If you're at Starbucks and someone looks at you wearing Google Glass, your digital avatar could appear in their vision and say, "If you'd like to record and I'm in your shot, my face will appear blurry and I can't be tagged without my permission. If you're tagging me for commercial purposes, please text me the specifics of how I'll be compensated for the use of my personal data."

This type of scenario, outside of the technical aspects, represents the rapidly emerging practice of virtual currency. Within a trusted framework, people can pay each other in the form of specie (money), products (swapping), or skills (time). This avoids the echo chamber of privacy discussions mired in policy in favor of positive economic exchange. This is also a vision of how we can shift the model of selling people's data without their knowledge. We can shift this practice from being exploitative to being inclusive by

providing transparent means of identity sharing and virtual commerce. Then people can see themselves as providers of content or data, where they are actively involved in a consensual transaction. The notion of being a consumer, defined primarily by what and how much is purchased, will erode and allow people to see their value in a wider dimension.

Geekery in this section will involve the evolution and future of augmented reality, a definition of Big Data, and how providing content and value to others can liberate your identity through creativity and commerce.

PART 3: BE PROACTIVE (PROMOTING PERSONAL AND PUBLIC WELL-BEING)

Many times, happiness is an output of action versus a momentary mood. Social scientists make the distinction between short-term or “hedonic” happiness and eudaimonia—a Greek term associated with Aristotle, roughly translated as “well-being.” A new outfit may produce a momentary increase in positive mood, but if you rely on retail therapy for happiness you may experience what’s known as the “hedonic treadmill.”

Altruism also has proven benefits toward the increase of happiness. As Sonja Lyubomirsky, a leading mind in the field of positive psychology, notes in her book *The How of Happiness*, one of the less-noted aspects of kindness is its benefits regarding self-perception. The more acts of compassion you perform, the more you view yourself as altruistic. Eventually, the way you view your own identity may evolve to the point at which your confidence and happiness increase as a result.

Sharing value in the connected world leads to happiness. Also, the alternative isn’t great—if you’re a jerk, your actions may get quantified in a way to let others know that before you even speak to them. I wrote about this potential culture clash in my Mashable piece “The Impending Social Consequences of Augmented Reality.”

Private data revealed in a digital context via technologies like augmented reality is going to lead to a lot of awkward situations:

Ford's MyKey technology, available since January 2011, lets parents program cars for teens so they can't go over 80 mph or listen to the stereo until all seat belts are engaged. While the features were originally designed for teen safety, the technical framework could certainly be utilized in a different context . . . for instance, to vet whether or not a parent is worthy of driving children in a car pool. If via my "You Drive Like an Asshat" app I see you score a two out of ten on safety, my kid doesn't get in your car.¹⁴

This example demonstrates how accountability-based influence could become a key driver of identity and behavior in the future. In one sense, we'll start labeling other people the same way we rate restaurants right now in a Yelp review. And if no ethical or cultural frameworks around privacy or etiquette exist, data taken out of context will become almost a daily occurrence. That's why, in this section, we'll also be discussing the idea of "regard," or why it's so important not only to put your device away when speaking to someone face-to-face but to study how our interactions are different in the real and virtual worlds. Both have their benefits, but research on the longitudinal results of Facebook and other social network usage are showing negative effects that can be minimized by unplugging the connected side of your identity once in a while.

We'll examine thinkers from the world of positive psychology, focusing on how action, or "flow," as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (pronounced "cheek-sent-me-hi-ee") describes it in his seminal book *Flow*, can produce "optimal experience" in a person's life. By identifying the activities that drive your intrinsic well-being, you can optimize and improve the quality of your happiness.

Last, we'll focus on the emerging economic metrics of happiness

indicators as demonstrated by Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Index. Other countries around the world, including the United Kingdom, Brazil, and the United States, are beginning to implement subjective and quantitative elements of policy based on measuring well-being.

I'll point out multiple examples of how the GDP isn't working as a measure of happiness, such as Shirley S. Wang's article "Is Happiness Overrated?" where she cites a 2010 statistics report in *Clinical Psychology Review* by researchers at San Diego State University, who noted that depression and paranoia had increased in college students from 1938 to 2007 and comments, "The analysis pointed to increasing cultural emphasis in the U.S. on materialism and status, which emphasize hedonic happiness, and decreasing attention to community and meaning in life, as possible explanations."¹⁵ The popular book *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain touches on similar trends, showing how America has moved from a culture of character to one of personality. Our need to demonstrate extrovert characteristics has made us into a nation of salespeople, focused on self-aggrandizement over the benefit of others.

I'll also show the connection between the digital metrics of quantified self and the Internet of Things and the economic measures of Gross National Happiness. In this way, people can better connect their personal actions with a new global paradigm of value that's not based solely on wealth. Sharing value, done proactively, can provide individual happiness while changing the world for good.

The measurement of life based solely on fiscal wealth, or ever-increasing production or consumption, limits who we are. We aren't just creatures put on the earth to amass stuff or work ourselves to death. The economic measure of gross domestic product has influenced our lives to the deepest level of our global identity. Sadly, the existing data economy reinforces the fundamental tenets

of GDP's focus on increased productivity at all costs (pun intended). When our lives are measured primarily as a marketing algorithm, we stop valuing actions that don't add up to a fiscal bottom line. We can't give ourselves permission to deeply reflect on what brings our lives meaning, or put others first when they need help.

But here's some great news—this primary measure of value the world has agreed on for more than fifty years is beginning to crumble. While the GDP, on one hand, is simply a metric to gauge the health of a country, it has so influenced our collective lives that most of us gauge our work not by its value but by its volume. We're not encouraged to take the time to see all the areas of our lives that can bring ourselves and others joy. We're not leveraging our full resources as humans and suffering due to the deficit.

But around the world countries are beginning to measure their citizens' lives and governmental actions via a wider lens. Multiple factors beyond financial metrics are being evaluated to see how people can live balanced lives beyond solely monetary measures. And when people gain perspective on all the ways their lives bring value beyond money, they'll also justify taking time to optimize their own lives or help others. They'll be motivated to take actions to increase their well-being in ways they haven't considered since the invention of the GDP.

My Background in Measurement

Bullies made it easy for me, a fat kid growing up in a suburb of Boston, to begin a life of self-examination. Early on, I became part of a playground hierarchy that had a set of sacred measures. Being overweight meant you were bullied. Fat equaled bad. Pretty simple. I wasn't happy about the situation, but I couldn't control it. So I studied it.

I learned that words don't often mirror action or character. For instance, the bullies who threatened were typically the last ones to

act. I also became intimately aware of the concept of morals—I felt it was wrong that I was bullied. It wasn't fair. Nobody asked my permission but I still got cast in a John Hughes movie where roles were defined by somebody else before I even entered the picture.

I bring this up in regard to my experience with Klout to demonstrate how often we find ourselves in situations where someone has developed rules for a game we didn't know we were playing. And a typical human response is to try and win at a game without even asking whether it makes sense. That's what I mean by the challenge of measurement. We tend to look at the world through the lens we're given, never asking how the glass is focused. Questions of comparison are only applied to an existing perception of the world, versus one that may not be seen.

I was exposed to other ideas about examining life at a young age because of my family. My dad was a psychiatrist in the 1970s, when the term "shrink" was still applied in a pejorative sense. People tend to forget psychoanalysis is a relatively new field, having gotten its start from Freud in the early 1900s. When I moved to Needham, Massachusetts, as a boy, no neighbors brought us pies until they saw my dad gently spank me on the butt and realized he was mortal.

While he wasn't allowed to talk about his work with me, I knew my dad's job was to listen to people and help them hurt less. His private practice ran for about forty years in which he spent at least fifty hours a week, fifty weeks a year, helping patients—and that's a low estimate. Do the math and that's over one hundred thousand hours helping others examine their lives to find happiness.

Heroes come in all sizes. I come from good stock.

I went to college thinking I was going to be a minister, having examined a number of spiritual issues and thinking I could best help the world from the pulpit. But an influential acting teacher told me to follow my bliss, and I ended up going to New York City in 1992. (As it turns out, my mom wound up becoming a pastor.) I

was a professional actor for more than fifteen years, appearing in principal roles on Broadway, on TV, and in film. During my time as an actor, I did a lot of corporate videos and started getting asked to rewrite scripts to make them funnier. I said, “Yes, if you pay me,” and my writing career was born.

After multiple scripts, articles, and books, I landed a job writing the first About.com Guide to Podcasting in 2005 before social media became mainstream. I interviewed hundreds of thought leaders in business and technology before shifting to consulting to leverage my expertise toward business development for a few start-ups, like Blog Talk Radio. I ran two open-source tech conferences in New York City (2,000 participants, over 200 speakers) and eventually ran the social media practice of a top-ten global PR firm. It was at that time my business career got two giant boosts—I became a contributing writer for Mashable.com, and traditionally published my first book, *Tactical Transparency: How Leaders Can Leverage Social Media to Maximize Value and Build Their Brand* (Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass/John Wiley, 2008).

My primary expertise is in technology, having helped a number of great clients over the years, including Gillette, HP, and Merck, interpret how their brands were perceived online to build relevant engagement with consumers. At Mashable, I’ve interviewed hundreds of thought leaders from companies like Microsoft, Qualcomm, Google, Starbucks, Weight Watchers, AT&T, Verizon, and dozens of start-ups.

So in many ways I get paid to observe. As an actor, you observe human behavior to portray characters as real people. As a non-fiction writer, you observe trends to see how they’ll affect culture. In my case, it was examining the technology and economic trends I wrote about in my Mashable piece “The Value of a Happiness Economy,” which led to the writing of this book and the formation of the H(app)athon Project, a nonprofit organization “Connecting Happiness to Action” by creating sensor-based smartphone surveys

utilizing economic indicators to increase civic engagement and well-being.

Thank You

Your time is precious, the most valuable resource someone can offer. I genuinely appreciate your devoting some of it to reading *Hacking H(app)iness*. I've done my best to provide sound value in exchange.

I gave you a bit of my background to demonstrate why I believe it's essential to live an examined life, and how much of my career has been spent in teaching people how technology can improve theirs.

I believe in the inalienable right of dignity for your data. Data is the proxy for your identity, a mark of your citizenship and humanity visible to the world. It's what makes you count.

In this sense, *Hacking H(app)iness* is about life, liberty, and the transformation of pursuit. The *pursuit* is what leads to the happiness. Identifying what brings you meaning and purpose and connecting to others is how to increase your well-being. This process can be expedited through revolutionary new mobile and digital tools, but not without personal reflection. And not without becoming accountable about your data and identity in the digital world.

So I invite you to reflect. And note—I'm not here to tell you how to be happy.

I'm here to prove you're worth the effort.