

NOTES FROM: *How to Live*, by Derek Sivers

SUMMARY: Certain authors just become associated with certain ideas, and one that I continue to profit from handsomely – year after year after year – is Derek Sivers' insight that when making a decision, it's either a "Hell yeah!" or it's a "No." Either you're *consumed* with interest by what you've decided to do - it's just so completely obvious that *this* is the thing you should be doing/want to do - or you're better off not doing it at all.

His newest book, *How to Live*, is basically 27 chapters *full* of insights like that. He's actually chopped the book up and trimmed it down to make it just 8% of its original size, now clocking in at just 112 pages. Each chapter vehemently yet respectfully disagrees with the other ones, like taking 27 different perspectives on the question of how to live your life.

I took two full pages of notes, and many of my *own* notes disagree with each other. But they're all *true*! The entire book is like that, and it's so cool reading someone with the ability to disagree with themselves over and over and over again, yet still able to make a clear, concise, cogent case for the indisputably true assertion that *this one life is your own*, and you have to live it in a way that makes sense for you.

Years ago, Sivers sold his company, CD Baby, for millions, enabling him to forget about earning more money (he doesn't need it or want it), and letting him put every single creative neuron in his brain into this one book. In the past, he's been a musician, a producer, a circus performer, an entrepreneur, a TED speaker, and a book publisher, but here in this book, he's just your friend Derek.

"All misery comes from dependency."

"Long ago, people had to follow norms to have high social status, otherwise they'd be ostracized and couldn't survive. But now you can survive, mate, and thrive without social status. So it's both irrational and unwise to follow those norms."

"Never agree with anything the same day you hear it."

"Wait a few days to decide what you really think."

"Nothing is more lonely than being with the wrong person."

"If it's not important, never do it. If it's important, do it every day."

"Never go down a road you recognize."

"Remember: no repetition. But after decades of this, you'll need something radically new. Stay in one place. Be with one person. Buy a home. Raise a baby. It's terrifying, but if you don't it will be the one experience you never had."

“Desire is the opposite of peace.”

“Shallow rivers are noisy. Deep lakes are silent.”

“Silence is the one thing that all religions have in common.”

“Everything seems more important while you’re thinking of it.”

“If you put \$2000 into the stock market for 200 years at the average 8% return, it will be worth over \$9 billion. If you can do \$100,000, it will be worth over \$483 billion.”

“Never spend, only invest.”

“When you choose a behavior, you choose its future consequences.”

“Be a great ancestor.”

“Making memories is the most important thing you can do with your life.”

“Mastery is the best goal because the rich can’t buy it, the impatient can’t rush it, the privileged can’t inherit it, and nobody can steal it. You can only earn it through hard work. Mastery is the ultimate status.”

“People don’t fail by choosing the wrong path - they fail by not choosing.”

“How long will it take you to become a master? It doesn’t matter. Imagine getting to a mountaintop after a long hike through a gorgeous forest. Achieving your goal would feel like taking off your backpack. That’s all. You do it for the journey, not the destination. Pursuing mastery is how to live.”

“Remember: You want the pain. The sooner you pay a price, the less it costs.”

“The English word ‘passion’ comes from the Latin word ‘pati,’ meaning ‘to suffer or endure.’ To be passionate about something is to be willing to suffer for it – to endure the pain it’ll bring.”

“The best things in life aren’t things.”

“The truly important things are quiet. Life is incredibly peaceful when you shut out the noise.”

“You don’t need anything the modern world is pushing.”

“Learn time-tested skills that were just as useful in your grandparents’ time as they are today. Speaking, writing, gardening, accounting, persuasion, and survival skills. These skills have hardly changed in a century. They’re unlikely to change in your lifetime.”

“Comedy is tragedy plus time. Time belittles anything by showing it’s not as bad as it seemed. Humor does that instantly.”

“Befriend discomfort so that you’ll never fear it.”

“Value yourself higher, then rise to fit this valuation.”

“When you’re rich, everything feels free.”

“You only need to get rich once. When you win a game, you stop playing.”

“Don’t wait for inspiration. Inspiration will never make the first move.”

“While other people have one idea that they think might work, you will have thousands you can prove didn’t work, and one you couldn’t make fail.”

“Schedule every hour of your day. Distraction steals what’s not locked down.”