

The well-being canon



Following the success of our [Life Canon](#) project, which looked at the 10 essential books for flourishing in the modern world, we will be producing a series of Canon lists examining the best books in specific topic areas - from history to philosophy. The first one in this series is the well-being canon - 10 essential books to help you develop your well-being.

As before, the list is not meant to be a presentation of the great cultural works of our time, but a set of accessible and interesting books that provide perspective, ideas and inspiration.

If you can't see the list, login or sign up now - it's free and it takes less than a minute to do it!

1. [Man's Search For Meaning: The classic tribute to hope from the Holocaust](#) - Viktor Frankl

A highly influential book in which Frankl explores his imprisonment in Auschwitz and other concentration camps, and his attempts during this time to find reasons to live.

2. [Flourish: A New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being - and How To Achieve Them](#) - Martin Seligman

One of the world's foremost academic psychologists and founder of the Positive Psychology movement offers a new theory on what makes people flourish and how to truly get the most out of life.

3. [The Happiness Hypothesis: Putting Ancient Wisdom to the Test of Modern Science](#) - Jonathan Haidt

A "self-help" book for people who don't read self-help books, with much more evidence, weight and credibility than you might have expected from this type of publication.

4. [Resilience: How your inner strength can set you free from the past](#) - Boris Cyrulnik

A book arguing that suffering can be the making of somebody rather than their destruction.

5. [Nature and Selected Essays \(Penguin Classics\)](#) - Ralph Waldo Emerson

In his writing Emerson discussed a range of topics relating to well-being, and this book pulls together a selection of his essays.

6. [Walden: Or, Life in the Woods \(Dover Thrift\)](#) - Henry David Thoreau

The classic and inspiring story of one man's escape from the encroachment of industrialisation to a cabin in the woods by a pond.

7. [Penguin's Poems for Life \(Penguin Classics\)](#)

This anthology brings together the best-loved poems in English to inspire, comfort and please readers. It contains a poem for most moments in life.

8. **Waterlog: A Swimmer's Journey Through Britain** - Roger Deakin

Deakin's account of his swim across Britain, which is a personal and informative exploration of nature and the environment.

9. **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People** - Stephen Covey

A highly influential book showing how we can change the way we look at ourselves and the world around us in order to live more fulfilling lives.

10. **Well-Being: The Five Essential Elements** - Tom Rath and Jim Harter

This book provides a research-based approach to improving well-being in all aspects of your life.