



# The Primal Connection: Follow Your Genetic Blueprint to Health and Happiness

*Mark Sisson*

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## **The Primal Connection: Follow Your Genetic Blueprint to Health and Happiness** Mark Sisson

Are You Hyperconnected ... and Disconnected? The frenetic pace of modern life distracts us from a painful truth: we are disconnected. Disconnected from our DNA recipe, forged through the selection pressure of human evolution, to enjoy health, happiness, and peace of mind. Horns, office chatter, and whirring machines batter our ears with incessant noise. Artificial light and digital stimulation overstress our nervous systems day and night. Traffic jams, long lines, interruptions, distractions, and big egos pervade daily life in such a manner that we don't even realize the piece--or rather the peace--that's gone missing. In *The Primal Connection*, Mark Sisson, the leading voice in the Evolutionary Health movement, and bestselling author of *The Primal Blueprint*, presents innovative, step-by-step guidelines to reconnect you with the hard-wiring of the human brain, trigger the release of feel-good hormones, and promote optimal gene expression. *The Primal Connection* is about setting your own daily pace, redefining your core values, and making time for play, for thrilling adventures, for quiet reflection, for friends and family, and for optimal rest and rejuvenation--while still enjoying the comfort and convenience of modern life!

**Time To Get Primal!**

- \*Go barefoot--cures foot and back pain
- \*Play in the dirt--boosts mood and immune function
- \*Wear sunglasses at night--promotes sound sleep
- \*Family before Facebook--strengthens your inner circle
- \*Commune with nature--relieves stress at the biochemical level
- \*Power down when you should--learn to single-task
- \*Cultivate an attitude of gratitude--appreciate simple gifts, roll with punches
- \*Redefine wealth--includes free time, fun, and fitness too

**Primal Connection Q&A With Author Mark Sisson**

**Q:** How does this book differ from *The Primal Blueprint*?  
**A:** *The Primal Blueprint* focused on the ten lifestyle laws of our hunter-gatherer ancestors, with particular emphasis on what seem to be the most urgent and obvious life changing elements of the Evolutionary Health movement: eating primal foods (meat, fish, fowl, eggs, vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds) and exercising in a manner aligned with optimal gene expression (frequent comfortably paced movement coupled with brief, intense strength and sprint workouts). *The Primal Connection* extends the primal theme to matters of the psyche and the disconnects inherent with high tech modern life and how to fix things.

**Q:** How are the connections categorized?  
**A:** There are six sections of the book offering scientific rationale and step-by-step action plans to make assorted connections as follows:

- \***Inner Dialogue:** Reject self-doubt and gain mastery over your thoughts and actions. Learn the ten habits of highly effective hunter-gatherers: dealing with personal conflict, letting go of the past, reevaluating your definition of affluence, and trusting your gut instincts.
- \***Body:** Learn how to safely and gradually transition to a barefoot-dominant lifestyle, including workouts. Learn correct posture and movement mechanics--maybe for the first time ever! Understand the transformative power of touch and how to leverage it in daily life. Learn the importance of frequent, comfortably paced movement, including taking regular breaks from prolonged sedentary periods, and even how to create a standup work environment to enhance concentration, circulation, and fat metabolism.
- \***Nature:** Relieve stress at the biochemical level simply by immersing into pleasant natural surroundings.

## **The Primal Connection: Follow Your Genetic Blueprint to Health and Happiness** **Details**

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## From Reader Review The Primal Connection: Follow Your Genetic Blueprint to Health and Happiness for online ebook

### John says

Mark Sisson is a great author. I enjoyed the Primal Blueprint and indeed found it life-changing. I really enjoy listening to him speak - YouTube, podcasts, etc - and I think he's done an incredible job as a layman scientist, of melding so many different fields into a holistic primal concept. I think it's brilliant and has the power to truly transform.

This particular book left me a little wanting. I think it was just a little repetitive and somewhat dreamy. I assure you, no matter how much fat, spinach and berries I eat, nothing will compel me to spend any time outdoors barefoot in Chicago in the winter. Mark's workouts, play time and chilled-out downtime seemed to be perfectly suited to a well-off lifestyle in Malibu. I think that's great, but I'm not sure it translates to a less privileged life. None the less, the closer you get, the better it becomes. I am confident of that.

What I would like to see come out of this book is that the Paleo-Primal community stops preaching to the choir. There is a glut of books, cook books, fitness and lifestyle, that all seem to be written for one another. I would like to see the experts in this field truly challenge the medical/fitness/nutrition establishment and come out of the woods with credible science and studies that support a wholesale change in western health. They have to get louder and use their resources to grow the audience.

Mark, call Sanjay Gupta and get yourself an interview on CNN ... bring your science, bring your results and get this party started.

JOHN

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### Brad Revell says

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the Primal Connection. This is the second of Mark Sisson's books along with his [marksdailyapple.com](http://marksdailyapple.com) blog. I follow religiously this blog as he continues to provide copious amounts of output from continued research on all things health and wellbeing related.

This book is no different and it takes a different approach to the Primal Blueprint book which I read a few years ago. This is more about connecting the various facets of your psyche together whether that is being social, your body, nature or the rhythm of life. There is plenty of tips and areas to think about along with references to external sites and products. Given Mark's blogs I was expecting a lot of detail and he certainly didn't leave me doubting on any topic. For example there are tips for jet lag, the A to Z on vitamin D. He also doesn't beat around the bush that humans should get dirty and not be so clean by way of anti-bacterial material as often as we do.

I am an advocate of the Primal Blueprint and would recommend anyone to read the Blueprint book (Mark's first) along with this one. It would certainly help reading the Blueprint first given Mark's 10 laws.

Three key takeaways from the book

1. This quote is so simple yet we do not think this way as often as we should: Life is 10 percent what happens to us (chance) and 90 percent how we respond to it (choice).
  2. Being selfish does not mean valuing yourself above all others. It means being as generous with yourself as you are with others.
  3. I'm really beginning to understand how important healthy gut bacteria is in the stomach and its impact on your body: "Over the course of evolution, Homo sapiens have come to host some sixty trillion microbes of beneficial bacteria, weighing as much as six pounds!"
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## **Alison Golden says**

At the core of this book is an acceptance over man's need for the state of mind we call "happiness." We are often under the impression that life of ancient man was short and brutal - an experience to be endured, often with great suffering, rather than enjoyed or appreciated.

But author Mark Sisson refutes that, giving examples of how important play, social bonds, rest and slow living were vital to individual thriving and tribal survival. His point is that happiness isn't unattainable or a luxury, but vital. If we are not happy, we are not living optimally, in best accordance with our survival-hypersensitive genes and, back in the day, this would have meant death. Developing this theme, *The Primal Connection*, in a similar vein to *The Primal Blueprint*, expounds on the ways we've evolved as a means to inform and guide us on how we should lead our lives today.

In the book, he focuses on the following areas:

**Inner Dialogue:**

Mark uses a list, *The Ten Habits of Highly Successful Hunter Gatherers*, to define a successful mindset - attitudes and actions that are best adopted to deal with the vagaries and opportunities of life. This section establishes the foundation of the book, much like *The 10 Primal Blueprint Laws* did in his first book.

**Body:**

Here, he focuses on posture, barefoot living, and gives detailed explanations on how to move, stand, sit. You'll find yourself reading the rest of the book a little taller after reading this section. :-)

**Nature:**

Mark argues that responding to natural stimuli is inherent within our genetic coding. Modern day living means we are almost always indoors and need to reconnect with nature as much as possible, and certainly more than we currently do.

**Daily Rhythm:**

This section discusses the importance of respecting our circadian rhythms and controlling our use of technology rather than the other way around. Mark also discusses why our brain chemistry, anchored as it is in our evolutionary past, makes withdrawing from the sights and sounds of technology so difficult, while emphasizing the importance of doing so.

**Social:**

The essence upon which so much of our connectedness, our joy, our sense of belonging is based is down to our social bonds. But ultimately it is a sense borne out of the need for survival. Many can make light work of much and when our total needs depend on so many skills, strengths, and numbers, it makes survival sense to stick around in a group.

Play:

We have all but forgotten how to play, truly play. We barely recognize activity that is undertaken without regard for the outcome - activities that are process, not achievement, oriented. Mark urges us to recapture that ability, as a means to rest, relax, create. We need to recharge so that we can meet the next major demand.

Throughout the book, Mark provides simple, but effective, actionable ideas to allow us to delve deeper and re-establish our connection to what we have been designed through evolution to satisfy in order to thrive. My absolute favorite was a list of houseplants that will help optimize your home environment.

As a often-time workaholic, almost permanently technology-wired woman-who-sometimes-does-too-much, reading this book was like curling up with a favorite, fuzzy blankie. It reminded me that everything I intuitively know to be true about how we live our lives, things that I often ignore in favor of meeting the demands of the non-paleo primal world around me, and to be fair, my own inner whip-cracker, is misguided.

We sit too much, have poor posture, ignore our neighbors, play too little, sleep not enough. If we get in touch with the cornerstones to rectify these situations presented in this book, Mark asserts that dissatisfaction and stress will dissipate and we'll find ourselves not only enjoying life more but experiencing greater health, wisdom and connectedness.

As a roadmap to life satisfaction, and yes, happiness, this book was one of the best I've read. The Primal Connection is the yin to his earlier book, The Primal Blueprint's yang; it completes the circle and offers you a complete manual for optimal living. At the end of the day, we only have one life, and it is short. Mark's message is that if we follow our bliss genes to live optimally, we'll thrive and enjoy the ride.

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## **Caitlin says**

If you've read Mark's blog, nothing in here is \*shockingly\* new, but it's a useful book for re-orienting your approach to life. There is immense value in reminding yourself that nature is an important component of health, as our friendship and adventure and fun. As someone who finds themselves wondering if they work enough, I needed to realize that increasing my productivity also means paying attention to the overall structure of my life and my relationships. And that I need to go on more hikes!

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## **Quicksilver Quill says**

Mark Sisson changes lives—he can't seem to help it. First he gets you in shape, eating and exercising right, then he teaches you how to find balance, happiness, and connection. How does he do it all?

The Primal Connection is a worthy follow-up to Mark's magnum opus, The Primal Blueprint. For those new to the primal/paleo movement, The Primal Connection is an excellent intro to many of the basic tenets. And while some of the content will already be familiar to devotees—the benefits of going barefoot, the importance of adequate sun exposure, etc.—there's still enough new info here to keep you interested, informed, and help you reflect on the bigger questions of life aside from what to put on your plate every night and how many PEMs to do per week.

Mark fills these pages with useful tips, tricks, and tweaks. You'll learn about the importance of finding your tribe and reconnecting with other Homo sapiens—and how to disconnect from too much digital stimulation

and superfluous media distractions. There's even the pleasant idea of keeping a gratitude journal. It's all solid advice and it all makes sense.

So while you can read *The Primal Blueprint* and do just fine in terms of your overall health and fitness, those who have found success with the Primal lifestyle would do well to read *The Primal Connection*. Explore these latest ideas and innovations. Get Primally connected. And take your modern-day hunting and gathering to the next level.

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## **Rebekka Steg says**

Lately I've been digging deeper into health looking beyond just diet, and instead embracing the importance of all aspects of our lifestyle. *The Primal Connection: Follow Your Genetic Blueprint to Health and Happiness* by Mark Sisson is the best guide I've found so far to get started on this. While there's still plenty of things to dig further into, it's an excellent primer on a wealth of topics, such as:

- Touch
- Barefoot walking
- Posture
- Movement
- Sleep
- Nature + Wilderness
- Dirt
- Daily rhythm
- Slowing down
- Social connections
- Play
- Art
- Thrills

I'm talking about a life of physical challenge but ample leisure. I'm talking about living by the natural ebb and flow of light and darkness, season to season. I'm talking about living in smaller groups. I'm talking about play and creativity and getting dirt under our fingernails - a life of the raw senses and an overlapping of the self and the natural environment.

Not all of the suggestions might work right now, but there are plenty that help you bring these aspects into your life in little bits and pieces and I love knowing what I can work towards going forward.

I've noticed for a while that taking plenty of time for sleep, spending time in nature and generally slowing down is incredibly important for both my mental and physical health and well-being. *The Primal Connection* has helped me look at more ways to get these things into my day-to-day life, as well as pointing out other important areas such as playing with dirt - and playing in general. I highly recommend it!

*How do you make sure to make time for sleep, play, nature in your life? Have you noticed these things making a difference?*

*As always I invite you to find me and connect with me on Goodreads.*

## Mickey says

While I like to consider myself an independent sort of person, born and raised in the Wild West, where toughness and individuality are prized, I have to admit a serious penchant for being easily seduced into new interests. For instance, when I moved down south and noticed all the hoopla around the Civil War, I tried to avoid getting sucked into it, but, thanks to picking up Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War, I shamelessly succumbed to the general hysteria. Another example was when I was a freshman in college, my suite mates were rabid fans of General Hospital. I tried to ignore it at first, but by the end of the first month, I was right there with them, having long and in-depth discussions about Jason's psychology and Carly's deviousness. My first reaction when I heard of the new upsurge in interest with cavemen was amused puzzlement. Why would anyone wish to emulate such a time span that was so uninteresting? Then I picked up this book.

Excerpt from the beginning of the book:

*An advanced notice: This is not a book about living a more gracious life. Nor is it written to stir sentimentality or foster sophistication. On the contrary, it's an endeavor best undertaken with sleeves rolled up. Prepare to get your hands dirty. We'll be digging down to the rudiments. It's about unearthing something in ourselves that has been lost, buried, or obscured. It's about reconnecting with a less acknowledged, let alone less appreciated, layers of ourselves. It's about getting to the very essence about what makes us human and tapping into our genetic recipe for health, happiness, and fulfillment.*

This book makes a case for the benefits of incorporating cavemen culture into the modern day. The book is skillful at creating images that make you want to spend time in nature and dig into the dirt with your hands. It's almost poetic in its defense of cavemen culture, and if there is one thing that will make me a convert, it's always been pretty words and great imagery.

This is a marvelous bit of persuasion and some fine writing aimed straight at the disenchanting and disappointed modern day person. It makes cohesive and interesting arguments for its positions and also stands as a sort of Walt Whitman-esque call to action. Very beautiful and worthwhile book.

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## Alex Timberman says

He gives great advice on how to live a healthy, happy life. Mark Sisson is one of the most respected members of the paleo/primal/alternative health lifestyle. This book is more about general principles than specific advice, but he does add a plentiful amount of references to science to support his outlook. Any way you look at it, he does a great job of articulating a common sense lifestyle that should improve the quality of life for most people.

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## Amanda says

Honestamente y objetivamente, es una de las peores basuras que he leído en mucho tiempo. El autor tiene razón en algunos puntos, pero el vender este libro como el secreto para una salud excepcional y luego

asegurar, sin fundamento, que una dieta alta en colesterol y grasas saturadas es lo idea, es un crimen. Mi padre lo compró dejándose llevar por lo que prometía (a pesar de que desde la contraportada se puede notar lo malo que va a ser, lol), le dimos la oportunidad y ambos estamos muy decepcionados por haber gastado dinero en algo así.

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### Kris says

Overall, a great book, and a good followup to The Primal Blueprint that really expands on the premise of the Primal lifestyle, that goes well beyond just the diet (similar to paleo for the uninitiated). This portion definitely offers a lot of room for growth for anyone. And while changing one's diet can be difficult, and one might argue with the principles of the primal diet, it's difficult to argue with the lifestyle suggestions for health and happiness presented here. It builds upon the foundation laid by The Primal Blueprint, though it could also stand alone well. It was a fairly quick and enjoyable read, fairly dense with good tips, and interesting/amusing as well. Mark does a good job of not pressuring/guiling the reader into changing these things, but offering encouragement and positivity instead.

Close to being 4 stars, but ends up being 3 for me, mostly because a lot of it is already familiar. A decent bit is a rehash from reading The Primal Blueprint, as well as Mark's website (marksdailyapple.com). And then I've been on a positive psychology and health kick recently, where I've seen some of the material before as well.

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### Erin says

I've been paying very close attention to the whole Primal/Paleo lifestyle for the last year and find the whole thing very intriguing (whether or not I decide to adapt it is almost irrelevant, but I have adapted some of the principles into my daily life.) But this is a slightly different take on that (most of these books focus on diet), and has Sisson comparing our current lifestyle to the lifestyle of our hunter-gatherer ancestors, and how really disconnected they are from each other. We eat terribly, don't play enough, don't use our bodies enjoyably, don't sleep enough, and don't connect with each other. Some of this book was a little repetitive, but I thought the advice was quite smart because I would argue we aren't happier or (definitely) healthier as technology (and major corporations) invade our lives, and we're going in the wrong direction. It's difficult to hear this amid the noise of our daily lives, but I think the points Sisson makes (and lives) are really smart.

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### Joshua says

I found this book to be inspiring and grounding. So many of the things he suggests doing to get a life back in balance -- connecting with others, enjoying nature, playing, doing moderate adrenaline seeking, and so on -- are intuitive once they are pointed out. Yes, I feel great when I walk in the woods. Cool -- there is evidence that suggests it's even better for you than just feeling good -- and making your interior more "natural" is helpful too. Well worth reading. A healthy index is provided with links to much of the research behind the suggestions, as well.

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### **Dan Wool says**

Primal Connection is a lot less groundbreaking than Primal Blueprint but a fine companion piece.

Connection is a little more philosophical than Blueprint.

In Primal Connection, Mark Sisson continues to explore the common sense notion that while society has changed dramatically from the times of early mankind, our genes have not changed, and you must do (or in many cases avoid!) things to ensure their proper expression including proper diet, optimal exercise and ideas for ensuring continual energy and happiness.

For those who think paleo is some sort of low carb, high meat diet -- or that we should be just like cavemen and go without modern conveniences -- Sisson is the guy who blows these myths to smithereens. His enthusiasm is catchy and his assertions are all backed in science. I especially enjoyed the sections on proper posture and what light does to sleep cycles and vitamin D levels.

As a longtime Mark's Daily Apple reader, I felt that some of the content was a bit redundant from the website -- and there are fewer reader stories, photos and charts to break things up -- but it was great to get it all in one place.

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### **Igor says**

This holiday I pondered about the balance in my life, had some questions & this book happened to sit in my shelves for some years .. thoroughly enjoyed it, valuable life lessons to apply immediately. Also, very intelligently written ... . A must reread as well.

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