

Bio (2025)

Brief bio

Statistician, speaker and author Nic Marks helps organisations build happier, more successful teams. His TED talk has millions of views, and his latest book on workplace wellbeing is called Happiness is a Serious Business.

Short bio (50 words)

Nic Marks is a statistician, speaker and author who pioneered workplace wellbeing. He founded the Centre for Wellbeing at NEF, creating the Happy Planet Index and the Five Ways to Wellbeing. Today, through Friday Pulse and his new book Happiness is a Serious Business, he shows why happy teams perform better.

100-word-bio

Nic Marks is a statistician, speaker and author who pioneered the field of workplace wellbeing. After reading Mathematics at Cambridge, he trained in organisational change and psychotherapy before founding the Centre for Wellbeing at the New Economics Foundation. There, he created influential frameworks including the Happy Planet Index and the Five Ways to Wellbeing.

A sought-after international speaker, his TED talk has been viewed millions of times, and his TEDBook A Happiness Manifesto helped put measuring national wellbeing on the global agenda. Today, as founder of Friday Pulse, he helps organisations improve team happiness through science-led feedback. His latest book, Happiness is a Serious Business, shows why happy teams perform better.

Full bio (280 words)

Nic Marks is a pioneering figure in the field of workplace wellbeing, often described as “The Statistician with a Soul” for his unique combination of analytical insight and human understanding. Originally trained as a mathematician and statistician, Nic has spent the past 25 years at the forefront of measuring what matters—people’s experience of life and work.

After graduating from Cambridge, he studied operational research and organisational change, while also training as a therapist—an unusual mix that has come to define his work. Nic founded the Centre for Wellbeing at the New Economics Foundation (NEF), where he and his team developed influential frameworks such as the Happy Planet Index and the Five Ways to Wellbeing. His TED talk on happiness has been viewed millions of times, and he was the author of one of the first TEDbooks, A Happiness Manifesto.

In 2012, Nic founded Friday Pulse, a London-based tech company helping organisations measure and improve team happiness through a science-led weekly pulse. His clients include large corporates, public sector organisations and fast-growth scale-ups—teams of every shape and size.

Nic’s work sits at the intersection of statistics, psychology and systems thinking. He brings evidence, empathy and optimism to his mission: to make happiness at work something we take seriously. His forthcoming book, Happiness is a Serious Business, explores why happy teams perform better—and how leaders can build the conditions for people and organisations to thrive. He’s an engaging public speaker, whether at boardroom briefings, international summits or music festivals.

Nic lives near Stonehenge in Wiltshire with his wife. He’s happiest when walking the ancient chalk paths of southern England, listening to music, or enjoying time with his family as well as occasionally getting immersed in datasets.

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**Career Highlights**

**Author of Happiness is a Serious Business (2025)**: The first easily accessible book to bring together all the evidence about why happy teams are successful and how to build them.

**Founder, CEO and Chief Statistician of Friday Pulse** (2012-) Friday Pulse helps teams and organisations understand, track and build team happiness.

**TED Talk (2010):** Nic’s popular TED talk has been watched over 2.5 million times. It lays out the case that governments need new measures of progress that will help guide the way to a sustainable future where ‘good lives don’t cost the earth’.

**The Five Ways to Wellbeing (2008)**: The Five Ways are the positive mental health equivalent of five-a-day the public health dictum for healthy eating. Nic and his team developed them for the UK Government Office of Science and they have been widely adopted, and adapted, by public mental campaigns globally.

**The Happy Planet Index (2006-)** Nic created the HPI – the world’s first measure of sustainable wellbeing. The HPI is updated every few years.

**Founder of Centre of Wellbeing, NEF** (2001-2012) – Nic’s work at NEF started as a volunteer but his focus on creating robust measures of population wellbeing meant that with just a few years him and his team were producing highly influential work. In 2007 they won the Betterment of the Human Condition Award from the International Society of Quality of Life Studies.

**Qualifications**

**Post graduate diploma:** Change agent skills and strategies; Human Potential Group; Surrey University; 1999-2001

**BACS approved Counselling diploma:** Psychosynthesis and Education Trust; London; 1992-1994

**MSc:** Operational Research; University of Lancaster; 1986-1987

**MA:** Mathematics (part 1) & Management studies (part 2); University of Cambridge; 1984- 1986

**Key Publications**

**Happiness is a Serious Business**: Rethink press: 2025

**The Happiness Manifesto:** TED book; 2011

**Happy Planet Index:** New Economics Foundation and Wellbeing Economy Alliance;reports and index; 2006, 2009, 2012, 2016, 2021

**National Accounts of Wellbeing**; New Economics Foundation; 2009

**Five Ways to Wellbeing**; UK Government Office of Science Foresight Programme; 2008

**Further publications**

Abdallah S, Mahony S, Marks N, Michaelson J, Seaford C, Stoll L, Thompson S, 2011) *Measuring our progress* (London: **nef**).

Marks N (2010) *Think before you think*; forthcoming in Biswas-Diener, R. (Ed). Positive Psychology as a force for social change. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Abdallah S, Thompson S, Michaelson J, Marks N and Steuer N (2009) *The (un)Happy Planet Index 2.0: Why good lives don’t have to cost the Earth* (London: **nef**).

Michaelson J, Abdallah S, Steuer N, Thompson S and Marks N (2009) *National Accounts of Well-being: bringing real wealth onto the balance sheet*: London **nef**

Huppert FA, Marks N, Clark A, Siegrist J, Stutzer A, Vitterso J and Wahrendorf M (2008) ‘*Measuring Well-being Across Europe: Description of the ESS Well-being Module and Preliminary Findings’*. PSE Working Papers 2008-40, PSE (Ecole normale supérieure).

Aked J, Marks N, Cordon C, Thompson S (2008) *Five ways to well-being: the evidence* A report presented to the Foresight Project on communicating the evidence base for improving people’s well-being: London **nef**

Thompson S, Marks N (2008) *Measuring well-being in policy: Issues and applications.* A report presented to the UK Government Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Well-being. London **nef**

Steuer N, Marks, N (2008) *Local Wellbeing: can we measure it?* London:Young Foundation/**nef**

Thompson S, Abdallah S, Marks N, Simms A and Johnson V (2007) *The European (un)Happy Planet Index: An index of well-being and carbon efficiency in the EU* (London: **nef**).

Marks, N., Thompson, S., Eckersley, R., Jackson, T., & Kasser, T. (2006). Sustainable development and well-being: relationships, challenges and policy implications. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Marks N, Abdallah S, Simms A and Thompson S (2006) *The (un)Happy Planet Index: An index of human well-being and environmental impact.* London: **nef**.

Marks N (2006) ‘Happiness is a serious business’. In *Reflections on employee engagement.* London: Chartered Institute for Personnel Development.

Marks N, Potts R and Walker P (2005) *Spoiled Ballot: Why less than three per cent have a fair share of democratic power in Britain.* London: **nef**.

Marks N (2005) ‘GoodJobs: well-being at work’. In *Reflections on employee well-being and the psychological contract.* London: Chartered Institute for Personnel Development.

Shah H and Marks N (2004) *A Well-being Manifesto for a Flourishing Society*. London: **nef**. Reprinted in the *Journal for Mental Health Promotion* and Huppert F, Baylis N and Keverne B (eds) (2005) *The Science of Well-being*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marks N (2004) *The Power and Potential of Well-being Indicators: Measuring young people’s well-being in Nottingham*. London: **nef**.

Jackson T and Marks N (1995) *Measuring Sustainable Economic Welfare - A Pilot Index: 1950 - 1990*. **nef** (new economics foundation) and Stockholm Environment Institute (this work has since been updated in 1997 and again in 2004 as *Chasing Progress*).

Jackson T and Marks N (1999) ‘Consumption, sustainable welfare and human needs’ *Ecological Economics* *28*, pp. 421 – 441.

Jackson T and Marks N (1998) ‘Found wanting’ In Christie I and Nash L (eds) (1998) *The Good Life* London: Demos.