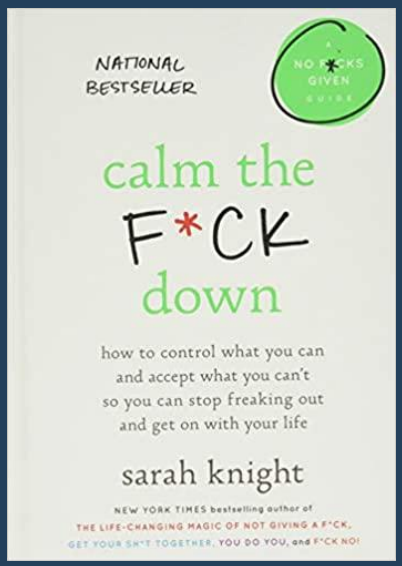

Calm The F*ck Down

Year of publication: 2018
Author: Sarah Knight
304 pages
Link for purchase: https://amzn.to/3fOa23M

The book "Calm the F*ck Down", was written by the author, Sarah Knight, in 2018, and published by Alta Books, in 2019.
Very current and with an extroverted language, the book explains to the reader, over its 304 pages, how to get rid of anxiety symptoms, controlling what you can, and accepting what you can not.
The bestseller is a guide that teaches you how to solve daily problems and has a goal to make your life easier and lighter.

Score

8

8 Aplicability
9 Inspiration
8 Innovation
9 Impact on results
8 Structure

Main ideas of the book

- Face it: shit happens, with everyone and at any time;
- Understand your problems and learn to deal with them;
- The four faces of outbreak: recognize which category you fit in;
- The outbreak funds: resources you waste by freaking out;
- Mental decongestion: put the lessons into practice;
- Assessment the probability of a shit happening, and ask yourself: can I handle it?;
- Control your outbreaks, and put worries aside;
- Effective, Useful and Productive Concern: convert your concerns into productive actions;
- Know the three principles for dealing with your problem.

To whom is this book indicated?

"Calm the F*ck Down" is a self-help book indispensable for you, who suffer from anxiety, whether a mental disorder or a temporary state of mind and who has already sought solutions that have not worked.

Overview of the book

Overview: Shit happens

Life is a cycle. Inside a break of 24 hours, which we call a day, a infinity of things are subject to happening, in my life, in yours, in everyone's life.
These things can be good or bad. Or very bad. That's it, shit happens! And that is the central theme of "Calm the F*ck Down". According to Sarah Knight, all of us are susceptible to face problems, and the way we do that defines their consequences.
The book starts explaining that reacting to the mishap in a panic, or dominated by angry, will only make things worse. So first, you need to calm down!
To begin with, learn these 6 lessons:

1. Don't decrease the size of your problem to feel better. It's real and it won't help at all;
2. The only things you can control against a problem are you and your reaction;
3. This third lesson is the "Prayer of Serenity": accept the things you can't change, brave to change those you can and wisdom to understand the difference;
4. Don't worry about the "what-if". They may not happen;
5. You can avoid some of the shit from happening and decrease its consequences;
6. Understand: not everything is under your control. Just move on.

Sarah's main goal is to make you, reader, use the rationality to deal with your problem, and the first step is to identify you with realism, pragmatism and logical reasoning, because it all revolves around the way you see things.
That is, if you are feeling ill, distracted or unable to sleep at night, believe me, that is anxiety, and behind it there is some reason that is causing you concern.
It's necessary to find out what can be done about it, so that it doesn't evolve into a possible outbreak, defined by: "what-if", concern, inertia and finally, outbreak!
And if you've reached the outbreak stage, it's very useful to know what type you're having, because they're all different, and there are different ways to neutralize them. Its symptoms manifest themselves in an intense way, characterized mainly by fear and tremors in the body.
This is not good. Both for your physical and mental health. Therefore, Sarah classifies them into 4 types, and determines the importance of knowing the "enemy", in order to overcome it:

Anxiety

Sarah Knight explains:

> *"For example, you may find that you have food poisoning, when, in fact, your stomach is upset due to anxiety."*

It is like a short circuit generated in the body, causing intense sensations of insecurity and anguish. For the author, better known as "antiguru", the worst symptom of anxiety is to think too much. It occupies all your time, and takes away the focus of all your daily activities.
Therefore, to fight it, concentrate on one problem at a time. Change the focus of your thoughts and seek to solve them in parts.

Sadness

It is one of six basic emotions that all human possess, and causes feelings of loneliness, guilt, low self-esteem or pain. You can be sad for some real reason, or have no reason at all.
Whatever the circumstances, don't give up! The sadness that endures attracts more problems to your life and becomes exhausting, transforming into a depression.

Angry

The author, Sarah Knight, exemplifies in her book "Calm the F*ck Down", the feeling of anger, telling an episode she lived with her husband at the airport in Mexico City.
After she had forgotten the ticket to get on the flight, her husband, frustrated, before the possibility of her not being able to return home, externalized this feeling in the form of anger, and lost patience with airline employees.
She used reason in that fraction of seconds and contained it. Thanks to this, they managed to board. The woman next door dealt with the same problem in a much worse way. Summary of the story: she didn't get on the plane.
Anger prevents critical ability, that is, it makes things worse. So, have patience and control!

Escape

Sarah Knight calls this feeling of "Ostrich Mode". It is about putting your head inside the sand and pretend that there is no problem. Unfortunately it does exist, and ignoring it will make a snowball.
The concern will still be there, waiting to be solved. So don't run away!. Recognize, accept and deal with it.
Whatever the kind of outbreak you have, the simplest way around it is to change the rhythm:

"A simple structure to admit your worries: recognize your harmful reactions and begin to reverse them."

Overview: The Outbreak Funds

Sarah Knight calls the Outbreak Funds, the resources you possess to prevent an outbreak:

"That's the budget you'll use to turn the fuck on when the shit happens."

Use them to calm down and deal with the setback in a healthy and sensible way, because concerning is wasting time, energy and money.

Time

Apply your time with useful things. Improve your quality of life, read a book, deal with the facts of your life head-on and seek to solve them. That resource doesn't go back, and you only have to lose when you spend it freaking out.

Energy

Your physical and mental energy is valuable, and it's just as important to spend it as to replenish it. If you don't use it for productive things, which will bring benefits to your life, you are wasting the opportunity to minimize worries, and achieve personal growth.

Money

If your money is well spent, you will get a satisfactory return, and will probably reduce your list of problems.
Going into a state of crisis, and trying to alleviate those feelings by spending what you can and can't, won't take away the responsibility of solving the situation. Think and use your money consciously, to resolve this "pineapple".

The Fourth Fund

The last fund is defined as the goodwill that people have with you, when you're freaking out or going through a hard time.
However, that fund has a limit. If you are always in crisis, suffering for minimal things and complaining about everything with everyone, these people, one hour, will lose patience, and give up helping you, believe me!
So don't run out of willingness, because:

> *"When you need help and solidarity for something worthwhile, maybe they're not there anymore."*

To finish this part of "Calm the F*ck Down", Sarah Knight advances in our manual on how to control your outbreak, and put into practice 2 lessons.
All you need to do is organize your mind. Sarah calls this "mind decongestion", which basically is to discard your irrelevant concerns and organize the rest to deal with the problem.
Having done that, create the habit of asking: "Can I control that?".
That is the standard way to measure if something worth your worries, and what you can do about it.
Knowing how to use these resources is practicing their emotional intelligence, that is, learning to deal with own emotions, and enjoying them for own benefit, balancing the emotional and rational side of the brain.

Overview: Shitanes

In this part of "Calm the F*ck Down", Sarah focuses on the content of the book in situations that haven't occurred yet, the already known "what-if", and the probability of them happening or not.
It works like the famous Saffir-Simpson scale, which goes from 1 to 5 and measures the intensity of hurricanes. However, we will not deal with hurricanes, but rather, "shitanes"!
Before understanding the Shitane Scale, it's worth noting that each person has a different experience with a shitane, and it's not correct to compare them. We can't say, for example, that your frustration at work is more important than the flat tire on my car.
Everyone has a different point of view and a different experience.
So, here we go:

- **Category 1:** HIGHLY IMPROBABLE;
- **Category 2:** POSSIBLE, BUT IMPROBABLE;
- **Category 3:** PROBABLE;
- **Category 4:** HIGHLY PROBABLE;
- **Category 5:** INEVITABLE.

Speaking plainly, what's the probability of you succeeding in the college exam by studying 8 hours a day? Highly probable. However, if you leave the studies for the eve, the so dreamed 100 is possible, but improbable.

Perceive that we can control the shitanes of life, or at least minimize them, and reflecting on the probability of them happening is a useful daily exercise.

This helps to focus on the reality of the situation, rather than fantasizing about how they can happen ("what-if"). The tip is: be realistic!

Let's go a little further on the infallible tips on control of the outbreaks. After the gold question "Can I control this?", we need to differentiate the types of control exercised in a situation.

Out of reach

These are things that are completely out of your control, such as the 90% rain forecast on your scheduled trip to the beach.

Make a contribution

You don't have the power to control the whole problem, but you can minimize the effects of shit. Since it will rain on your long-awaited trip to the coast, no use crying and complaining, just remember to bring an umbrella.

Under your influence

"If you can't control that problem, you can deeply influence it."

Fueling your car will prevent you from getting on foot and pushing it to the nearest gas station. Simple.

Completely control

They are the shit that you have total control, the reaction of your action (Newton's Third Law)

Before plucking out the hair imagining the "what-if", evaluate the situation, place on the scale the importance of that problem and the probability of it actually occur, realize your influence on it, ponder what is worth, and the main, stop freaking out!

Now, if you can't control your problem, but also can't stop worrying about it, spending hours of your precious time distracted by it, you need to turn your worry into something effective, useful and productive. Do something good and necessary for the cause, because getting out of inertia is the first step to avoid anxiety, and even if that attitude doesn't change much, the feeling of trying to solve the problem is better than doing absolutely nothing!

Overview: Deal with the problem

We reached the final part of "Calm the F*ck Down". The shit has already happened, and you need to learn how to deal with it.
Responding to this problem constructively can be challenging, but not impossible, and it's very important that you understand the need to prepare emotionally when the setback is inevitable.
In light of this, Sarah Knight quotes 3 principles to face him:

1. **Evaluate the situation before it goes from bad to worse.** This will help you calm down and have an action plan to act at the right time;
2. **Identify your realistic ideal result (RIR)**, establish a viable goal and be honest with yourself to find appropriate solutions to the problem;
3. **Perform a mental screening of difficultie**s, prioritize what is most urgent, that is, organize your shit.

In addition to these 3 teachings, try to put them into practice with some more infallible tips from the author:

- Be flexible when the situation requires;
- Don't waste your time looking for a guilty for the problem;
- Study, because this is one of the most productive ways of occupying the head;
- Do good. You can't change the world, but giving yourself to a cause can offer comfort for your own problems.

It's all connected. The way you see and face things changes them. Be positive and believe in the improvement of your life. Problems will always come, and there's no way to escape from them. So accept it, and most importantly, don't freak out!

What do other authors say about it?

For Augusto Cury, author of the book "Anxiety: Facing today's evil", the Accelerated Thinking Syndrome can be controlled avoiding anticipatory suffering, freeing thought and giving more importance to the quality of life. This is the way to a happier and less anxious life.

In "Everything is F*cked", the author Mark Manson defends the idea that for each action there is an opposite emotional reaction of equal intensity, creating a mental gap, which is the feeling that something went wrong and you deserve to be rewarded.

At "Be Unique!" , the authors Jacob Petry and Valdir Bündchen explain that using time, energy, relationships and capital (intellectual and financial) for their goals, will make a significant difference in the future.

Okay, but how can I apply this in my life?

- Practice mental decongestion, eliminate from your thoughts everything that is not relevant;
- Occupy your head by studying or doing balance exercises;
- Organize your problems, put them in priority order and focus on solving one at a time;
- Get out of inertia, take some attitude that can change the current scenario of your setback and turn it into something good for your life;
- Take care of yourself, as if you were going to take care of a close friend who is going through some difficulty: watch your favorite movie, take a nap or eat something you like.

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