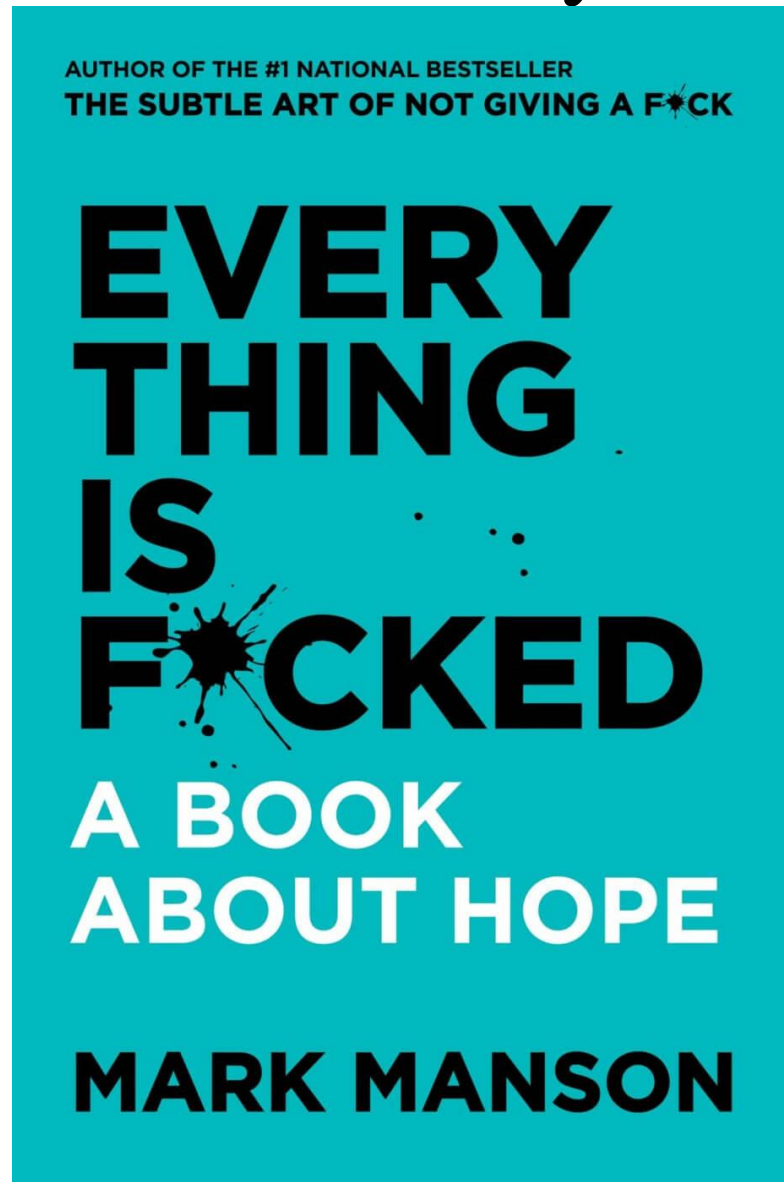


Mark Manson: Everything Is F*cked: A Book About Hope Book Summary



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“Everything Is Fucked” Book Summary in Three Sentences

1. One of the reasons many of us struggle with hopelessness is because “*we’ve lost the clear why that drove previous generations.*”
2. To build and maintain hope, we need 3 things: *A sense of control, a belief in the value of something and a community.*
3. By analyzing our past experiences through re-writing the narratives around them, and by constructing narratives of our future selves, is -the construction of hope.

3 INSIGHTS from the book “Everything Is Fucked”

INSIGHT #1 The Thinking Brain and The Feeling Brain

“you have two brains and they’re really bad at talking to one another”

Imagine your mind as a car, the *consciousness car*. This car is traveling down the highway of life with many intersections and turns, where each leads to a different destination.

Within this car, the author writes: there are two passengers; one is your *thinking brain*, and the other is your *feeling brain*.

Your thinking brain is your ability to make calculations, to reason and to express ideas and thoughts through language.

Your feeling brain represents your emotions, impulses, intuitions, and instincts.

“While the thinking brain rests within the synaptic circuits in your skull, the feeling brain is the wisdom and stupidity of the entire body.”

The driver of your consciousness car as Manson clarifies is not the thinking brain, but in actuality, it is the feeling brain that is behind the steering wheel.

The feeling brain, Manson argues, is more powerful than the thinking brain because it is the feeling brain which generates the emotions which propel us to move into action.

“Emotions inspire action and action inspires emotions, the two are inseparable.”

“The overindulgence of emotion leads to a crisis of hope, but so does the repression of emotion.”

The person who denies his feeling brain numbs himself to the world around him. On the other hand, the person who denies his thinking brain becomes impulsive, selfish, *“warping reality to conform to his whims and fantasies, which are then never satiated.”*

The challenge, as Manson points out, is getting both the brains to talk to each other. That is, *“integrating our brains into a cooperative, integrated and unified whole.”*

In other words, to teach the thinking brain to negotiate and cooperate with the feeling brain.

Manson provides an example of this dialogue in the book:

“ ‘Just put on your gym shoes, feeling brain, that’s all. Let’s just see what happens.’

‘If the feeling brains response is negative you simply acknowledge that negative emotion and offer another compromise. See how the feeling brain responds, then rinse and repeat.’

This process of aligning both the brains and pursuing the same course of action involves accepting our emotions and working with them, rather than against them.

It’s a skill, says Manson, it takes effort.

“...this is the real work of anything that even resembles psychological healing: getting our values straight with ourselves so that we can get our values straight with the world.”

INSIGHT #2 Hope Narratives

Mark Manson argues that we are constantly forming before and after narratives of ourselves. These *‘hope narratives,’* however irrational, give our lives a sense of purpose and meaning and they are similar to the concept of human values.

Raising your children, protecting the environment, making money, or improving your golf swing are examples of *‘hope narratives.’*

Manson writes about the importance of forming a future narrative of yourself:

“The other way to change your values is to begin writing the narratives of your future self. To envision what life would be like if you had certain values or possessed a certain identity.”

This ability, Manson adds: the ability to think about and articulate a future for ourselves, is one of the ways our thinking brains can influence our feeling brains by nudging it into the *correct lane of life*.

The consequences of not constructing a narrative of your future:

“...Without developing a clear vision of the future we desire, of the values we want to adopt, of the identities we want to shed or step into -we are forever doomed to repeat the failures of our past pain.”

The construction of a narrative of our future is in a sense, the construction of hope.

“The stories of our past, define our identity. The stories of our future define our hopes.”

INSIGHT #3 Engaging with Pain

“Life is one never-ending stream of pain, and to grow is not to find a way to avoid that stream, but rather, to dive into it and successfully navigate its depths.”

Manson states a profound truth about life, that is: ‘*Pain Is The Universal Constant*,’ which is the 7th chapter in the book *Everything is Fucked*.

The default human condition is to avoid pain and pursue pleasure. But this pursuit of happiness is toxic because it is misleading and self-defeating, as the author clarifies:

“...when we avoid pain when we avoid stress and chaos and tragedy... we become fragile. Our tolerance for day to day setbacks diminishes and our life must shrink accordingly for us to engage only in the little bit of the world we can handle at one time.”

The antidote, Manson suggests is to actively engage with pain and *learn to suffer well*.

"...while pain is inevitable, suffering is always a choice... there is always a separation between what we experience and how we interpret that experience. ...there is always a gap between what our feeling brain feels and what our thinking brain thinks, and in that gap, you have the power to bear anything."

"When we pursue pain, we are able to choose what pain we bring into our lives... this choice makes the pain meaningful, and therefore it is what makes life meaningful."

Everything Is Fucked by Mark Manson – Summary Notes

- The opposite of happiness is hopelessness. It is nihilism. It's a belief that everything is fucked, so why do anything at all?
- *"Nihilism in the pure indulgence of desire that accompanies it, are gripping the modern world. It is power for the sake of power, success for the sake of success and pleasure for the sake of pleasure. Nihilism acknowledges no broader why it adheres to no great truth or cause. It is simply: 'because it feels good.'"*
- Self-control is not a problem of information or discipline, but rather, it is a problem of emotion. An emotional problem can only have an emotional solution. It is all up to the feeling brain.
- *"The thinking brain does not control the feeling brain, but it can influence it."*
- *"The thinking brain is the supporting character, who imagines herself to be the hero."*
- *"People are always mistaking what feels good for what is good."*
- *"Consistently communicating and aligning the brains around the same values. It's a skill. It takes work."*
- *"... self-improvement is not the cultivation of greater happiness, but rather, the cultivation of greater self-respect."*
- *"[Growth]... reprioritizing ones value hierarchy in an optimal way"*
- *"The values we pick up throughout our lives crystallize and form a sediment on top of our personality. The only way to change our values is to have experiences contrary to our values. Any attempt to break free from those values through new or contrary experiences will inevitably be met with pain and discomfort."*
- *"...there is no such thing as change without pain, no growth without discomfort. That's why it is impossible to become someone new, without first grieving the loss of who you used to be."*
- 3 laws of emotion: 1) for every action there is an equal and opposite emotional reaction. 2) our self-worth equals the sum of our emotions over

time. 3) your identity will stay your identity until a new experience acts against it.

- *“Experiences generate emotions, emotions generate values, values generate narratives of meaning.”*
- Development psychologists have long argued that protecting people from problems, challenges or adversity, does not make them happier or secure. It makes them more insecure.
- *“No matter how sunny our skies get, our mind will always imagine just enough clouds to be slightly disappointed. This constant sea of pain results in what is known as the hedonic treadmill.”*
- *“the human body can go either way depending on how you use it. If you get off your ass and actively seek out pain, the body is anti-fragile. Meaning it gets stronger the more stress and strain you put on it....but if you avoid stress and pain... your muscles will atrophy, your bones will become brittle and you will degenerate into weakness.”*
- *“... the question then, the only question is, will you engage it? will you engage your pain or avoid your pain? will you choose fragility or [antifragility](#)?”*
- *Everything you do, everything you are, everything you care about is a reflection of this choice.”*
- *“the quality of our lives is determined by the quality of our character and the quality of our character is determined by our relationship to our pain.”*
- *“pain is the currency of our values, without the pain of loss or potential loss it becomes impossible to determine the value of anything at all.”*
- One gains real freedom by imposing limitations on themselves. True freedom is not the privilege of choosing everything you want in life, but it is to do with what you will give up in your life.
- *“Diversions come and go, pleasure never lasts, variety loses its meaning...but you will always be able to choose what you are willing to sacrifice, what you are willing to give up.”*

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