

Take Control of Your Life How to Silence Fear and Win the Mental Game by Mel Robbins Book Summary



- The author says this is a book that's going to teach you how to win the mental game by silencing fear
- If you can change your response to situations that make you nervous or scared, then you will change how you think
- You will win the mental game and you will take control of your life. The only thing that makes you feel out of control in your life is fear
- You have allowed fear to teach you to think in ways that keep you stuck, and that undermines your courage

- Fear comes down to one thing: **control**
- ***You feel nervous or afraid at any moment when you sense you're about to lose control***
- The irony: it's your desire to keep control that is actually screwing things up
- Three step method that will help you change where are you struggling
- First you must identify what you're scared of, Second, you've got to see the new unique way you silence yourself or run whenever you feel nervous or afraid
- First person is Dan, who is a teacher and his greatest fear is having regrets in his life in regards to not being able to for fill what he wants in life
- Pick a field or area of study that you enjoy and that makes you light up
- Don't focus on trying to do the right thing because it gives you a false sense of control

• **Session 1: Dan**

- Teacher, greatest fear is regret not doing things he wanted by the time it's too late
- Mel says that she believes a lot of people get to teaching because they love learning
- But the trap is when you're teaching the same thing over and over, at a certain point you *stop growing*
- A study showed that the number one regret people had near the end of their life was that they *wish they stopped worrying so much*
- The worry comes from fear and stops them from doing what they wanted to do
- We worry about stuff that will never happen and causes us to not do things
- At the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the ***need to grow***, which is what causes a crisis in us when we are in our 30s and 40s and 50s and recognize our mortality
- Thinking about something is very different than doing it
- Thinking gives you a false sense of control
- It is an illusion that you're working on something
- Research shows that *fantasizing about your goals* actually saps your energy and leads to decreased motivation in achieving them
- 1st Takeaway: anytime you catch yourself overthinking, follow the fear
- What am I afraid of?
- When you feel out of control or afraid, don't speed up, slow down
- **Busyness** gives you a *false sense of control*, but it's not going to get you the results you want
- There's something about slowing down and tuning in that brings the truth to the surface
- There is research that shows why ***long walks in nature*** helps your nervous system and your brain focus
- This explains why she has breakthroughs during walks
- If you want your dreams to come true, it starts with the courage to state it
- You have to be able to state it in order to create it as your own
- ***You change your life inch by inch, brick by brick, not mile by mile***
- Brick by brick helps you focus on steps rather than thinking about the huge picture
- Every move you make forward in life is going to be valuable
- We are obsessed with thinking about the big stuff, but you can only control the small things

- Smaller is better. The bigger it is, the less control you have
- Ask yourself:
- How will I know if I completed it?
- What is the biggest obstacle to doing this?
- **Passion** is just energy, it's not a destiny
- What you are passionate about is *what energizes you*
- Passion is what you feel inside about what you're doing, about the way you're living your life
- Figure out how you can grow into what you want
- Look around and ask yourself what are the things that energize you?
- What are the things that actually energize you?
- What are you curious about?
- What do you like to learn?
- What's a new skill you want to develop?
- Passion is not about the thing you ultimately want to achieve
- It's about how you feel as you're living your life and growing into it
- Start paying attention to *where your energy increases* and where you feel depleted
- Passion is a feeling you get when you're doing something you care about
- Passion is the energy that expands inside of you and expands your life
- Start intentionally slowing down and start aligning your life with things that energize you
- Do this audit for everything: hobbies, food, people, type of work, topics you read about
- Recap of 5 takeaways from Dan's session:
- Always follow the fear
- Ask: what am I afraid of?
- Being busy doesn't mean you're in control
- You have to state it to create it
- How to take steps? Go brick by brick to make it stick
- Break down your goals into small chunks
- Simplify your goals into the smallest actions forward everyday and then just start working on it
- Passion is not a person, place or thing, and you're not gonna find it
- You're gonna follow the energy and grow into the things that interest you
- It's all about the pursuit, not the endgame
- **Perfectionism** is a defense mechanism
- Wherever you're focused on perfection, your life is probably out of control

● Session 2: Heather

- 29, New York City, Marketing, Engaged
- Book reference: [Mindset by Carol Dweck](#)
- She's telling Heather that it's important to teach kids the **growth mindset** where effort is more important and you have the capability to learn new things through *hard work, creativity, and resilience*
- Takeaways from regarding perfectionism:
- In order to gain control you must follow your fear

- Ask what are you afraid of and what do you do when you are afraid?
- The secret to mind control is body awareness
- Feeling out of control begins with your body, not with your mind
- Fear triggers a physical response
- Research and studies show that our bodies are *designed to sense things around us and send signals to us about safety or threats*, and our bodies are always communicating with us, even before our minds react to any perceived threats
- A study with rigged decks of cards prove that our bodies figure out what's happening faster than the conscious brains do
- First, slow down and slow your breathing
- Maybe walk around, and count forwards or backwards from 90
- You can also hug someone for 90 seconds
- Just make sure it's someone you know because that'll be a long awkward hug
- You don't have to experience trauma to be paralyzed by fear
- Even the seemingly little moments can have a huge impact on our lives
- When you're young, every failure can feel like a life or death
- From then on you develop coping mechanisms so that you'll never have to feel out of control again
- *Being hard on yourself and self criticism* is actually a ***coping mechanism*** to protect yourself from being hurt
- It's like punching yourself so that nobody else will
- It's bracing yourself for impact so when others criticize you, it doesn't matter or hurt as much
- On top of that, it becomes a destructive pattern and habit that doesn't stop even when others aren't being hard on you
- How to get rid of deep rooted pattern of self criticism
- When you increase self compassion, you boost your feelings of self worth and reduce fear and anxiety
- Create anchor thoughts – positive images that makes you happy or excited
- Anchor yourself on something positive that you achieve in the past or something you can be happy or grateful for
- If you're negative, don't hang out with negative people
- **Fixed vs Growth** mindset:
- Fixed mindset people believe their skills and talents are fixed traits and therefore you can't change
- You can teach yourself how to have a growth mindset
- What you believe is that *your talents and skills can grow* with time and experience
- You have to prioritize learning, growing, and trying over seeking approval, perfecting, and succeeding
- ***Focus on the process instead of the result***
- As a parent, reward the actions and effort, not the traits
- If you want control, ***expect to hear "no"***
- Kevin Hart gave a speech and told students he's successful because he heard 3,607 "No's" and he kept showing up and began expecting them
- The game is *showing up and facing rejection*
- It's not about how good you are, it's a numbers game

- With a growth mindset, you hear a no, learn from it, and keep moving forward
- The only thing you have in this world is your **willingness to try**
- You are 1000% in control of that and you'd better get comfortable with it
- Climbing the "ladder" doesn't make you happy
- It only gives you a fake sense of control

● Session 3: Rosa

- **Mother of 3, Secondary teacher, Canadian, Divorced**
- Once you identify and change your response to fear, you're gonna get control of your life
- Stuff will never give you what you seek
- Focusing on the things in your life will never get you the control that you want
- Life is defined by *what's inside your head*, not by what's outside of you
- You take what's inside your head wherever you go
- A therapist told her that it's actually a good sign when your kids come home and can let it all hang out emotionally because it means they feel safe to do so with you
- You have to worry when they *bottle it up and not talk to you* at all about anything that's going on
- It's way more motivating to change your life for the better if you care for and love yourself first rather than making yourself wrong
- This is why giving yourself *grace* and *compassion* is such an important first step
- Focus on the side of it that's about being kind to you
- ***Excuses mean fear is winning***
- There are two kinds of people in the world
- People who see the *opportunity*
- People who see the *excuse*
- You either see what you want or you see all of the obstacles in between you and what you want
- Instead of asking yourself what's wrong with me, ask yourself *what happened to me?*
- Takeaway: Any time you got an excuse, that is fear talking
- The excuses make you feel like you're in control
- But no change will happen until you break through them

● Session 4: KC

- 28 years old, Detroit, Michigan, Recently engaged, Real estate agent
- His greatest fear: *being labeled and separated from the pack*
- Sometimes we have **imposter syndrome** because we haven't fully *embraced who we've become*
- When you own your story in a different way, it becomes something powerful for you, not done to you
- Mel said one of her all time favorite lines she's ever heard anyone say:
- ***"Who I was does not dictate who I am and who I'm becoming"***
- Own the fact that all the change is gonna come from you
- The hardest thing for most of us is to just be ourselves and not try so hard to fit in
- Have a learning disability can be a struggle in school, but it is an advantage in life
- It's an advantage to learn differently because your learning style forces you to be a *creative thinker and problem solver*

- You can see things other people can't see because your brain thinks differently
- Your learning difference can make you *more resilient in the long run*
- It's a struggle, but you get used to failing
- You get used to trying over and over
- You get used to understanding that you have to work a little bit harder and differently than everyone else
- That will pay dividends in your adult life
- If your child has a learning difference, you must be the safe place for them when they get home
- Always praise the effort they're putting in
- Growth vs fixed mindset
- Reward the work and focus on creating a growth mindset
- Be their advocate by utilizing tools and resources to help them adapt, but more importantly to being their advocate for doing more of what they're good at
- Remember that it will get better
- Takeaway: **Introverted** vs **Isolating yourself**
- It's all about energy
- Studies even show that introverts tend to be better leaders
- **Authenticity limbo**: you know you're not the old version of you, yet you haven't fully embraced the new version of you
- Communicate your change through your actions, not your words

● Session 5: Amy

- 46 Years old, Michigan, Married, 4 Kids, Insurance
- Being a **social chameleon** is a psychological term that means you *change your personality in order to fit in*
- Lies always catch up to you, and so does blending in
- Learn how to trust the guidance system that's inside of you rather than waiting for somebody else to figure it out for you
- Your internal compass always points in the direction of things that you're interested in, curious about, or energized by
- Takeaways:
- You can feel out of control and still take control
- Recognize when you're being a chameleon and hiding in plain sight
- Unresolved issues follow you

● Session 6: Cassandra

- Washington, Not married, 3 kids
- Her biggest fear is that she doesn't know how to have a functional, committed relationship with a man
- You don't hurt people because you love them
- People's actions say they don't love you because they can't
- ***Some people are not capable of giving love or being in love***
- **Love** is getting control of your anger
- Love is treating people with respect, dignity, and kindness
- Some people are so broken, they are *incapable of loving others*
- Victims of abuse mistakenly categorize the trauma these people caused as love

- Be aware of your own ***emotional landmines***
- It is hard to see the patterns in your own life until you follow the fear and your response to it
- Your judgements are created by your own perception, not the truth
- Takeaway: Judgement comes as a result of hurt
- Decades of distance can be erased with one phone call

• **Main ideas / Themes:**

- Always follow the fear by asking “*What am I afraid of?*”
- You change your life *inch by inch, brick by brick*, not mile by mile
- What you are passionate about is *what energizes you*
- **Perfectionism** is a defense mechanism
- Being hard on yourself and self criticism is actually a coping mechanism to protect yourself from being hurt
- **Fixed vs growth mindset**: *Focus on the process instead of the result*
- Excuses mean fear is winning
- “*Who I was does not dictate who I am and who I’m becoming*”
- Communicate your change through your actions, not your words
- Learn how to trust the guidance system that’s inside of you
- Some people are not capable of giving love or being in love
- Love is treating people with respect, dignity, and kindness
- Judgement comes as a result of hurt
- <https://marloyonocruz.com/>