

Book review



The Book of Angst

Understand and manage anxiety

Category: Book Reviews / Self-Help

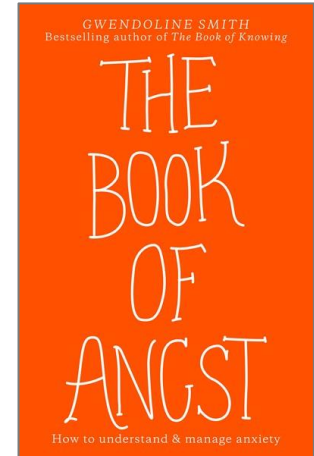
Author: Gwendoline Smith

Year: 2020

Publisher: Allen & Unwin, NZ

ISBN: 9781988547695

Audience: For Community



Summary: Using simple, clear language with humorous illustrations, Gwendoline gives a detailed step-by-step advice on how to cope with anxiety.

Ironically, Gwendoline Smith's *The Book of Angst* leaves the reader feeling less anxious ... about anxiety! Written during 2020, this is a timely read during uncertain times.

The magic of this book is its simplicity. With plain language and a straightforward approach, Gwendoline provides a useful overview of anxiety. Such publications can be serious and dry, yet *The Book of Angst* is anything but. Concepts are made memorable through humorous stories and examples. Witty illustrations are peppered throughout this quick and easy read.

Cleverly, it has a light-hearted feel whilst also being incredibly informative. Read it in one sitting or dip in and out of when required. Those who have read the author's previous publications *The Book of Overthinking* and *The Book of Knowing* will be familiar with the author's candid style.

The opening chapters delve into the different types of anxiety, how they manifest and possible treatment options. More attention is then given to social anxiety, which Gwendoline believes is currently the most common and underdiagnosed form.

As an Auckland based clinical psychologist, Gwendoline advocates for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) as a proven and evidence-based treatment method. The reader can expect clear explanations and simple strategies to try at home. I got excited over the helpful flashcards at the back of the book which add to its practicality.

Importantly, Gwendoline provides an insight into what can be expected when professional help is sought. The last few chapters act as 'therapy sessions' where the reader is exposed to a course of therapy with a fictitious client. This section would be hugely beneficial to readers considering seeking professional help for themselves or a loved one.

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I appreciated the cheery tone in this book. Whilst reading, I felt like I was talking to a wise friend and thought adults and teenagers alike would enjoy this. Whether you've been pondering anxiety, diagnosed with it or simply want to be more informed, *The Book of Angst* will leave you feeling more knowledgeable ... and hopefully a little less anxious.

Reviewed by Gina Speedy, School Counsellor at Auckland Normal Intermediate

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