

Book review



Calming the Emotional Storm

Using dialectical behaviour therapy skills
to manage your emotions and balance your life

Category: Book Reviews / Self-help

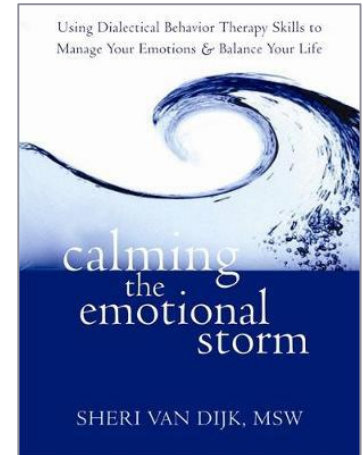
Author: Sheri van Dijk

Year: 2012

Publisher: New Harbinger, US

ISBN: 9781608820870

Audience: Supporting Myself



Summary: An accessible, general introduction to DBT skills for anyone who feels overwhelmed by their emotions at times

Emotional dysregulation means you react emotionally to some situations and your reaction is more intense than the situation warrants, and it takes you longer to recover from such strong emotions. After reading that, I felt like I had emotional dysregulation! But that is the point that *Calming the Emotional Storm* is trying to make; everyone has difficulties with their emotions, but there are simple ways to change your feeling of uncontrollable emotions.

Calming the Emotional Storm is a perfect book to outline and illustrate ways of restoring emotional stability by focusing on the four Dialectical Behaviour Therapy skills. Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is formed from the basic premise that our emotions, thoughts and behaviours are all interconnected, but US psychologist and creator of DBT Marsha M. Linehan adds the concepts of mindfulness and acceptance to this idea. The book gives explanations along with exercises that the reader can use, creating more active learning.

I enjoyed the writing of the book; it's very organised and well thought out. The writing is simple which helps define complicated emotions that we all feel. It was a wonderful introduction to mindfulness while not focusing too long on the concept. This book is great to read through, but more ideal for having on hand in order to turn back and refer to its exercises when they are needed. The simplistic Zen Buddhist concepts are soothing to contemplate and simplistically difficult, a juxtaposed concept similar to our daily emotions.

The book doesn't present an expectation of mastering mindfulness in 30 days, it gently reminds the reader that change takes time, and can be difficult in parts, but sometimes change is just about listening and getting to know your body. Understanding yourself can start with simply listening to your breathing.

Reviewed by Kate Cherven, Communications and Fundraising Intern at the Mental Health Foundation

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