

Book Review

The book of knowing: Know how you think, change how you feel

Smith, G. (2019). Allen & Unwin.

The book of knowing by Gwendoline Smith (Dr Know) is an engaging book about understanding your brain and how it affects your thinking. It discusses how anxiety is affected by the body, mood, and behaviour and highlights the importance of understanding how you think, so you can change how you feel. Knowing looks into the cognitive psychological approach, and gives a basic overview of how to use the theories in practice.

The language and illustrations actively drew me in, as did facts behind what was easily linked to personal experiences with anxiety. Knowing was an easy read that required no prior knowledge of psychology.

Structured self-help generally turns me away from a book, however with Knowing, I found myself using the techniques and realising that they did work for me. Self-help strategies and their success differ from person to person, however Knowing acknowledged this, and gave many different ways to combat overthinking and anxiety. Knowing focuses on the ways the mind works in everyday life, and why it works in that way.

One of the things that stood out to me in Knowing was its lack of positive affirmations - Dr Know uses the phrase "putting sugar on sh*t" to describe positive affirmations, and I think it fits perfectly. The lack of being told that affirmations are the one true solution was refreshing. This book does contain some coarse language, so I would recommend that people under 13 years should not read it. I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in how their brains work.

For those who deal with anxiety and general worry, Knowing holds a lot of wisdom, and gives easy strategies to incorporate into daily life. Knowing is a short read that is easy to digest either in one go, or with breaks in between, and once read, should be picked up and looked through often.

Reviewed by Gray Smith, Logan Park High School.

The Mental Health Foundation's Information Service brings you reviews as part of the Good Reads feature for Mental Health Awareness Week. To view more go to <https://mhaw.nz/>