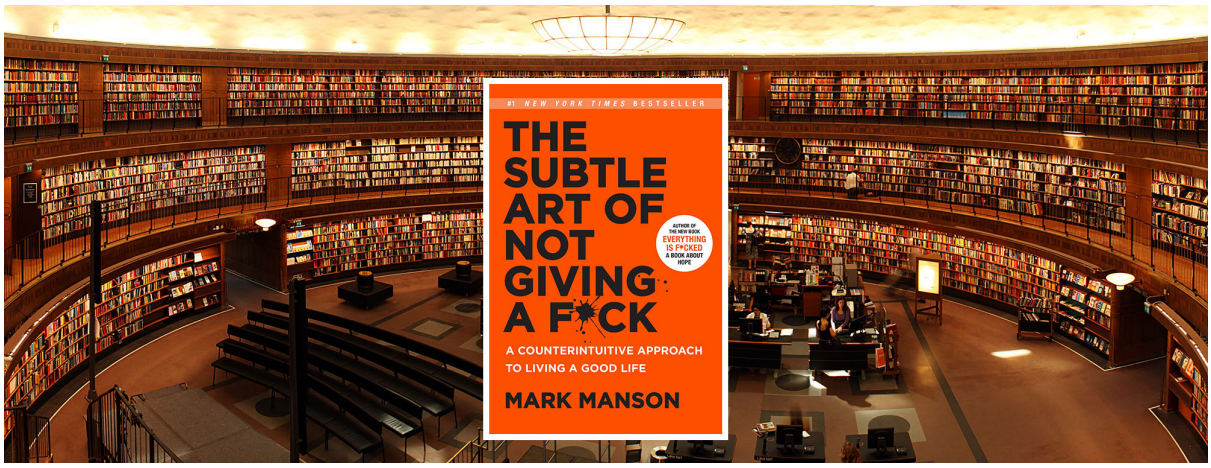


The Subtle Art of Not Giving a Fuck

A Counterintiutive Approach to Living a Good Life

by **Mark Manson**
Harper, 2016. 204 pages

reviewed by **Dr Claude Diderich**

The Democrat House representative from California, Katie Porter, got my attention to reading the book *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a Fuck*. She was reading this book by mark Manson during the McCarthy House Speaker election disaster. You can find proof from gettyimages here. While the book's title is provoking, its content is very insightful- assuming you get over the numerous f* references in its first half. It is about focusing, prioritizing, and choosing what matters to you and what does not based on your honest personal values. The book combines storytelling with prescriptive ideas about how to determine whether or not to give a fuck.

The book is structured into nine chapters, each focusing on a particular topic. In chapter one, the author defines "not giving a fuck" as being comfortable with being different. Too many people try to behave in a certain way to fit in. Although at a different level, the ideas described remind me of Adler's concept of freedom. To be free and subsequently to be happy, you need to adhere to your standards, not those of others. Chapter two digs a little deeper into the concept of happiness. The author argues that happiness is not a solvable problem. Indeed, nobody happy stands in front of a mirror to tell himself he is happy. In chapter three, the author emphasizes that trying to be special does not lead to happiness. The worst that one can do is to believe their bullshit. Next, Manson turns to explore the

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value of suffering. He illustrates the concept with Lieutenant Onoda, who continued to fight the Second World War long after it was over. This leads to exploring the concept of self-awareness and self-improvement. It is all about prioritizing better values and choosing better things to give a fuck about. Chapter five, titled you are always choosing, makes the point that we feel empowered if we choose our problems. On the other hand, problems are forced on us, making us feel victimized and miserable. Again, the ideas relate to Adlerian psychology stating that being happy requires adhering to the concept of separation of tasks. Humans do not always control what happens. But they contain how to interpret what happens to them and how to respond. In chapter six, the author turns to the concept of being wrong about everything. He saw process starts by observing that certainty is the enemy of growth. For any change to happen, one must be wrong about something. Building on the concept of being wrong, Chapter seven focuses on exploring failures as a way to move forward. Humans can only be truly successful at something if they are willing to fail at it. The magnitude of success is proportional to the number of times one has failed. The author elaborates on the importance of saying no in the second to last chapter. The book concludes with Chapter nine, called "... and then you die." What the author wants to say is that people fear giving way too much about too many things come out because giving a fuck about those things is the only thing that distracts from the reality and inevitability of death.

The subtle art of not giving a fuck is an exciting book, once you get over the excessive vulgar language and use of the F-word. But I would not qualify it as a best seller. There is insufficient formalism about the concepts introduced. The book follows the principle "trust me in what I am telling you." At the same time, many of the ideas are illustrated using storytelling; I believe the case presented are often farfetched. The book also is completely missing any references. Such references would have been helpful to understand better how the author came up with the idea of pride. It is a perfect book to read if you have to sit through a House Speaker election ship. In all other situations, while interesting to read, I would not recommend it as a first read on self-awareness and self-improvement.

As always, this is my personal subjective assessment of the book *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a Fuck* with which you may or may not agree. Any well-argued opinions, whether in agreement or not, are welcome!

`#book #bookreview #businessbook #business #management #life #fuck #happyness #problem #emotion #disappointment #special #exceptional #extraordinary #value #choice #tragedy #failure #success #paradox #trust #dying #death #pain`

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Dr Claude Diderich (`claude.diderich@innovate-d.com`) is the founder and managing director of the Swiss innovation and strategy consulting boutique `innovate.d`. Claude holds a doctor ès sciences and a masters in computer science engineering from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne and a certificate of advanced studies in strategy from the University of St. Gallen. His areas of expertise include business model innovation, customer-centric strategy development, digital transformation, and problem-solving using design thinking. His most recent book titled *Design Thinking for Strategy: Innovating towards Competitive Advantage* has been published by Springer Nature and available both in English and German.

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