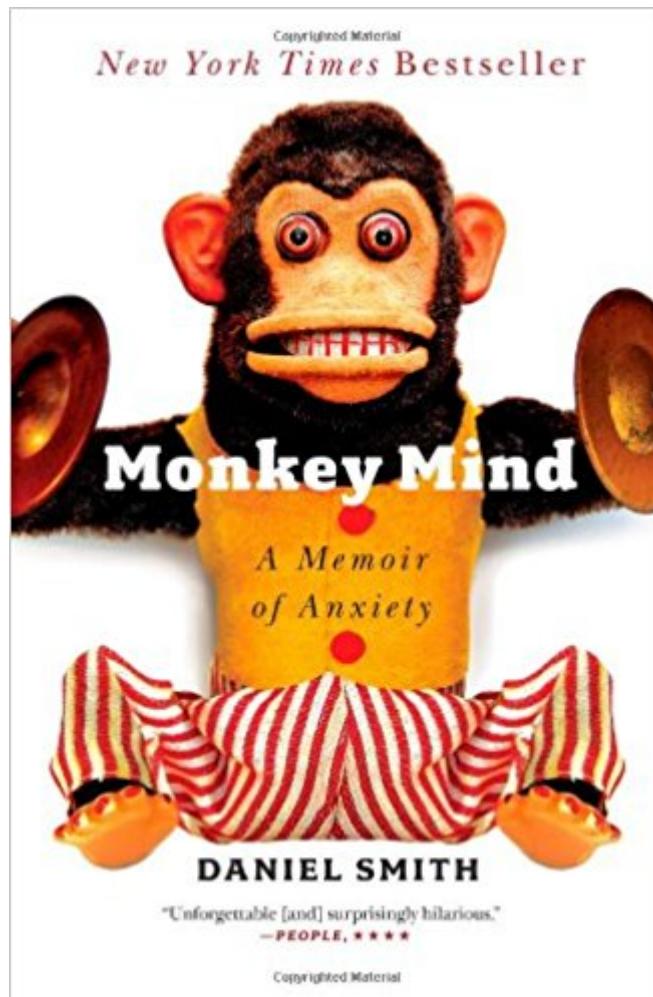


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Monkey Mind: A Memoir Of Anxiety



Synopsis

A wildly acclaimed New York Times bestseller, this uplifting, smart, and funny memoir provides hope and understanding to the 40 million Americans who suffer from anxiety disorders. Daniel Smith's *Monkey Mind* is the stunning articulation of what it is like to live with anxiety. As he travels through anxiety's demonic layers, Smith defangs the disorder with great humor and evocatively expresses its self-destructive absurdities and painful internal coherence. Aaron Beck, the most influential doctor in modern psychotherapy, says that "Monkey Mind does for anxiety what William Styron's *Darkness Visible* did for depression." Neurologist and bestselling writer Oliver Sacks says, "I read *Monkey Mind* with admiration for its bravery and clarity. . . . I broke out into explosive laughter again and again." Here, finally, comes relief and recognition to all those who want someone to put what they feel, or what their loved ones feel, into words.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"I read *Monkey Mind* with admiration for its bravery and clarity. Daniel Smith's *Monkey Mind* is matched by a wonderful sense of the comic, and it is this which makes *Monkey Mind* not only a dark, pain-filled book but a hilariously funny one, too. I broke out into explosive laughter again and again." (Oliver Sacks, bestselling author of *The Mind's Eye* and *Musicophilia*) "Monkey Mind does for anxiety what William Styron's *Darkness Visible* did for depression." (Aaron T. Beck, father of cognitive therapy) "You don't

need a Jewish mother, or a profound sweating problem, to feel Daniel Smith's pain in *Monkey Mind*. His memoir treats what must be the essential ailment of our time—chronic anxiety—and it does so with wisdom, honesty, and the kind of belly laughs that can only come from troubles transformed. (Chad Harbach author of *The Art of Fielding*) “Daniel Smith maps the jagged contours of anxiety with such insight, humor and compassion that the result is, oddly, calming. There are countless gems in these pages, including a fresh take on the psycho-pathology of chronic nail biting, an ill-fated ménage à trois—and the funniest perspiration scene since Albert Brooks’s sweaty performance in *Broadcast News*. Read this book. You have nothing to lose but your heart palpitations, and your Xanax habit.” (Eric Weiner author of *The Geography of Bliss*) “I don’t know Daniel Smith, but I do want to give him a hug. His book is so bracingly honest, so hilarious, so sharp, it’s clear there’s one thing he doesn’t have to be anxious about: Whether or not he’s a great writer.” (A.J. Jacobs author of *Drop Dead Healthy* and *The Year of Living Biblically*) “Daniel Smith has written a wise, funny book, a great mix of startling memoir and fascinating medical and literary history, all of it delivered with humor and a true generosity of spirit. I only got anxious in the last part, when I worried the book would end.” (Sam Lipsyte author of *Home Land* and *The Ask*) “In this unforgettable, surprisingly hilarious memoir, journalist and professor Smith chronicles his head-clanging, flop-sweating battles with acute anxiety. . . . He’s clear-eyed and funny about his condition—painful absurdities.” (People (four stars)) “This book will change the way you think about anxiety.” Daniel Smith’s writing dazzled me. Painful experiences are described with humor, and complex ideas are made accessible. *Monkey Mind* is a rare gem. (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette) “Monkey Mind is fleet, funny, and productively exhausting.” (Ben Greenman The New York Times Book Review) “Superb writing [and] marvelous humor . . . If you’re chronically anxious and want to better explain to a loved one what you’re going through, hand them *Monkey Mind*.” (Psychology Today) “You’ll laugh out loud many times during Daniel Smith’s *Monkey Mind*. . . . In the time-honored tradition of leavening pathos with humor, Smith has managed to create a memoir that doesn’t entirely let him off the hook for bad behavior . . . but promotes understanding of the similarly afflicted.” (O Magazine) “The book is one man’s story, but at its core it’s about all of us.” (Booklist) “[Smith] adroitly dissects his relentless mental and physical symptoms with intelligence and humor. . . . An intelligent, intimate and touching journey through one man’s angst-ridden life.” (The Star Tribune (Minneapolis)) “A true

treasure-trove of insight laced with humor and polished prose. (Kirkus Reviews (starred)) "Monkey Mind is a perfect 10. Hilarious, well-informed and intelligent, Smith conveys the seriousness of his situation without becoming pathetic or unrelated, and what's more, he offers useful information for both sufferers and non-sufferers. He gives us a reason to stay with him on every page. (Newsday) "Here's one less thing for Daniel Smith to worry about: He sure can write. In *Monkey Mind*, a memoir of his lifelong struggles with anxiety, he defangs the experience with a winning combination of humor and understanding. (Heller McAlpin NPR.org) "For fellow anxiety-sufferers, it's like finding an Anne of Green Gablesâœ kindred spirit. (New York magazine) Vulture.com) "[Monkey Mind] will be recognized in the years to come as the preeminent first-person narrative of the anxiously lived life. (Psychiatric Times)

Daniel Smith is the author of *Muses, Madmen, and Prophets* and a contributor to *The Atlantic*, *New York magazine*, *The New York Times Magazine*, and *Slate*. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

'Monkey Mind' is a very interesting book but let me make something clear. It's a memoir of the author and not anxiety. What do I mean? Well, the story is told through the eyes of the author (obviously) but focuses a lot on his life, including when he lost his virginity, his relationship with his mother, his career in fact-checking and writing, and eventually his relationship with his now wife, Joanna. Throughout the story, the author describes how certain events in his life were related to his diagnosis of anxiety, and how he worked to overcome this. At some points during the book, he uses dramatic descriptions of how it feels to have anxiety - if you close your eyes you can almost feel how he does. But the book is about him and not the condition. There is a lot of description of his life events and some of it doesn't really reference his anxiety. I suppose that this is necessary so you can get to know the author, but as I read this, I felt as though I was clearly reading a biography of the author who happened to be anxious, rather than a biography of the condition anxiety with descriptions of how people with the condition felt. Maybe it's splitting hairs, but the book was just not quite what I expected. The book has a very satisfying end (I won't reveal that here) in which 2 significant things happen to the author. I found myself being very happy for him and very hopeful that he would be able to conquer his problem. If you're interested in mental health diagnoses, this one is a short read which is interesting. I would recommend it.

I could not finish this book. I have struggled with anxiety and expected to receive something I could

relate to, something to bring humor to this disorder, something to possibly give me a few tricks on relaxation. Instead I got a self indulgent, meandering, boing book with little reference to anxiety. The best way to explain it would be if Twitter gave him unlimited characters. We learn about his family, his crushes, his every minute thought, almost like he typed without a mental filter. Boring and self indulgent. Don't bother.

This person doesn't take anxiety seriously. The "horrible incidents" he describes read like boasts. The book ends with him basically saying, that he's glad all that is behind him now, without really offering any real solutions. I have the solution to your monkey mind, It's called meditation, and throw in some yoga too if you like. This book won't help you with any of that. It's just a way for Mr. Smith to brag about his life, while acting like it was all so horrible, and sell books to people looking to improve themselves. I hate this book.

This is a great book for those that suffer from anxiety. Albeit it is someone else's life and story, it is relatable to those that suffer. Totally recommend this book for anyone who wants to understand this mental illness better.

It was great to find myself laughing out loud as I read about someone suffering from pretty severe anxiety. Some of Daniel Smith's stories were hilarious. It also made me feel a little better about my own anxiety, which I work to control every single day of my life. His seems way worse. (Of course, I hate to feel better about my issues because someone suffers more than me.) I would wish for neither of us to have to deal with it, but I'm grateful he has such a great sense of humor about it. It helped put everything in perspective.

A book that hits close to home. Always good to hear about the experiences of others dealing with anxiety

So much serious stuff. So much humor to levitate it somehow. I'm listening to the audio version and laughing out loud in the car and I'm not that much of a book laugher. Heads up--some things that might make sensitive people cringe a bit and lots to delight in the difficulty. My guess is anyone with any kind of anxiety will likely find lots to love--especially if they have a bit of sense of humor about their own anxiety. I enjoyed the writing immensely and the journey he's on. I feel like it ended rather abruptly...I wanted to see where he went from there--clearly it is a longer journey and I think he's still

fairly young. Part 2?This book was recommended to me when I began my own possible anxiety memoir--I'm glad to know there's another one out there! And he covered so much ground, I don't feel pressured to cover the same ground.Enjoy!

This is a terrific book. In the first part, you get inside the narrator's brain, following the crazy path of his anxious mind.If you suffer from anxiety, if someone you know does, this is a great book. It will show you exactly what is going on inside the mind of one anxious person, and you'll come away with a new perspective.The first part is not so much about anxiety: it's the experience of anxiety. Very well written. The second part tells youreally good, interesting stuff about anxiety. Different from any other book I've ever read. It's certainly not a textbook:go elsewhere if you're looking for a sociological overview. It's not case notes, because it's written by an author troubledwith anxiety, not a shrink. It's not a manual for how to cope. It's what it's like to live with anxiety. Very interesting, touching,personal, and informative. Very original, too, there's no other book like it that I know of.

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