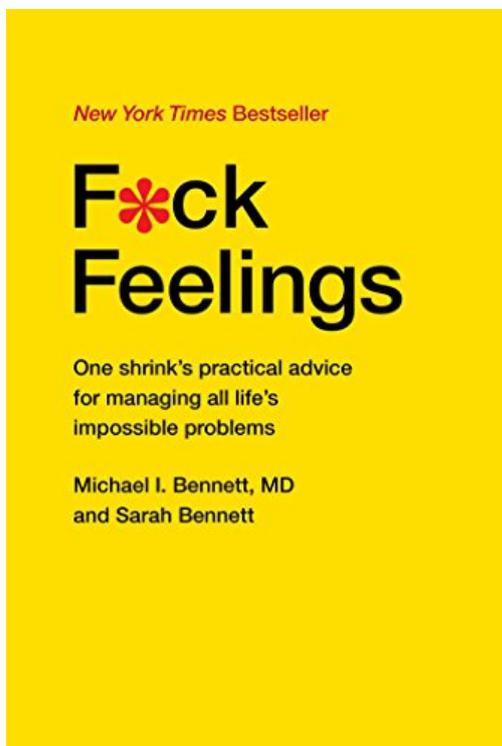


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# F\*ck Feelings

One shrink's practical advice  
for managing all life's  
impossible problems

Michael I. Bennett, MD  
and Sarah Bennett

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One that makes this book is strongly read by amounts people is that it gives a different means to utter the significance of this book for the reader. Easy to review as well as understandable turn into one part personalities that people will consider in picking a publication. So, it is very appropriate to consider F\*ck Feelings: One Shrink's Practical Advice For Managing All Life's Impossible Problems By Michael Bennett MD, Sarah Bennett as your reading product.

## Review

"Gives the middle finger to the self-help genre....Refreshingly blunt." (Harper's Bazaar)

"The Ice Bucket Challenge of self-help books...sound advice." (New York Post)

"The Bennetts have no time for gooey motivational slogans....Together they urge readers to abandon a quest for perfection in favor of realistic attempts at betterment....The Bennetts' goal is not that you might finish the book and say, 'I am perfect,' but that you might finish the book and say, 'I am the best version of myself that I can be at the moment.' (The New York Times Book Review)

"A tough-love, irreverent take on 'life's impossible problems.'" (The Atlantic)

"F\*ck Feelings is the ultimate anti-self-help book." (Refinery 29)

"A highly informative and entertaining smack down to get your head on straight." (Kirkus Reviews, starred review)

"Engaging...it's hard to argue with the book's advice." (Elle)

"F\*ck Feelings offers not only reliable, practical, and eminently useful advice to deal with all of life's various points of pain, but it is also funny, engaging, intelligent, and warm. Full of arresting examples and memorable quips, the book will help anyone who reads it to replace fool's gold with the genuine gem of wisdom." (Edward Hallowell, M.D., author of Driven to Distraction)

"I don't trust anything called a "self-help" book which is why I love F\*ck Feelings. There's no smiling guru on the cover. We would all be smiling, motivated, people all day long if our f\*cking feelings didn't keep f\*cking us up – but this book helps. It gives clear examples of our own circular thinking and how to accept our feelings but not always cater to them, and it's FUNNY. Because life – even when it sucks – is FUNNY." (Jen Kirkman, stand-up comedian and New York Times bestselling author of I Can Barely Take Care of Myself)

“Despite the in-your-face title, Dr. Michael Bennett really does believe in feelings. He just thinks that there is only so much time that one should spend examining one’s belly button searching for answers or getting hung up on guilt or anger. Instead, people should recognize and accept their flaws and get on with modifying or changing their behaviors and attitudes. This is useful advice for everyone, including therapists who can use this technique as a way of helping patients avoid getting stuck in endless therapy. I found myself using it on several of my patients. A great combination – valuable education and a fun read.” (Gail Erlick Robinson MD, DPsych, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Toronto)

“A wise, witty and practical book filled with wonderful case examples that speak to all of us. It has been a pleasure to read. ” (Carol C. Nadelson, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, Past President, American Psychiatric Association)

#### About the Author

Dr. Michael I. Bennett, educated at both Harvard College and Harvard Medical School, is a board-certified psychiatrist, Canadian, and Red Sox fan. While he’s worked in every aspect of his field, from hospital administration to managed care, his major interest is his private practice that he’s been running for almost thirty years. The author of *F\*ck Feelings*, with his daughter Sarah Bennett, he lives with his wife in Boston and New Hampshire.

Sarah Bennett has written for magazines, the Internet, television, and books. She also spent two years writing for a monthly sketch comedy show at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theater in New York City. When not living by her philosophy of “will write for food,” Sarah walks her dog, watches Red Sox games, and avoids eye contact with other humans. Somehow, she lives in New Hampshire and works in New York. *F\*ck Feelings*, written with her father Dr. Michael I. Bennett, is her first book.

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*F\*ck Feelings* introduction what’s your goal?

Most people read self-help books, or come to see shrinks, because they can’t solve their problems after trying very, very hard to do it themselves. This is true whether they feel depressed, anxious, ill-treated, burdened with self-destructive behaviors, hurt by an unhappy relationship, too fat, too thin; you name it. They come expecting advice or treatment that will reduce symptoms, ease painful feelings, strengthen self-control, or mend broken relationships. Basically, they want a cure. These expectations are stoked by the public faces of therapy, particularly those telegenic, first-name-basis self-help gurus like Drs. Phil, Drew, Laura, Nick, etc.

*F\*ck Feelings* offers a more realistic approach from a medically trained, practicing psychiatrist who, over a forty-year clinical career, has treated hundreds of patients with intractable mental illness, bad habits, and troubled relationships—Dr. Lastname. That was the alias used by your authors—Dr. Michael Bennett, the aforementioned Harvard-educated psychiatrist, and his daughter Sarah Bennett, a writer who spent years writing sketch comedy at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre in New York—as we developed our collaborative technique at our website, [fxckfeelings.com](http://fxckfeelings.com).

Observing the difference between what people expect from therapy and what they are actually likely to achieve, I, Dr. Bennett, came to believe that people use the very act of coming for help—and their overbelief in a cure for their problems—to deny the fact that there is much about life, others, and their own personalities that is beyond anyone’s power to change. They would rather see themselves as failures or as partially developed seekers who cannot properly begin their lives until they have found an answer that has so far eluded them. Clinging to the belief that they can be cured, they want to know what they or any prior therapists did to block them from achieving their treatment goals. Unfortunately, many therapists, eager to help patients realize these wishes, support their false hopes. I am not one of them.

F\*ck Feelings explains that, in most cases, you have not failed and do not need to try harder or wait longer for improvement to begin; instead, you need to accept that life is hard and your frustrated efforts are a valuable guide to identifying what you can't change. After urging you to accept whatever it is you can't change—about your personality, behavior, spouse, kid, feelings, boss, country, pet, etc.—the F\*ck Feelings approach shows you how to become much more effective at managing life's impossible problems, instead of vainly and persistently trying to change them. If you're willing to accept what you can't change, we have many positive suggestions for improving the way you manage the shit on your plate—beginning with not wasting time repeating what hasn't been working.

Your issue may be the love or hate you wish you could stop, the urge to drink or drug that you wish would go away, the blues you wish you could cure, or the spouse, kid, or parent you wish you could change. By the time you seek help, however, it's usually obvious that something about your wish isn't feasible, but that hasn't stopped you from confusing that wish with a permanent, dedicated, high-priority goal. You can't go forward, or be helped by treatment, until you accept its impossibility, suck it up, and turn your bullshit wish into a goal that can actually be achieved.

Accept whatever is obviously impossible about your goals. Accept that depression is often chronic and incurable, so you can stop blaming yourself for not controlling it. Stop treatments that don't seem to be helping. Embrace whatever positive steps help you to live with and manage your illness or issue. Accept that there are some losses that never stop hurting, so you can stop delving into them, get used to living with a heavy heart, and try to build a better life. Accept that you have some urges for stimulating but unhealthy substances, sex partners, or self-expression that no amount of self-understanding will change. Stop asking why you've got weaknesses and start preventing them from turning you into a jerk.

After challenging advice seekers, patients, and our readers to accept what you can't change, we show how you're much less responsible for your misery than you thought. We teach good, often well-established methods for making the best of things—methods that you weren't using because you were too busy with wishful thinking instead of problem solving.

Obviously, we don't guarantee happiness—quite the contrary—but instead we offer you methods for building strength and pride in your ability to deal with the inevitable misery of a tough life. It's not that we're against happiness, just against holding yourself responsible for making it happen when it can't. In our world, feelings don't rule, many things can't be changed, and acceptance of limits, not limitless self-improvement, is the key to moving forward and dealing effectively with any and all crap that life can throw your way.

So, no, we can't tell you how to repair a long-broken relationship with a difficult parent, reform a bad boyfriend, or get respect from your boss, but that's only because nobody can. The only book that can actually teach you how to change how others think is a lobotomy manual. Instead, we can show you how to look past the disappointment, resentment, and/or neediness that result from those issues so they can be managed realistically.

With the right limits, you can have a peaceful relationship with a difficult parent, and with the right standards, you can avoid bad boyfriends altogether. And with realistic expectations, you can get your work done in spite of a bad boss, or better yet, find a better one. Instead of false promises or happy endings, we provide concrete steps for getting past unavoidable bad feelings so you can do your best with what you actually control.

This book is also filled with fun sidebars and tables, like this one, so that I, Sarah, can amuse myself:

Bad Wish

Good Goal

Be my best me!

Learn to accept that “me” isn’t the best, and that that’ll do.

Learn to love myself!

Love the effort I put into putting up with myself.

Never drink again, ever!

Never stop working hard to resist delicious alcohol.

Given life’s cruelty and unfairness, F\*ck Feelings believes profanity is a source of comfort, clarity, and strength. It helps to express anger without blame, to be tough in the face of pain, and to share determination without sentimentality. On the other hand, we don’t tolerate the reverent use of truly obscene f-words, like “fair” or “feelings.”

Each chapter addresses the usual wishes people have when they hope to solve a common problem—like loneliness, bad self-image, or conflict—and explains what part of these wishes are impossible to achieve. Using several composite case examples, we show you how to define the limits of what’s possible, create realistic goals, and devise businesslike procedures for achieving those goals. We remind you, repeatedly, because you need to hear it, to respect yourself for how you deal with bad luck, not for the overall quality of your luck. We also include information on how to find off-the-page therapy that might work for you.

So while other self-help books guarantee the path to happiness, F\*ck Feelings guarantees that said path is nonexistent; furthermore, convincing yourself that there is such a path will actually lead you to feel like a true failure, instead of an unlucky hero. What F\*ck Feelings can promise you is that there is no situation in life that can’t be endured if you can keep your sense of humor, bend your wishes to fit reality, restrain your feelings, manage bad behavior, and do what you think is right.

To those who want one of the many famous, overoptimistic Dr. Firstnames to tell them the secret to being happy, we say, fuck happy. Fuck self-improvement, self-esteem, fairness, helpfulness, and everything in between. If you can get over that, you can get real and get to a realistic solution, and yes, you can get it from this book, and from a real doctor, last name and all.

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