

Book Review

Super better: A revolutionary approach to getting stronger, happier, braver and more resilient

McGonigal, J. (2015) Penguin Press.

This book is a creative way to use some of the concepts of gaming to build resilience and a happier, stronger you. Super Better uses many scientific studies to explain why taking a more "gameful" approach to life can make a real change and how the game and app, of the same name, can help make that happen. The book is filled with quests that ensure you are experimenting with being gameful right from the start. But along the way you discover things about challenging yourself, power ups, battling the bad guys, allies, secret identities and epic wins.

Part one looks at why games make you super better. Actually, the book could have lost me in part one because while I can see why the Super Better game makes you feel super better, I will never be convinced that sitting in front of a computer playing games is a good idea. However, the great quests along the way kept me motivated to find out more and I appreciated the different perspective on gaming, particularly for anyone worried about the impact of gaming on someone in their life.

A quick way to shift your mindset

The quests throughout the book alone are a great resource of tools to quickly and positively shift your mindset and they all come with a clear explanation of why they work. Moving onto part two, How to be gameful convinced me that playing *Super Better* was a creative and fun way of approaching problems like depression or anxiety in a really active way. With small wins and small activities you can shift yourself and become empowered.

That said, the book was super long and had too much detail for me. But I have recommended it to a number of people already, including a friend who has a 13-year-old struggling with type 2 diabetes and weight problems. What a great way for her to approach her challenge, not full of things she should and shouldn't be doing but by playing a game to change her mindset and move forward everyday in some way. I am convinced taking a more gameful approach is a great way to shift and overcome a challenge. Start playing today!

Reviewed by Ngaire Newland, behaviour change champion at Be More Now.

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