

# SUMMARY

## GET YOUR SH\*T TOGETHER

SARAH KNIGHT



# **Summary of “Get Your Sh\*t Together” by Sarah Knight**

Written by Lea Schullery

Learn how to stop worrying about what you should do so you can finish what you need to do and start doing what you want to do.

Introduction	5
What Getting Your Shit Together Looks Like	6
The Process of Getting Your Shit Together	8
Begin With the Small Shit	10
Getting Your Money Shit Together	12
Win at Life and Win in Your Relationship	14
Get Your Professional Shit Together	16
Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety	18
Keeping Your Housekeeping Shit Together	20
Final Summary	22



# QuickRead

F R E E B O O K S U M M A R I E S

**Go to [QuickRead.com/App](https://QuickRead.com/App) now to download our app and get access to thousands of free book summaries as both text and audiobooks.**

**Get the key insights of non-fiction books in minutes instead of hours. Listen to our free audiobooks while you workout or on your commute to work.**



# Introduction

What's been your *Oh shit* moment? We all have one at some point. Perhaps it was the time you checked your bank account balance, only to find it wouldn't be enough to cover your credit card balance. Or maybe it was when you pulled on your favorite pair of pants and realized they didn't fit two sizes ago. Or perhaps it was when you woke up to your formerly favorite person, only to realize he or she didn't fit two *years* ago. Don't worry, we've all been there. For Sarah Knight, her *Oh shit* moment came when she realized she was unhappy because she didn't love her job anymore. Even more, she didn't enjoy the company or even the career that she had chosen to dedicate her life to. This realization was suddenly followed by "What the fuck am I going to do?" and "How the fuck am I going to do it?" Furthermore, Sarah was battling crippling depression that made it difficult to get out of bed in the morning. She felt as if she'd been spending fifteen years climbing the corporate ladder, only to realize she didn't enjoy it anymore. She finally realized, that "there was so much more she *could* be doing with her life if she could only stop worrying about what she *should* be doing." And once she realized she wanted to work for herself, she never looked back.

Now, Sarah has made it her mission to help you face reality and get your shit together. Throughout her book, Sarah aims to teach you "how to *approach* all the different stuff in your life so you can get it done in your own way, on your own schedule." By the end, you'll have your shit together and you'll be on your way to living the life you want and deserve.

# What Getting Your Shit Together Looks Like

So you're looking to get your shit together, right? But what exactly does that mean? It doesn't mean filling your calendar with to-do lists and social events, getting it all done while looking perfectly put together, and still managing to get dinner on the table each night. At the end of the day, these people only *look* like they have their shit together, but they typically sacrifice their mental health in the process.

For example, Sarah Knight was that person. One Friday morning, Sarah woke up not feeling well but she decided to get her shit together and go to work anyway, she had things to do! Throughout her NYC subway ride, she stifled her nausea until she was able to get to the office bathroom and vomit in peace. There she was holding her head over the toilet, but nothing happened. She immediately thought, "Oh holy fuck, am I pregnant?" She went back to her office to begin her work, she had her shit together, she could do anything... or so she thought. Suddenly, her arms became numb, her vision blurred, she stumbled out of the office and pleaded with her friend to call her husband.

After being wheeled out in a wheelchair, the nurse spent the next three hours calming Sarah down and assuring her that she was neither pregnant nor poisoned. Yes, she really thought she could have been poisoned somehow. The nurse suggested that Sarah had experienced a panic attack instead. It was this moment that Sarah realized, "Just because you are doing a ton of shit all day, every day, does NOT mean you have your shit together. It means you are a high-functioning human to-do list potentially on the verge of a total mental and physical collapse."

Instead, getting your shit together means managing your to-do list and calendar in a way that shit that needs doing gets done, and it doesn't make you go crazy. Sarah calls this "winning at life." However, in the Game of Life, you are only competing against yourself. Winning at life means you get what you want out of your time here on planet Earth. Perhaps it's getting

the house, job, car, partner, or even the hairstyle of your dreams. It's what happens when you translate your dreams into actions and live *your* best life. So how do you do this?

# The Process of Getting Your Shit Together

Now that you know what getting your shit together *looks* like, it's time to find out "what the process of getting your shit together and winning at life actually looks like." For Sarah, it was living life in the tropics and working for herself. But for you, it could be getting a promotion, circumnavigating the world in a kayak, or just going one week without drowning in your emails. The beauty is that anything is possible and getting your shit together takes just three steps.

1. Strategize: Set a goal and make a plan to achieve that goal in a series of small, manageable chunks.
2. Focus. Set aside time to complete each chunk.
3. Commit. Do what you need to do to check off your chunks.

Sarah's goal was to have enough money saved up to quit her job, become a freelancer, move to the tropics, and write her first book. It was during this time she got her first book deal, yay! The problem? She had just one month to write 40,000 words. "*One motherfucking month.*" She wanted to hit her deadline so she made a plan. She determined that she would have to write a certain number of words per day, set aside time each day, sit down, and write the damn thing. She strategized, focused, and committed. *That's what having your shit together looks like.*

Similarly, she had to use these same steps when building a house and moving to the Caribbean. She and her husband strategized on what they could afford and how long it would take; focused on small parts of the whole, like applying for loans and corresponding with builders; and committed financially and psychologically to both their overall goal and the smaller mini-goals along the way. Sarah compares having your shit together to an adult coloring book. "You simply work your way through each little section until the big picture materializes before you."



Now, it's time to keep track of your keys, phone, and wallet. Yes, you should keep track of your real keys, phone, and wallet, but your metaphorical ones as well. "If you can manage to stay on top of these three little life management tools, you can use them to get your metaphorical shit together too." Your keys are the ability to strategize, they unlock your next steps. Your phone is the ability to focus, make those calls, and mark that calendar. Your wallet represents your commitment, this is when you put your real or metaphorical money where your mouth is, to follow through on your plan. In other words Keys + Phone + Wallet = Shit. Strategy + Focus + Commitment = Together. Shit Together.

Think about life like your cell phone. Sure, you may have 25 apps open at once, but you can only use your phone to do one thing at a time. In life, it's not possible to do more than one thing at a time in general. So it's time to focus on your small, manageable chunks, just one at a time. Let's say your goal is to get a new job. Step one is updating your résumé. Step two is grabbing your real or metaphorical phone and scheduling that step. Step three is setting aside an hour on Saturday for résumé updating. It's all about giving yourself the time and space to do the shit that needs doing to get you closer to your goal.

# Begin With the Small Shit

As you know by now, breaking things up into small, manageable chunks is the best way to keep things “ultramanagable” for you. Therefore, Sarah suggests beginning with the small shit, “Stuff you have to deal with regularly, like being on time and not getting distracted and staying on top of your email.” Once you can get the small stuff together, life becomes infinitely easier. Then you can begin managing the bigger stuff. You see, when people are looking to get their shit together, they often say things like, “I don’t even know where to begin.” Therefore, it’s time to demolish this lame excuse and begin by simply *setting a goal*.

This is where Sarah explains the What/Why scenario. First, begin by asking yourself, “What’s wrong with my life?” Then, ask yourself “Why?” Next, set a goal that will help you fix what’s wrong in your life. For example, perhaps the problem in your life is that the giant box for the TV you bought eight months ago is still in the living room. Ask yourself why it’s still sitting there. The answer? Because you haven’t taken it to the street. So set your goal: Take the fucking box to the street. It’s your turn to try:

What’s wrong with my life? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

When you’re setting a goal, it’s important to set a *reasonable* standard. For instance, if your goal is to lose weight, you shouldn’t make a goal of looking like Sofia Vergara, that’s unrealistic for most normal people. You see, when you set unrealistic goals, you are setting yourself up for failure. You’re running a race that will never end. You might as well give up, go home, and sit on the couch and eat a Costco-sized pallet of bite-size Mini Oreos. Instead, you should set realistic goals based on your own life, not someone else’s measurements.

Once you've set your goal, it's time to start scheduling time to work on it. If you're like most people, you might be thinking, "There's never *enough* time." You have too many things to do but too few hours in the day to get it all done. Again, this is just another lame excuse. You have 24 hours in a day, it's up to you to use them wisely. The key to time management is laying out a strategy and focus. Figure out just how long it takes you to complete a task, schedule the time, and get it done.

Next, prioritize your to-do list. This is where "Fuck Overload" comes into play. If you give too many fucks - without enough time, energy, or money to devote to them - you become overbooked, overwhelmed, and overdrawn. This is where you begin to experience "Fuck Overload" and experience panic, anxiety, and despair. In reality, you don't need to give all those fucks so it's time to start prioritizing.

To avoid "Fuck Overload," it's time to figure out which of your tasks are "to-do" and which ones are "must-do." For Sarah, her to-do list looked something like this: pick up prescription, write 500 words, touch up roots, do laundry, order birthday gift for husband, and watch the Red Sox game. In the end, her "must-do" list was simple: pick up prescription and write 500 words. When you pare down the truly necessary tasks, you realize you have more time than you think!

# Getting Your Money Shit Together

No matter your financial goal, you'll need to use what you've learned so far about strategy, focus, and commitment to achieve some of your financial goals, like getting out of debt, saving up enough money to start your own business, or purchasing your dream home. So if your answer to the question, "What's wrong with my life?" is that your bank account is in the red each month, then it's time to figure out why. Perhaps you're spending a little bit too much. Let's say you're spending \$100 extra each month, while this doesn't seem like a whole lot over a month, let's just stick with this amount for the sake of this example.

Okay, so let's say your goal is to spend \$100 less each month. First, you need to strategize! Think about spending just \$25 less each week for four weeks. By breaking down your \$100 into increments of \$25, it becomes a much more manageable chunk. Next, it's time to focus. When you're confronted with a potential expense, think about how much it costs in increments of \$25 and ask yourself, *Do I really need it?* If the answer is no, do not take out your wallet, swipe your credit card, or sign your name on the dotted line. When you don't spend the money, that is known as commitment. Perhaps you're going out to dinner and want to save \$25. Think about skipping the appetizer and dessert and stick to an entrée and a drink!

Perhaps \$25 a week still doesn't feel like a small enough, manageable goal to keep your spending habits at bay. In this case, you can break your chunks down even further to a *daily* amount. This works out to \$3.57 you have to avoid spending each day to account for \$100 a month. Here is where you should probably make a list of the things you spend money on daily to see which items can be easily eliminated. Here are five things on which you don't need to spend \$3.57 or more: a cup of coffee, two Powerball tickets, a 3-pack of gum, a collapsible shot glass key chain, any three-and-a-half items from the dollar store.

Think about your goal, whether it's \$100 a month or \$100,000 towards your dream home, you can achieve it by watching your daily spending habits and chunking it into manageable chunks.

# Win at Life and Win in Your Relationship

Now that you've started with the small shit, it's time to move into the tough shit. That is the problem of getting older, getting ahead, getting healthy, and getting better at life in general. We'll start with how you can apply the strategies you've learned to your relationships. And while having healthy relationships in every area in life is the goal, we're going to focus on your romantic partner relationship for now. So if you want to nurture your relationship, it's time to get competitive.

When we're talking about competition, we aren't talking about playing each other in one-on-one basketball or entering a doubles tennis match. No, being competitive in your relationship means competing with your partner to become the more loving, thoughtful, and affectionate person in your relationship. For example, when you set your goal for your relationship, make your goal to be the most helpful or the most kind. Perhaps for the next holiday, you can have a competition to see who gives the best present or who can create a better surprise.

Winning in life means winning in your relationship, so once you adopt a winning relationship mindset, you'll begin to change your perspective about the everyday chores and mundane tasks. For example, instead of dreading the after-dinner cleanup that involves taking the stinky trash to the curb of your driveway or even to the dumpster on the other side of your apartment complex, you can now think of this task as a way to earn more points in your competition. In other words, try showing your partner you love them by doing annoying tasks that nobody likes. If you both adopt a winning relationship mindset, you'll both be competing to show one another your love!

If you're really looking to win, it's time to get organized. Just like when you set time aside to work on accomplishing your goals, you should schedule some time to create a list of things you could do for your partner that will show your love. Maybe these are big things like scheduling a romantic trip

to the Caribbean or scheduling a weekend getaway in a nearby city. While you can certainly incorporate these big gestures if you have the time and money, it's more important to include many small gestures like keeping their favorite snack stocked in the pantry. In the end, it's the small things that matter. Practicing daily kindness lets your partner know that they are always on your mind. In fact, the annual big romantic gesture might seem like you're simply overcompensating for ignoring them the rest of the time. That's certainly not winning!

# Get Your Professional Shit Together

Now it's time to get your professional shit together. This can look however you want, remember that Sarah ended up quitting her job, becoming a freelancer, and moving to the Caribbean in order to get her shit together. Of course, you don't necessarily have to do something so drastic, unless you want to! Whatever it looks like for you is okay, perhaps it's getting a raise or even scoring that new promotion. Regardless of your career path, Sarah has plenty of tips to help you get your professional shit together.

The first step is to be confident. Okay, that may seem a bit vague and honestly a bit impossible sometimes. Even if we've been with a company for several years, exuding confidence isn't always so easy. That's why you should simply begin by *appearing* confident! When you appear confident, you can begin to gain the trust and respect of others, so how can you appear confident? Begin by looking at your colleagues who you respect. Who do you look up to? What does that person do that you can do? What makes them appear confident? Perhaps they're doing something incredibly simple like wearing the right outfit and dressing for success. Or maybe they just have a happy disposition and smile more.

You can emulate this confidence too. I mean, would it be so difficult to put a smile on your face and dress a bit better? Next, it's time to ask and ye shall receive. Many times we have goals to move up in the workplace; however, many of us never get there because we just never asked. For example, if you want to become a director in your department, then begin with having a conversation with your boss about what you need to do to be considered for that position. Stop guessing about what your boss wants and just ask! It's that simple. By asking the right questions, you can see exactly where you stand in the company and how to achieve your goals.

You may be thinking, "I'm too scared to ask my boss" or "My boss won't ever give me a straight answer." But what do you have to lose? Either way, you'll get valuable information. Perhaps you *don't* get a straight answer, or



you do and it's not what you want to hear, then you'll have a clearer understanding of your future at that company. You'll either know exactly what you need to work on, or you'll know that you need to find a new job - one where you can grow and progress. Either way, it's a win-win situation no matter how difficult it may be.

# Strategies for Dealing with Anxiety

If you're anything like Sarah, then you've probably had your own struggles with mental health, like anxiety and depression. For many of us, we fail to cope with our anxiety because we normalize it and assume everyone struggles with it in some fashion. While this may be true, not addressing your anxiety can have severe consequences. Take a look at Sarah who thought she was poisoned and dying but was actually having a panic attack! If you've ever experienced a panic attack, then you know exactly how suffocating and scary they can be. Therefore, the best strategy to deal with anxiety is to face it head-on and essentially rip off the anxiety Band-Aid.

For example, perhaps your problem is that you are desperate to move out of your current living situation. However, you're struggling to consult your roommate and tell him or her that you want to move out. That's okay, confrontation is anxiety-inducing for many people but the only way to move forward in life is to put on your big-girl or big-boy pants and just tell your roommate. What's your other option? Just disappearing in the middle of the night? Secretly moving out? While it may be an awkward conversation, your anxiety will go away once you rip off the Band-Aid and have that hard conversation.

Of course, this strategy can be used in many other situations. Perhaps you need to tell your boss you want to leave, or maybe you need to confront a friend who hurt you, or maybe you need to tell your partner that things aren't going well and you need to work on your relationship. No matter the situation, confronting the situation head-on is the best strategy to ease your anxiety and improve your mental health. On the other hand, many people cope with anxiety by doing the complete opposite of confrontation. Instead, they decide to just do nothing. In this strategy, ignoring the situation can sometimes result in the problem resolving itself. You may be thinking that this strategy just sounds dangerous and irresponsible, but it's actually just sensible hesitation.

For example, perhaps you receive an email from your boss that causes your anxiety level to spike. Perhaps it even makes you angry. In this case, replying immediately to your boss would be irresponsible. You'd likely say things you don't mean and react out of anger, resulting in an awkward meeting with your boss or even a potential firing. Instead, do nothing and sleep on it. After a good night's sleep, you'll feel calmer and perhaps you'll even realize the email was nothing to be worried about at all!

# Keeping Your Housekeeping Shit Together

When it comes to anxiety, much of that stress may come from trying to keep a tidy home. As you look around and see piles of dishes in the kitchen sink, dirty laundry littering the bedroom floor, and even dust piling on all the surfaces, your anxiety levels begin to rise and you may wonder, “Why can’t I keep my housekeeping shit together?” Luckily, Sarah has a few strategies to get your house shit together and keep it in a state of perfect tidiness.

Step one is to schedule *one* decluttering session. This does not have to be a life-transforming purge of going through every single item you own, thanking it for its service, and handing bags of shit to the local Salvation Army. Instead, it should be enough decluttering to keep you from getting embarrassed when your neighbors, friends, family, or that cousin you never see shows up on your doorstep unexpectedly! Once you’ve completed your initial decluttering session, it’s time to strategize and create a plan to keep your home tidy in the long-run.

Begin strategizing by separating your cleaning chores into different categories. For example, your categories might include putting the children’s toys away, folding and ironing the laundry, taking the garbage and recycling bins out, vacuuming, and sanitizing surfaces. Once you’ve divided your chores into categories, it’s time to focus and commit yourself to getting your housekeeping shit together. As always, you should break your categories into chunks that will make your housework more manageable.

You should commit yourself to complete two of these categories every other day. So schedule a small amount of time in your busy schedule to complete a category. In fact, you probably don’t need more than 20 minutes to get each one done! Once you’ve created a cleaning schedule, you have no excuse to *not* stick to it. Of course, some tasks may require more than just 20 minutes but if you spend an hour vacuuming one day, you won’t have to

spend hours doing other house chores because you've been knocking them out each day in 20-minute increments! Keep in mind that a little goes a long way and when you break your chores up into smaller tasks, you'll be able to keep your house tidy each day and avoid becoming overwhelmed by daily chores.

# Final Summary

As we move through our busy lives, we continuously cross off items on our growing to-do lists while simultaneously adding more tasks. This never-ending cycle leads to many unfavorable scenarios: we get stuck in a rut, we become unhappy with our jobs, even worse, we become unhappy with ourselves and our lives. It's time to get your shit together. The first step is to identify what is wrong with your life and then ask yourself why. From there, you can set a goal that will help you fix that area of your life. Next, it's time to break your tasks into manageable tasks and work slowly towards your goal each day. You can then apply this same technique to each area of your life: your work, finances, relationships, and even your lifestyle. At the end of the day, getting your shit together doesn't have to mean getting everything done on your to-do list, it simply means getting what needs to be done on time and leaving enough time for yourself and your mental health. The key, however, is to focus on your goals and commit to working on them every day. So if you're looking to get your shit together, it's time to set some goals, break them down, focus, commit, and lastly, be consistent.



# QuickRead

F R E E B O O K S U M M A R I E S

**Go to [QuickRead.com/App](https://QuickRead.com/App) now to download our app and get access to thousands of free book summaries as both text and audiobooks.**

**Get the key insights of non-fiction books in minutes instead of hours. Listen to our free audiobooks while you workout or on your commute to work.**

