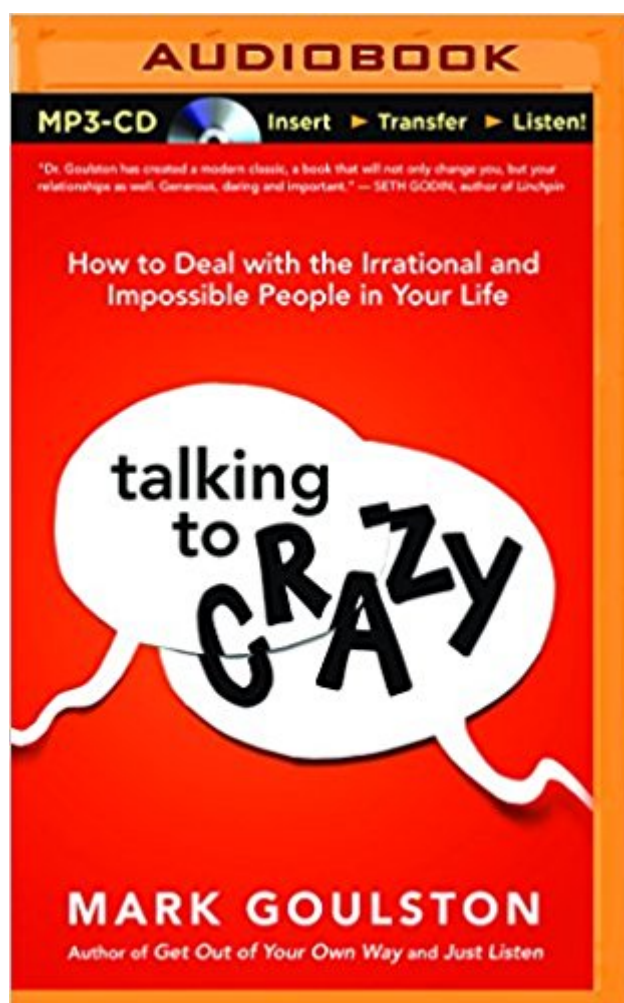


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# Talking To Crazy: How To Deal With The Irrational And Impossible People In Your Life





## Synopsis

Let's face it: We all know people who are irrational. No matter how hard you try to reason with them, it never works. So what's the solution? How do you talk to someone who's out of control? What can you do with a boss who bullies, a spouse who yells, or a friend who frequently bursts into tears? In his book *Just Listen*, Mark Goulston shared his bestselling formula for getting through to the resistant people in your life. Now, in his breakthrough new book *Talking to Crazy*, he brings his communication magic to the most difficult group of all—the downright irrational. As a psychiatrist, Goulston has seen his share of crazy, and he knows from experience that you can't simply argue it away. The key to handling irrational people is to learn to lean into the crazy—to empathize with it. That radically changes the dynamic and transforms you from a threat into an ally. *Talking to Crazy* explains this counterintuitive Sanity Cycle and reveals: Why people act the way they do How instinctive responses can exacerbate the situation and what to do instead When to confront a problem and when to walk away How to use a range of proven techniques including Time Travel, the Fish-bowl, and the Belly Roll And much more You can't reason with unreasonable people—but you can reach them. This powerful and practical book shows you how.

## Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Audible Studios on Brilliance Audio; MP3 Una edition (January 12, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1511364351

ISBN-13: 978-1511364355

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.5 x 6.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 94 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #193,148 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 in Books > Books on CD >

Parenting & Families > Interpersonal Relations #112 in Books > Books on CD > Nonfiction

#166 in Books > Books on CD > Health, Mind & Body > Self Help

## Customer Reviews

“By giving readers the words and theories, Goulston elevates a good book into a great one.” --Success Magazine “most conflicts in the workplace simply involve very difficult people who can make life miserable. *Talking to Crazy* offers much-needed



guidance for those seeking a solution to these all-too-common conflicts. --Soundview

"This is a great book for managers who know that some situations--a negative review, the announcement of organizational change--can bring out the crazy in anyone. --Inc.com

"Explains why people act in unreasonable ways, giving insight in to the brain's natural defense mechanisms and how to recognize an irrational person's modus operandi. --Industrial Engineer Magazine

"How can you survive all the cranks and impossible people that you daily have to deal with? Goulston describes their antics and how to deal with them in this delightful self-help book. --San Francisco Book Review

"Common-sense advice and humor offered by Goulston sheds light on mental health issues that are not discussed (but definitely experienced) in everyday life, especially in the workplace. --Small Business Trends

"Finally! The book that helps you deal with irrational, impossible people." --Oprah's Book Club 2.0

"Psychiatrist and power-blogger Mark Goulston presents the gift of his latest book to anyone who has ever dealt with bullies, whiners, manipulators, or screamers. Oh, wait, that's all of us. --Associations Now

"Talking to Crazy is a captivating, accessible guide to the many forms of 'everyday crazy' we face at work and in our personal lives." --TD Magazine

"We all deal with irrational people and situations. Talking to Crazy contains valuable insights into these types of interactions...an important addition to anyone's library." --Banking Exchange

"You've met the bully, the manipulator, the victim, the know-it-all, the backstabber. Dealing with these personalities can drive you crazy unless you employ Goulston's methods for dealing with them." --Jim Pawlak, Biz Books

Audiobook Review: "In this entertaining audiobook, author Mark Goulston has compiled decades of his experiences as a psychiatrist to show how even a layperson can communicate successfully with the irrational people in his or her life." --Audiofile Magazine

"My only regret about this book is that I did not read it sooner, when it would have been very helpful in dealing with some crazy situations." --Vancouver Business Journal

Earphones Award Winner from Audiofile Magazine      2016 Audie Award Finalist in Business/Educational

"I strongly recommend that you buy this book if you will find it infinitely useful, no matter what profession or life situation you are in." --PCB007

"Can help our work and personal life be less stressful, more productive and possibly save someone from doing something violent to themselves or others." --School Administrator

"Guidebook to dealing with the impossible people that cross your path. His suggestions can be put to work immediately. I know because I did. And they work." --Skip Prichard's Leadership Insights

"Reading Talking to Crazy will enrich your life. It is a book of practical wisdom."



--Parking Today      Online MBA's 25 Best Business Books      “Goulston’s ideas are a bit counter-intuitive but they really do shift the dynamic and help people diffuse and disarm the irrational person leading to more positive outcomes.” -- Online MBA      “Everyone’s heard the expression ‘you can’t talk to crazy.’ Goulston has discovered a way to communicate with them.” Lindsey Novak, At Work national columnist  
“Sometimes you read a book that is not only utterly riveting but also gives you useful tips for dealing with difficult situations in your own life.” Steemit      “You’ve met the bully, the manipulator, the victim, the know-it-all. Dealing with these personalities can drive you crazy unless you employ Goulston’s methods for dealing with them.”  
Hartford Business Journal      --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

“Goulston’s ideas are a bit counter-intuitive but they really do shift the dynamic and help people diffuse and disarm the irrational person leading to more positive outcomes.” -- Online MBA      Because some people are beyond difficult. Let’s face it, we all know people who are irrational. No matter how hard you try to reason with them, it never works. So what’s the solution? How do you talk to someone who’s out of control? What can you do with a boss who bullies, a spouse who yells, or a friend who frequently bursts into tears?

In his book, Just Listen, Mark Goulston shared his bestselling formula for getting through to the resistant people in your life. Now, in his breakthrough new book Talking to Crazy, he brings his communication magic to the most difficult group of all—the downright irrational. As a psychiatrist, Goulston has seen his share of crazy and he knows from experience that you can’t simply argue it away. The key to handling irrational people is to learn to lean into the crazy—to empathize with it. That radically changes the dynamic and transforms you from a threat into an ally. Talking to Crazy explains this counterintuitive Sanity Cycle and reveals: Why people act the way they do How instinctive responses can exacerbate the situation—and what to do instead When to confront a problem and when to walk away How to use a range of proven techniques including Time Travel, the Fish-bowl, and the Belly Roll And much more You can’t reason with unreasonable people—but you can reach them. This powerful and practical book shows you how. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

How to manage “everyday craziness” whenever and wherever you encounter it As Mark Goulston explains, he experienced an epiphany years ago when he went to a



meeting for estate planners who needed advice about helping families in crisis. "I expected the event to be a little dry, but instead, I was mesmerized. I found out that just like me, these people have to 'talk to crazy' every day. In fact, nearly every issue they discussed involved clients acting completely nuts...That's when it dawned on me that everyone -- including you -- has this problem. I'm betting that nearly every day, you deal with at least one irrational person...And that's what this book is all about: talking to crazy." That is, interacting with what he characterizes as "everyday crazy." More specifically:

- o They can't see the world clearly.
- o They say or think things that make no sense.
- o They make decisions and take actions that aren't in their best interests.
- o They become downright impossible when you try to guide them back to the side of reason.

As I began to work my way through Goulston's lively as well as eloquent narrative, I was again reminded of a scene in the Cheers television series when Frasier Crane, psychiatrist, patiently listens to Cliff Clavin, a mailman, babble on incoherently about the first Thanksgiving. "It took place between the ancient Egyptians and aliens from a distant galaxy." Eventually, Crane asks, "Cliff, what color is the sky in your world?" More recently, during the last holiday season at a party my wife and I attended, the host pointed out to several of us that very few penguins are left-handed. He was sober and quite serious. Goulston shares what he has learned about how to handle much more serious situations, situations that have potentially significant consequences if not resolved. "Maybe it's a boss who wants the impossible. Maybe it's a demanding parent or a hostile teen or a manipulative coworker or a neighbor who's always in your face." At one time or another, most people have encountered -- in an everyday situation -- a spouse or friend who screams at them, a child who says "I hate you" or "I hate myself," an aging parent who says "You don't care about me," someone at work who has a meltdown, and/or a supervisor who is a bully. These really are difficult situations that can be made even worse by an inappropriate response. These are among the several dozen passages of greatest interest and value to me, also listed to suggest the scope of Goulston's coverage:

- o The Secret: Leaning into the Crazy (Pages 5-7)
- o The Sanity Cycle (9-10)
- o The Science Behind Crazy, and, Three Pathways to Crazy People (26-28)
- o A Warning About Personality Disorders (37-41)
- o Triangle/Silo/Triangle (58-59)
- o The Eight-Step Pause (63-65)
- o The "Oh F#@& to OK" Speed Drill (68-69)

In Sections 3-5 (Chapters 8-33), Goulston then focuses on Fourteen Tactics for Talking to Crazy (75-163)

- o Eight Ways to Deal with Crazy in Your Personal Life (165-210)
- o What to Do When Crazy Is Actually Mental Illness (211-252)

One of Goulston's most valuable insights stresses the importance of following a process that is easy to chart but for most of us, very difficult to follow:

"The Sanity Cycle":

1. Recognize that the person



you're dealing with is unwilling and/or unable to think rationally/be reasonable in the current situation.2. Identify that person's modus operandi and the specific ways(s) that person acts out their craziness.3. Don't take the craziness personally. Realize that it isn't about you. Rather, it's all about the person who is obviously very upset and probably angry.4. Talk with the irrational person, leaning into the craziness by entering the other person's world calmly and with an intention to be helpful.NOTE: All of the major research studies (at least of which I am aware) indicate that during a face-to-face interaction, about 80% of impact is determined by tone of voice and body language; only about 20% (if that) is determined by what is said.5. Demonstrate your good will, that you are an ally rather than a threat, by listening calmly and empathetically but NOT, I presume to add, in a way that could be taken as condescendingly as the person vents. Make eye contact and listen with attention and (yes) patience as well as purpose.6. Help to guide the person to a more rational way of thinking. By letting off steam, they may calm down and appreciate the fact that you care and want to be helpful. These are the whats of the cycle. Goulston thoroughly explains the HOW of each of them. "The majority of the techniques I teach in this book follow these steps (although there are variations, and you'll sometimes veer completely off this path when you're dealing with bullies, manipulators, or sociopaths). That's because the Sanity Cycle is powerful magic. "Mark Goulston is determined to do all he can to "heal the world one conversation at a time" and hopes that everyone who reads this book will be well-prepared as well as sufficiently courageous to "help make that dream come true."

All of us face situations where we interact people whom we simply cannot understand. We may even regard them as crazy. If you want to learn how to interact with the irrationality in your life, "Talking Crazy" is the ticket. Mark Goulston, M.D. provides a roadmap for how to deal with you may regard as impossible people. The stories are insightful. What makes the book so rewarding are step-by-step tools you can employ to give yourself the edge. Equipped with such insights you will find yourself more at ease when you find yourself in tough situations with people who may drive you crazy.

Anyone who works, or lives, with people should read this book. Dr. Goulston provides strategies for talking with people - including people who are difficult for us; for recognizing people who really are crazy and need help we cannot give them; and for discovering our own crazy and the ways it makes



our relationships more difficult and may attach us to people from whom we should run unless we have to stay. In short, a very engaging guide to getting along in life as most of us actually live it!

Great outline of personalities and their various MO's, how to anticipate/dodge their various triggers while understanding how to either help or ease away. Works in the office, at parties, and with colorful friends that drain our emotional energies. Downside: Once you get the basic outline, it gets very detailed. Perhaps the first third and last quarter are for the "takeaway," while the center is for those of us with a serious purpose on our hands. Overall, an interesting guide for a walk in the zoo of life.

I work in a firm with so many crazies it makes me crazy! I loved this book because I was able to identify each personality and know how to deal with it. I've used the authors responses so many times and they work! He suggests we look at our own 'crazies' i.e. why do they make me crazy. Great question! I would recommend this book to everyone... except for the crazies because as Mark stated "They don't know they are crazy!"

I liked it. Helpful suggestions when talking to irrational people - or those who don't/can't be reasoned with. Easy to read and understand. Non techn

This book is a great book written by a sensitive and brilliant psychiatrist. He has a knack for distilling complex psychodynamics into real world techniques that can be used in dealing with difficult people. This word crazy is used in the most compassionate manner by the author He offers pertinent advice that can help in resolving volatile situations. I would highly recommend this book for supervisors, managers and anyone that has to deal with difficult people in their line of work. All of the chapters have usable bits of wisdom. I especially like the brief summary at the end of the chapters called "Usable Insights". They are really usable and very useful!!

The author explains why the communication breakdown is happening and how to get back on track which leads to better communication and stronger relationships. The numerous sample dialogues are extremely helpful in teaching the communication techniques and gives the reader a confident, "I can do this" attitude. Well done. Very well done.

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