

a quick guide to focus and declutter your mind

THE
LITTLE BOOK
OF

CLARITY

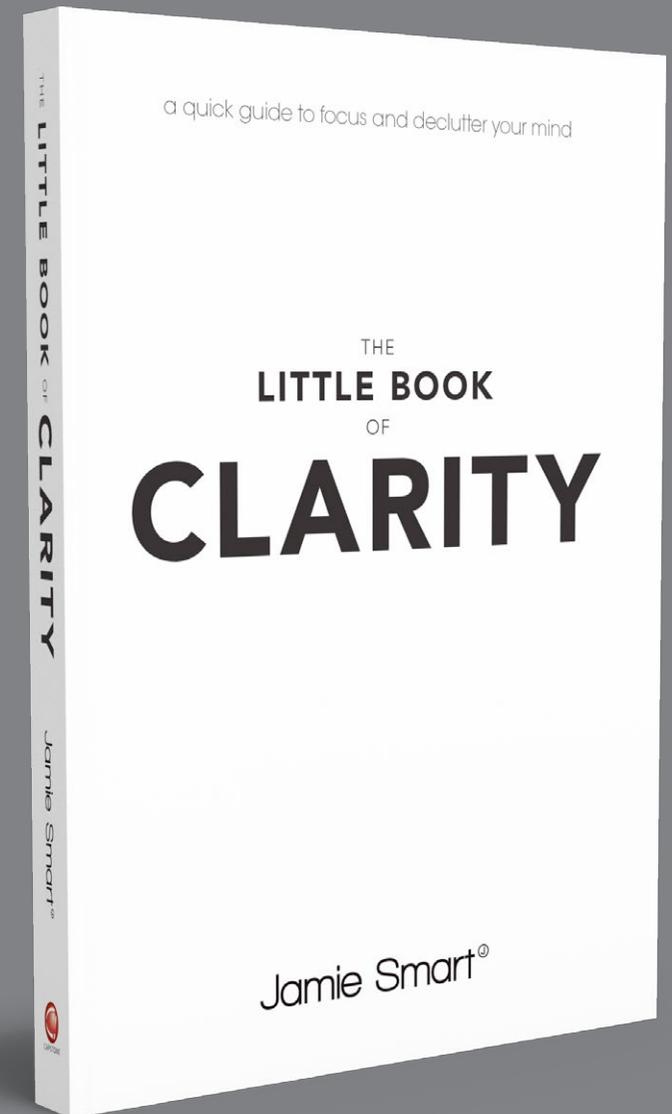
Jamie Smart[®]



Imagine what you could achieve if you could only clear your mind

The Little Book of Clarity shows you how to clear your head and get things done. Based on the bestselling book, *Clarity*, this new edition has been distilled to the essentials, getting right to the point. With no vague theory or superfluous anecdotes, this book gets you right to work reducing stress and boosting productivity by uncovering your mind's in-built "self-clearing" capacity. As you begin to understand the concept of innate thinking, the benefits will start emerging in every corner of your life. As you think less, you'll win more — at work, at home, and at the game of life as a whole. You'll rid your mind of clutter for good as you focus on what matters, and finally free up the time you need to pursue your dreams.

Life's constant bombardment of "to-do" and "urgent" pushes your own priorities clear off the radar. Before you know it, you're always busy, but not getting very much accomplished. Personal goals fall by the wayside as you struggle just to keep up with day-to-day life. This book shows you how to cut the noise and clear the fog, and start working on what matters to you.



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and online at  amazon



Please feel free to post this

THE **LITTLE BOOK** OF

CLARITY

sampler on your blog or website, or email it to anyone looking to clear their mind and get things done!

Thank you.

Extracted from *The Little Book of Clarity: A quick guide to focus and declutter your mind* published in 2015 by Capstone Publishing, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ. UK. Phone +44(0)1243 779777

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Preface

This book's predecessor, *CLARITY: Clear Mind, Better Performance, Bigger Results*, evoked a "Marmite" response when it was launched in early 2013. Many people loved CLARITY (the book became an international number 1 bestseller, a gratifying response for any author). But while the majority of Amazon reviewers gave the book 5 stars, explaining how CLARITY had transformed their lives, a full 10% of reviewers gave the book 1 star, with criticisms ranging from "too simplistic" to "too complicated" and various points in between.

This polarity was not unexpected. I've been sharing the principles behind clarity with individuals and groups since 2009, and the response to the book mirrors those of my public speaking audiences. In fact, it's quite predictable given the core message of *CLARITY* – that a clear mind is your natural state, and there's nothing you need to *do* to clear it; that our misguided attempts to clear the mind often result in more of what was clouding them in the *first* place. This assertion flies in the face of the personal development norm of telling people "what and how to think and do" in order to have the results you desire.

But some of the most fascinating feedback began arriving six months *after* the book's publication. People started coming up to me after talks and telling me in hushed tones that when they first read *CLARITY*, it hadn't made sense to them, but when they went back to the book a few months later, something strange had happened. They discovered that it not only made sense, but that they'd incorporated the lessons from their *first* time reading the book *without even realizing it*.

This makes perfect sense. While most personal development approaches offer "additive" advice (tips, techniques and concepts to remember, practice and apply) the principles behind clarity are ruthlessly subtractive...

Understanding these principles takes things *off* your mind rather than giving you more to think about.

The revelation that the mind is a self-correcting system resonated deeply with many people. Liverpool striker, Daniel Sturridge, scored his first Premier League hat-trick against Fulham in May 2013, then arrived at his post-match interview carrying a copy of *CLARITY*. One of my clients, Bluecrest Health Screening, started including a *CLARITY Quotient* section in their screenings, empowering corporate clients to take charge of their engagement and stress levels. Demand for training in the principles behind clarity has continued to increase, and a growing community of professionals are being certified as clarity coaches, practitioners and trainers.

Which brings us to an important question: *Why a little book of CLARITY?*

The acceleration of technology, information and communication has continued to increase since *CLARITY* was published. People are even busier and assailed by even greater demands on their precious time and attention. In the face of this, the idea of a concise version of *CLARITY* pared down to the bare essentials started becoming more and more attractive. It would provide an opportunity for me to further simplify and clarify the central message of the book, and to refine some of the terminology. Perhaps most importantly, it would mean that new readers could be introduced to the principles behind *CLARITY*, and start experiencing the benefits in their work, their relationships and their lives as a whole.

Believe it or not, I receive messages most days from people telling me what an enormous difference understanding these principles has made in their lives. While some have found new relationships, careers and life circumstances, the more universal discoveries are new peace of mind, clarity and freedom. The promises of a clear mind, better performance and bigger results are underpinned by something that's there for all of us: the discovery of where your experience is coming from, what you're up to in life and who you really are.

To your increasing clarity!
Jamie Smart, 2015

Introduction

“What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients.”

Herbert Simon, Economist, winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, 1978

“If a pond is clouded with mud, there’s nothing you can do to make the water clear. But when you allow the mud to settle, it will clear on its own, because clarity is the water’s natural state...”

Clarity is your *mind’s* natural state.

For many years, I’ve been sharing this simple metaphor in workshops and seminars with business leaders, entrepreneurs, coaches, consultants, therapists and private individuals. As people allow their mud to settle, clarity emerges, and they discover they have what they need for the job at hand.

So what is clarity, and why does it matter? How does clarity work, and why do so many people struggle to find it? Most importantly, how can you find the clarity you need and start benefiting from it?

It’s well known that outstanding leaders in every field, from Olympic medal-winners to visionary entrepreneurs, profit from the flow-states that a clear mind brings. With clarity of mind comes the qualities that drive sustainable results. These qualities and results are what individuals and organizations are searching for. But, due to a simple misunderstanding, we’ve been looking in the wrong place until now.

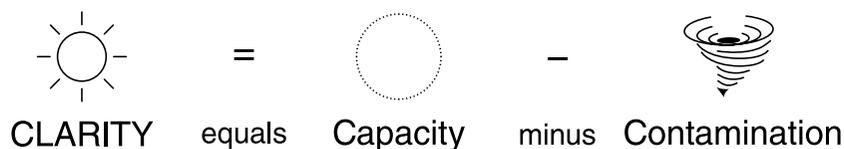
The purpose of this book is to correct the misunderstanding and help you experience greater and greater clarity, with all the benefits it provides. The book asks and answers the following questions:

1. *What is clarity?* It turns out that clarity is a kind of “universal resource”. When we have a clear head, we have everything we need for the job at hand. Ask a nervous speaker what’s going through their mind when they’re onstage, and they’ll explain their fears, worries and anxieties. Ask a *confident* speaker what they’re thinking about onstage and the answer’s almost always consistent: “Nothing!” This is the case in every field of high performance, from the classroom to the playing field, from the boardroom to the bedroom; when you’ve got nothing on your mind, you’re free to give your best.
2. *Why is clarity essential?* You’re going to discover why clarity is so important for living a life that’s successful on the inside as well as on the outside. It turns out that many of the most desirable qualities people struggle to “develop” (such as intuition, resilience, creativity, motivation, confidence and even *leadership*) are actually expressions of an *innate* capacity; they’re emergent properties of an uncluttered mind. These qualities drive the results people desire. Clarity is the source of authentic leadership and high performance. It allows us to be present in the moment, and have an enjoyable experience of life. A sense of purpose, direction and entrepreneurial spirit are natural for people with a clear head. So are happiness, freedom, security, love, confidence and peace of mind.
3. *How does clarity work, and how can you get it to work for you?* You’re going to be introduced to the principles behind the natural capacity for experience – thinking, feeling and perceiving – that every person is born with. This innate capacity generates 100% of our experience of life, moment to moment. Clarity is a naturally emergent property of this capacity – it isn’t something you do; it’s something you already *have*. The mind has its own “self-clearing” function, capable of guiding you back to clarity, regardless of what state (or circumstances) you’re in. While this is extremely evident in small children, all but a fortunate few have it conditioned out of them by the time they reach adulthood.

As you start to deepen your understanding of the principles behind clarity, you're going to reconnect with your mind's natural self-clearing function. As a result, you'll find that you start having a) an effortlessly clear mind, b) more time for what's important, c) improved decision making, d) better performance where it counts and e) more of the results that matter to you. Some of the "side effects" you may notice include improving relationships, reducing stress levels, more passion and an increasing engagement with life.

4. *Why do we need clarity now, more than ever?* We're living at a pivotal point in history; millions of people are faced with uncertainty, complexity and increasing chaos. As individuals, as organizations and as an entire species, clarity is the key to solving the big issues that face us, if we want to create a sustainable future for ourselves, and the generations that follow us.

You see, without even realizing it, we've been using an industrial age *misunderstanding* of how the mind works to try to deal with the challenges of a digital world. This misunderstanding gives rise to the contaminated thinking (e.g., worry, anxiety, overthinking, etc.) that obscures our innate capacity for peace, presence, high performance, creativity, security, love and the like. As you start to "see through" the misunderstanding, clarity will emerge more and more frequently and reliably. To put it succinctly: *Clarity equals capacity minus contamination.*



As you continue reading this book, you're going to start undoing the conditioning that's been keeping you from clarity until now, and notice yourself experiencing a clear mind more and more frequently (with all the benefits it brings). At the times when your mind *is* clouded, you'll know what to do (and more importantly, what *not* to do). The conditioning is based in three main areas:

1. *Contaminated thinking arising from the outside-in misunderstanding.* A widespread piece of conditioning mistakenly attributes clarity (and the lack of it) to a variety of circumstances. While this can easily be shown not to be the case, the misunderstanding is extremely persistent when it goes unchallenged. You're going to be introduced to a relaxing and enjoyable way of reading that will help you to "see through" this misunderstanding, and begin having insights and realizations that will make a difference to you immediately. As you deepen your understanding of the principles behind clarity, you'll find stale habits of contaminated thinking dropping away, and clarity emerging to take their place.
2. *The move from a manufacturing economy to a knowledge economy.* Just as factory workers need to keep their machines clean and well oiled, knowledge workers, coaches, creatives, managers and leaders need to take similar care of their minds. Individuals and businesses are paying the price as time scarcity, attention-poverty and information-saturation clog the "mental machinery" we rely on. But there's good news. People are born with a powerful immune system that protects us from disease and illness. The immune system reflects an innate tendency towards health and wellness that also shows up in the body's ability to repair wounds, breaks and other injuries. It is a little-known fact, however, that people also have a "psychological immune system," able to quickly restore even an extremely perturbed mind to clarity and well-being. As your understanding of the principles behind clarity continues to deepen, you'll find that you have what you need to prosper in times of uncertainty, complexity and change.
3. *Attempting to find clarity using outside-in methods.* The mind is a self-correcting system. The primary condition needed for a self-correcting system to find its way back to balance is simple: an absence of external interference. Outside-in methods such as positive thinking, affirmations and other techniques are examples of external interference. Other examples include smoking, drinking too much and Internet addiction. While they can be used to clear the mind in the short term, they are not sustainable. In the long run, they often make matters worse if they give the busy-minded person even more to think about and do (I'm assuming that the *last* thing you need is more on your mind).

This book is designed to *effortlessly* activate your innate capacity for clarity. As you'll find out, the principles you're going to be discovering will take care of the implementation for you.

DISTINCTION: Acting it vs. Catching it

- Acting it: *Acting* like you have a cold is neither easy nor convincing. Most business and personal development books aim at giving you the things to think, change and do so you can "act" in a certain way to get the results you want.
- Catching it: When you *catch* a cold, the symptoms emerge effortlessly because they're real. This book is designed so that you can "catch" an understanding that results in the "symptoms" of increasing clarity, resilience and peace of mind.

I want to assure you that you have the capacity for sustainable clarity, and all the benefits it brings. But first, a question:

Q: If you're caught in a trap, what's the one thing you have to do before you can escape?

A: You have to realize that you've been caught in a trap.

Until you realize you've been caught in a trap, you're very unlikely to get out of it. But once you know about the trap, and you can see how it works, then escape is pretty straightforward. Especially if other people have escaped from the same trap, and can show you how.

So please allow me to reveal the trap that's ensnared millions of people, including me...

keep exploring ✧ connect with others
share your discoveries ✧ deepen your understanding

At the end of each chapter, you'll find a section containing a "thought experiment". This is a statement or question for reflection to help you integrate what you are learning even more deeply. For example:

Thought experiment: We each experience greater clarity from time to time. As you look back now, what are some of the more memorable occasions when you've found yourself experiencing an unexpected increase in clarity?

When you reach a thought experiment, pause for a moment. You don't have to figure out the question or "get it right". You don't even have to answer it. Just reading the question and reflecting on it for a moment is enough to continue your process of integration.

This section will also contain a website URL to enter into your browser and a QR code that you can scan using your smartphone. These will take you to web pages containing material relating to the chapter you've just read, ranging from videos and audio recordings to shareable articles, photos and infographics. In addition to the resources, you'll find features that allow you to post your comments and share what you're learning with others.

Experience shows that sharing your discoveries is a simple but powerful way for you to continue integrating what you're learning, as your understanding of the principles behind clarity continues to deepen. I encourage you to explore, comment on and share these resources as you make your way through the book. You can start now...

www.LittleBookOfClarity.com/introduction



PART ONE
The Essential Foundations

1

Misunderstanding: The Hidden Trap

.....

“None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Poet, playwright, novelist and philosopher

“An addict is someone who’s trying to use a visible solution to solve an invisible problem...”

I started drinking when I was 12 years old and didn’t stop for good until I was 30. On the journey of recovery, my life improved in ways that I didn’t even imagine were possible. But, in the process, I discovered an even deeper addiction at the very heart of modern culture. This addiction is so subtle, it’s almost *invisible*; a life-eroding trap that has hooked countless millions of people...

The hidden hamster wheel

The hidden hamster wheel is one of the most common barriers to clarity. It's based in a misunderstanding that's taken to be "obviously true" by most people. It's so subtle and pervasive that it shows up in everything from children's books to leadership programmes; from movies to marketing campaigns.

The Power of Misunderstanding

In the 1800s, it was widely accepted that illnesses such as cholera and the plague were caused by "bad air" (also known as atmospheres or miasmas). At the time, huge numbers of people were moving to Soho in London, with an associated increase in sewage. The council of the day decided to dump the excess waste into the river Thames, unknowingly contaminating the water supply, and causing a cholera outbreak that claimed the lives of 618 Soho residents in just a few weeks.

The miasma theory was a misunderstanding that was seen as fact. As a result, the decision to pump sewage into the water supply was taken from *within* that misunderstanding. While you and I know it's crazy to let human waste anywhere near your drinking water, that's because we have a better understanding of how the world works.

Misunderstanding can lead to needless misery, suffering and even death. But as soon as people get a clearer understanding of the nature of reality as it *already* is, there can be a massive and widespread improvement in quality of life.

The life-damaging misunderstanding that I call the hidden hamster wheel is the mistaken belief that our “core states” such as security, confidence, peace, love, happiness and success can be provided or threatened by our circumstances; by something “visible”.

We have this belief because we’ve been conditioned to believe that there’s somewhere to get to, and that “there” is better than “here”. And “there” comes in a variety of tantalizing flavours that look something like this:

I’ll be [*happy/secure/fulfilled/peaceful/better/successful/ok*] when I...

- Find the right work/hobby/partner/community – the “there” of *doing* and *relationships*.
- Get the money/write the book/start the business/lose the weight – the “there” of *accomplishment*.
- Change my thinking/my limiting beliefs/do my affirmations – the “there” of *mindset*.
- Meditate properly/find the right practice/get enlightened – the “there” of *spirituality*.

The “*I’ll be happy when...*” trap is an example most people can identify with. The core states and circumstances vary, but the basic structure of the superstition is the same:

I’ll be [*core state*] when I have [*circumstance*]

It’s based on an even simpler structure: [*circumstance*] causes [*core state*]

The idea that our core states are, at least to some degree, the result of our circumstances seems so “obvious” to people that calling it into question can seem ridiculous at first.

Reality Check

I know what you may be thinking... "Are you really trying to tell me that my work doesn't actually stress me out? That my security doesn't come from money? That I don't feel love because of my partner? That I don't like going on holiday?"

Yes and no.

Your examples of your experience are real for you. I'm sure you can identify numerous circumstances where you experience certain feelings. I'm not saying you don't enjoy the things you enjoy, or that you shouldn't want the things that you want. What I'm saying is that the feelings aren't the result of the circumstances – they're coming from somewhere else entirely. And, as you start to understand where they're coming from, and how the system works, some wonderful things can start to happen.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

These days, I experience more clarity than I ever thought possible, but I didn't get here in the way you might expect.

In brief: I grew up in an alcoholic household and started drinking heavily when I was 12 years old. By age 19, I was a scholarship engineering student and a full-blown alcoholic. The alcohol was like rocket fuel for my life – I got jobs, was promoted rapidly, and started experiencing many of the trappings of success – expense accounts, foreign travel, luxurious surroundings – but on the inside, I was slowly falling apart.

At the age of 30 I got married. A month later, her bags were packed; so I decided to stop drinking in order to save my relationship.

Oh yeah – I missed one. I'll be happy when I get a cigarette/a drink/a line of coke – the "there" of *addiction*.

That was in 1996, and I haven't had a drink since. Today I live a fulfilling life that's beyond anything I dreamed was possible for me, but how I got here is a story of struggle, frustration and heartbreak (much of which I could have avoided if I'd known what you're going to be discovering in this book).

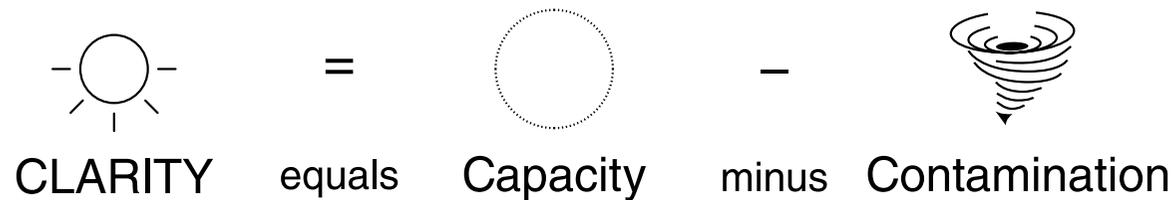
Just to give you an idea, in the time period from 1996 to 2008...

I managed several multi-million pound projects, and struggled with a combination of fear of failure and fear of success. I got married, had two daughters and got divorced. I quit my job and built a successful training company. I got caught in an endless cycle of gaining weight and losing weight, spent countless hours talking to a Freudian psychoanalyst and participated in various addiction recovery programmes. I had numerous false horizons, thinking I'd finally "got it", only to find myself feeling like I was back where I started. By the end of 2008, I was unhappy, stressed-out and at the end of my tether. I was on the verge of giving up.

Then I was introduced to the understanding you're going to be discovering in this book. As I write, it's six years on, and they've been the best years of my life. I'm experiencing a sense of clarity, peace, security and aliveness unlike anything I've had before. And as my level of understanding has continued to increase, my relationships, results and external circumstances have been improving too.

The good news is that it can be replicated. My clients are getting similar results, including:

- less stress, more clarity and peace of mind resulting in better health, with more vibrancy and aliveness;
- fears, anxieties and limitations falling away with solutions to problems emerging more easily;
- better working relationships, and more harmony in their personal lives;
- getting more done and having more free time, with better business results, and better performance where it counts.



It's working for them, so it can work for you; because seeing through a misunderstanding can give you an “out of proportion” increase in the results you get. So how do you escape from this addictive, life-damaging trap? How do you start seeing through the misunderstanding, and begin to experience an enormous increase in clarity and quality of life?

keep exploring ✧ connect with others
share your discoveries ✧ deepen your understanding

Thought experiment: We all fall into the “I’ll be happy when...” trap from time to time. As you reflect on your life so far, what are some of the ways you’re starting to realize you’ve been accidentally hoodwinked by this illusion until now?

www.LittleBookOfClarity.com/chapter1

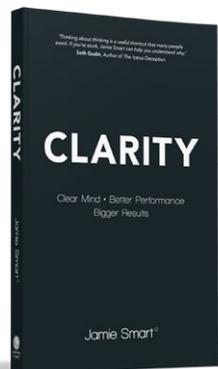


About the Author

Jamie Smart is a state-of-mind specialist, a leading trainer speaker, coach and consultant. He has been teaching people how their minds work and how to lead happy successful lives for 13 years. He shows individuals and organisations how an understanding of the principles behind clarity can help them have better relationships, better performance and the results that matter to them. Jamie runs programmes, workshops and retreats around *Clarity* as well as working closely with mentoring, coaching and corporate clients.



Also available from Jamie



For videos and articles from Jamie
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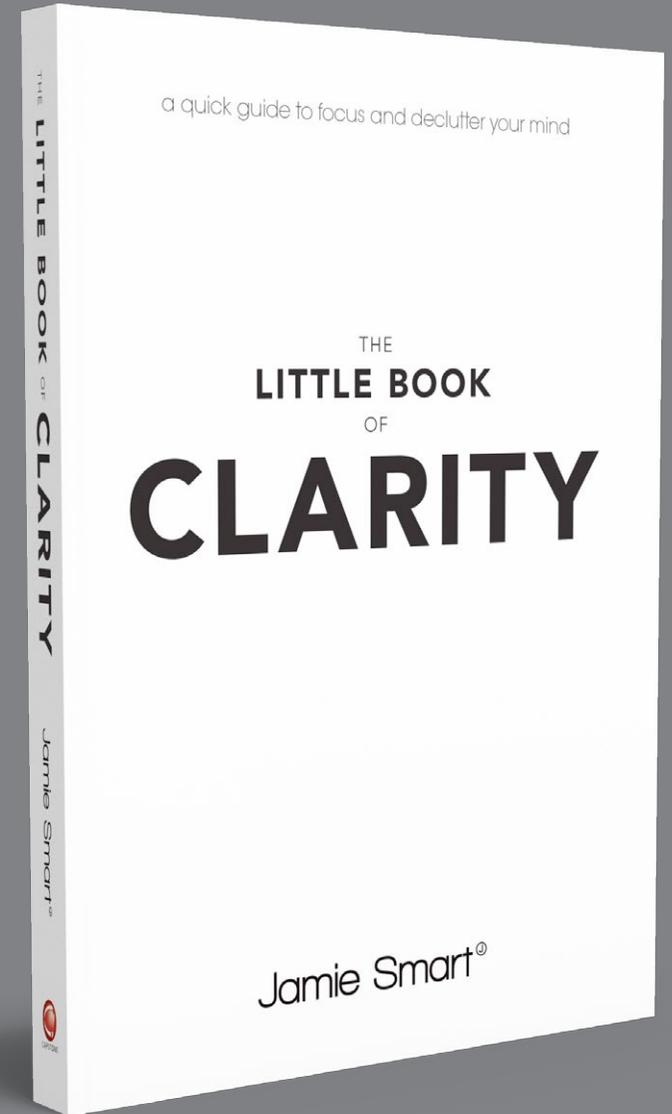
Like what you've read here? Then get yourself a copy of *The Little Book of Clarity*, and:

- Harness the power of insight and principles
- Discover your true identity and innate wisdom
- Build better relationships and stronger connections
- Discard toxic goals and pursue authentic desires

'A refreshing approach and a good read for anyone in business'
Paul McKenna

'Jamie Smart rocks! Stop stressing and start living a life you love with The Little Book of Clarity'

Sháá Wasmund MBE, Author of the #1 bestseller *Stop Talking, Start Doing*



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