

# The Fact Behind The Fiction

By Sian Hills



*A closer look at the genre of fictional self-help books and how beneficial they can be to a student's mental health*

Often when looking for ways to improve our mental health and wellbeing, we turn to literature for answers. Rifling our way through factual studies and guides on how to be more productive or boost our happiness in just 30 days. However, there may be another avenue for people to explore, like the wonderful world of fiction. The swapping of statistics for storylines has many hidden benefits that students are starting to realise. From exploring new scenarios to learning how to overcome them, authors are capitalising on this new genre of fictional self-help.

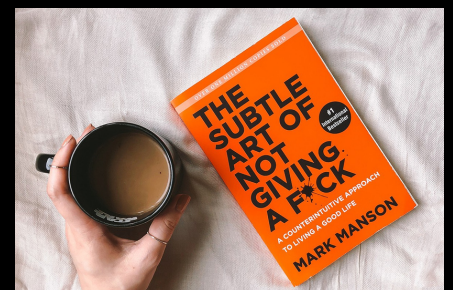


Fictional texts are usually pigeon-holed as childish literature, that is deemed unnoteworthy for students, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Fictional novels and texts allow for the reader to escape into a fantasy realm where reality becomes irrelevant. As a result of this, students often find themselves less stressed and overwhelmed with everyday life, as they have been able to shut their mind to reality for a few moments. This is why fictitious literature is so important to our mental health. It also helps with emotional growth, by forcing students to confront scenarios that they may one day experience, leaving them better equipped for the future.

So, with the rise of fictional reading amongst young adults and students, authors have taken it upon themselves to create a whole new genre of literature. This has been named as:

## **'Self-help fiction'.**

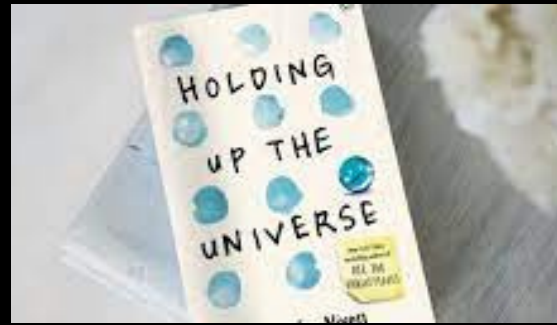
This is where an author will tackle hard-hitting issues that their reader may have experienced and through its characters, teaches the reader how to handle such a situation. Just like a factual self-help book that would provide advice, authors are now embedding this in fictional storylines, to help the reader detached.



So, which fictional self-help novels are the best? Well, here are a selection of stories to break you in this new genre of literature:

### 1) Holding Up The Universe By Jennifer Niven

This particular fictional tale is the focus of a heart stopping romance but also falls under the category of self-esteem and self-reliance for young adults. It's been proven to evoke every emotion possible, acting as a great escape.



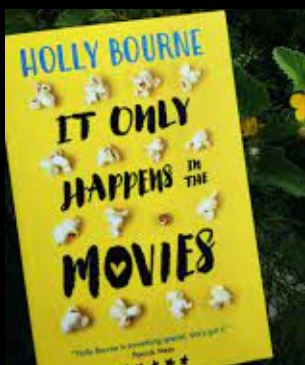
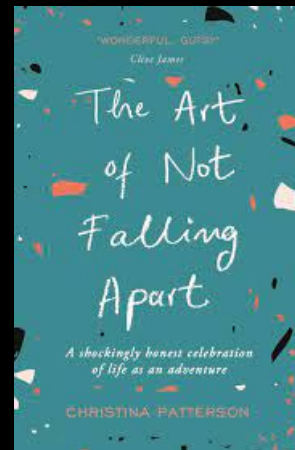
### 2) Before The Coffee Gets Cold By Toshikazu Kawaguchi

The novel travels back in time to explore the past of four different characters. Each of which have their own issues and emotional traumas to come to terms with. It asked the question of how you would change the past and how to move forwards in the future, wrapped in a beautiful Japanese setting.



### 3) The Art Of Not Falling Apart By Christina Patterson

Described as moving funny and frank, Christina Patterson's fictional novel tackles the issue of being left jobless in an already crumbling world and how to overcome this. It teaches its reader a life lesson about what's important in life.



### 4) It Only Happens In The Movies By Holly Bourne

No cheesiness or clichés allowed in this fictitious novel as Holly Bourne chooses to focus on the pain and confusion of relationships. The novel reflects the realities of love, allowing for readers to finally see that it isn't also fluffy as th films make it out to be.

### 5) The Hating Game By Sally Thorne

This is another novel focusing on the realities of relationships but through the use of a wicked and witty storyline that shows the element that hate plays in all relationships. It's emotional and educational whilst also being utterly delightful.

