

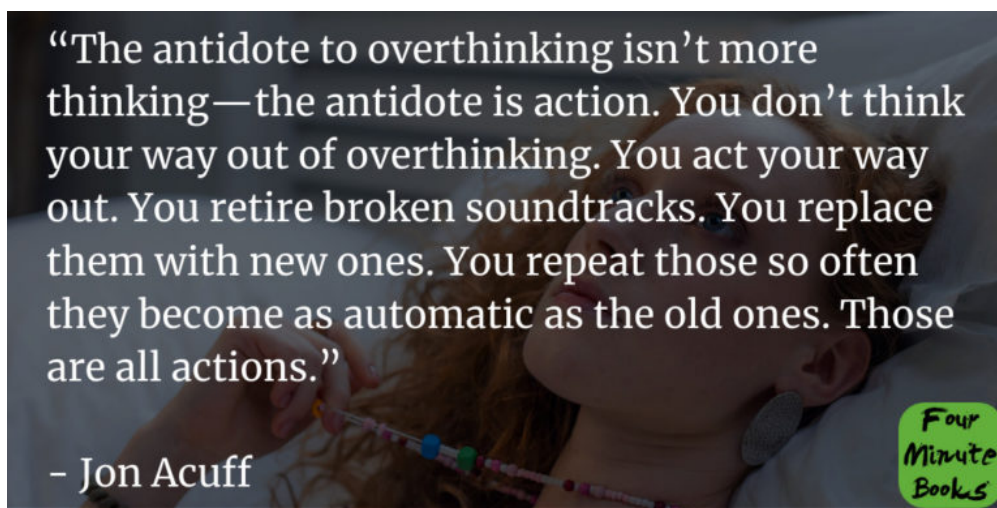
# Soundtracks Summary

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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Soundtracks* is New York Times bestselling author Jon Acuff's 2021 book that teaches you how to beat overthinking by challenging whether your thoughts are true, retiring unhelpful and unkind ideas, adopting thought-boosting mantras from others, using symbols to reinforce positive thoughts, and more.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



Is there a song that you know every word to? I'd bet that you remember where you were when you first heard it. And probably many of the times you've listened to it over the years.

That's because it's a soundtrack that you've put on repeat. It's songs like this that make us who we are. They shape our habits and character. And they're also the perfect symbol for our thinking patterns.

If I were to ask you what you think about most often, what would you say? These are what Jon Acuff would call your mental "soundtracks." You've been listening to them your whole life, and they determine how your life goes, for good or for bad.

Just like you can change the song on Spotify or the radio when something terrible comes on, you can do the same with your thoughts. And Acuff teaches all about doing it in his latest book: *Soundtracks: The Surprising Solution to Overthinking*.

Here are 3 of my favorite lessons from this life-changing book by Jon Acuff:

1. Stop negative thinking patterns by asking yourself if they're true, kind, or helpful.

2. To get awesome new soundtracks to listen to, invert old soundtracks, or borrow from others.
3. Use an item or image as a symbol to remind you of your new soundtracks and make them stick.

I think I can, I think I can, I think I can think positive! Let's do this!

## **Lesson 1: Ask yourself if your thoughts are true, kind, or helpful.**

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As much as we said “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me” as kids, we all know now that it's not true. Words hurt. And it's the worst when they're the words you're telling yourself.

**The first step to beating overthinking is to recognize and throw out the soundtracks that are hurting you.** There are three questions to ask yourself to catch a harmful thinking pattern:

1. Is it true?
2. Is it helpful?
3. And is it kind?

When asking the first question, “is it true?” you need to interrogate your thoughts. Pretend you've got a little “pocket jury” as Acuff puts it, and present all the evidence.

Most often, you overemphasize the negative and underemphasize the positive, so don't be shy about the good. If you discover that you've been lying to yourself, get rid of that thought!

Sometimes, however, you will find that something you're thinking is true. But if you find that it's unhelpful or unkind, you should stop that soundtrack.

When determining if it's helpful, ask yourself how it's affecting you. Does it build you up and lead you to be your best? If not, stop that soundtrack!

And last, to unearth unkind thoughts, ask yourself if it's something you'd say to a friend.

Once you know the soundtracks that need to get the boot, it's time to replace them. And that brings us to our next lesson.

## **Lesson 2: Borrow soundtracks from people who inspire you and invert old thoughts to better thinking patterns.**

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The good news about unearthing negative thinking is that you can use it against itself by turning it upside down. One of the best places to do this is where you think in absolutes like “I must” or “it has to be perfect” or “I have to finish the whole thing right now.”

Once you find these undesirable soundtracks, simply repeat the opposite to get on a positive thinking pattern.

Acuff did this with writing. His initial soundtrack was “I have to finish the whole book in one sitting.” He flipped this and began repeating to himself that he just needed to finish a few pages at a time, and it helped him finish this book!

Another great source for new soundtracks is other people. Take Kanye West’s quote, “my life is dope and I do dope sh\*t!” for example. Acuff used this one himself to start seeing more of the good in his life.

**If you wonder where to get your soundtracks from and how many to borrow, the answer is anywhere and all of them.** Anything that makes you feel great, that’s helpful, kind, and true, is worthy of putting on your new thought playlist.

Here are some of my personal favorites:

- “Prolific is better than perfect.”
- “I’ll feel better when I’m done.”
- “Pivot, don’t panic,” which came from Acuff himself!

Now that you know how to beat negative thinking and get positive soundtracks running, it’s time to figure out how to make them stick!

### **Lesson 3: Embed your new soundtracks into an item to make them permanent.**

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In January of this year, I was talking with a family member who mentioned they’d gotten really cheap plane tickets to Hawaii. I thought about how fun that would be, looked up the price, and bought the tickets at that moment.

My family and I had a blast swimming with sea turtles and exploring the island. One of the coolest things we saw as we drove along the coast of Maui was this black sand beach. While there, I picked up a small black rock as my souvenir.

I didn’t think much of it until I discovered Soundtracks and learned about the idea of using a symbol to make positive thinking patterns stick. Acuff teaches that you should find an item to remind you of the soundtracks you want to listen to and keep it with you always.

As soon as I read that, I thought of this little rock. Then, it hit me that I wouldn’t have that rock if I had been overthinking. I wouldn’t have gone on that awesome vacation to Hawaii if I’d overthought it.

**The rock became a symbol of how one of the best times of my life came when I beat overthinking and just acted.** I realized how much overthinking has held me back and how much I want to listen to a new soundtrack.

Now I keep the rock in my pocket all the time and pull it out whenever I'm stuck by overthinking. It's made me a lot happier and better at doing what I love!

## **Soundtracks Review**

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Jon Acuff is hilarious, and his books are really fun to read. I feel like I can relate to him so much that it's almost like he's in my head sometimes. Soundtracks has got to be one of my favorites of his, and it's significantly impacted my life for the better.

## **Who would I recommend the Soundtracks summary to?**

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The 42-year-old who takes pride in being a thinker but hasn't realized how much it's been holding them back, the 23-year-old that knows exactly what they need to do to be successful but gets stuck in their thoughts, and anyone who is tired of overthinking and wants healthier thought patterns that lead to success.