



Worried Sick? the Exaggerated Fear of Physical Illness

By Fredric Neuman

Simon & Brown. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 281 pages. Dimensions: 9.3in. x 7.5in. x 0.7in. We live in worrisome times. Perhaps chief among these worries is a concern about health. Newly discovered diseases, ranging from Legionnaires disease and Lyme disease all the way to AIDS, are reported regularly in the press. At the same time, expensive new technological devices, such as the CAT scan or the PET scan, are trumpeted urgently as ways of diagnosing and warding off otherwise hidden but possibly fatal conditions. New medical treatments, and alternative medical treatments, are advertised on television. It is no wonder that people focus on their health. And in the face of a prolonged or obscure illness, everyone becomes a health worrier. Nevertheless, some people worry all the time. Experiencing any kind of physical symptom, they imagine the worst possible illness. And they tend to express emotional distress by developing physical symptoms. These men and women are suffering from health anxiety. Their fears are unrealistic, but not entirely irrational. They are an outgrowth of certain common childhood experiences. Taken together, they reflect a set of mistaken ideas: about the nature of physical illness. about diet and sleep and bodily functions. about doctors...



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