Holistic Solutions for Anxiety & Depression in Therapy

COMBINING NATURAL REMEDIES WITH CONVENTIONAL CARE

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Reviewed by: Helen Hu

Written by Peter Bongiorno, a doctor of naturopathic medicine based in New York, Holistic Solutions for Anxiety & Depression in Therapy: Combining Natural Remedies with Conventional Care is a guide meant for “the busy mental health professional looking for a go-to primer about natural health care for anxiety and depression” (xvii). More specifically, the field of holistic medicine—an approach that “considers each person to be a unified whole” (xvi)—is one that has become increasingly popular over time. However, it is still a fairly new perspective: in most instances of traditional medicine, the brain and the body are treated as separate entities. Bongiorno makes it clear that although the holistic approach is not suited for every patient, there are certain benefits it offers that medications do not.
The book is divided into seven chapters, complete with an introduction and six appendices for further reference. Each chapter is more involved than its predecessor—Chapter One, for instance, focuses on whether or not holistic approaches are appropriate for the client whereas Chapter Seven addresses treatment plans and recommendations. Bongiorno consistently puts emphasis on the fact that external (i.e., lifestyle) factors are just as influential on an individual's behavior and mood as internal factors are. In some cases, he argues, medication can actually slow down or prevent the healing process. It is with this idea in mind that Holistic Solutions brings forth its core motivator for supporting holistic medicine: "to help the body balance itself" (xvii).

Though there is still much information to be discovered concerning holistic medicine, this book certainly is a valuable resource for trained individuals who aim to gain more knowledge about the field. Holistic Solutions for Anxiety & Depression in Therapy may very well be an indication of the future of medicine: perhaps, in order to make the most out of treatment, mental health professionals ought to consider addressing the body in its entirety. In other words, natural remedies and conventional care should work hand-in-hand to provide an optimal recovery for the patient. According to Bongiorno, a healthy body equates to a healthy mind; that perspective is one that ought to be considered with more gravity.