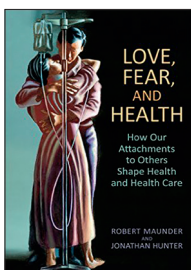


Out of Hours Book

Love, Fear and Health: How Our Attachments to Others Shape Health and Health Care

Robert Maunder and Jonathan Hunter

University of Toronto Press, 2015, PB,
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IT'S NOT YOU IT'S ME

The theme of this book is attachment theory, which is not as dry as it sounds. Although my blasé repartee 'kiss me quick' embarrassingly proved to be more attuned to my attachment status than a reflection of the pertinence of the content.

In attachment theory feelings of security, or the lack of security in personal relationships has direct effects on health, and on the interaction between a patient and family, and with healthcare professionals.

Before you say 'Obviously!' the intricate ramifications are Machiavellian, particularly when one considers the anxious patient demanding overtreatment or the equally frustrating opinionated non-complier.

Throughout the book case histories illuminate the theory thereby ensuring it is rewarding for healthcare professionals who are not experts in psychology (the authors are practising psychiatrists in Toronto).

All gradually unfolds in the lucid and easily-understandable text, which engenders a feeling that it was obvious all along. The authors achieve this by relating shared observations to theory, all illuminated in the healthcare setting so that we will be able see the wood from the trees in our personal boondock.

In the same way that attachment effects are slow and accumulative, there is a slow and possibly uncomfortable realisation that

seeing a patient (or colleague) as being a 'problem' is an indication that your own attachment attitude is also part of the problem.

Whatever the effect on general practice of the theory elucidated in this book, it will force a 'time out' from the relentless routine of a busy GP and allow for a refreshing contemplation of the whole therapeutic interlocution.

However, I will offer the caveat that as I neared the end of the book I had a sneaking suspicion that the theories presented that purportedly underpin medical consultation and treatment, probably just adumbrate what the experienced physician has been practising each and every day.

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