

diagnoses.

Later in this chapter the dilemma of digital healthcare records in the NHS is raised, candidly pointing out the 'mess' of NHS data, which is common across many other countries, the US included. Fry points out the difference between the chaotic nature of digital healthcare records compared with the meticulously collected private sector data that brokers sell. This is something we will all recognise at work when trying to find out what happened during a hospital admission or find an elusive X-ray result.

I found my eyes opened to the moral and ethical dilemmas posed by algorithms — should a driverless car save those on board or should it plough into a group of pedestrians on a zebra crossing? And yet I also felt reassured. Algorithms are designed and programmed to be our assistants, aiding humans in making decisions and needing human supervision to work effectively.

My previous concern — that an AI machine will take my place in my GP surgery, happily running a morning clinic — is unfounded, and, from all accounts, a very long way off.

Rebecca Cox,

Academic Clinical Fellow, Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, Medical Sciences Division, University of Oxford, Oxford.

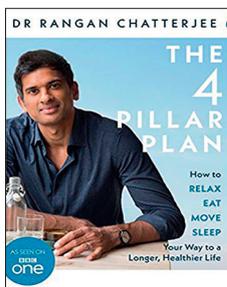
Email: rebecca.cox@phc.ox.ac.uk

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The 4 Pillar Plan: How to Relax, Eat, Move, Sleep Your Way to a Longer, Healthier Life

Rangan Chatterjee

Penguin Life, 2017, PB, 272pp, £16.99, 978-0241303559



MORE MOTION, LESS COMMOTION

Dr Chatterjee will be familiar to many through his appearances on the BBC TV programme *Doctor in the House*, in which his lifestyle interventions and advice to various individuals were shown to be transformative.

This book follows a similar approach, based on what he chooses to call the principles of 'progressive medicine', in which attention to behavioural choices based on scientific evidence (some of it rather slim) takes priority over medical interventions. The four pillars — relaxation, eating habits, physical activity, and sleep — are each conveniently divided into five specific goals, with detailed advice for their achievement. For example, the recommended eating habits include choosing five portions of vegetables of five different colours every day, and avoiding all processed foods containing more than five ingredients; physical activity includes 10 000 steps, high-intensity interval training, and specific exercises for glutes; and sleep advice emphasises a regular bedtime routine, blackout blinds, reduction in screen time, and the nicely phrased suggestion to 'manage your commotion', through meditation, a 'gratitude journal', and learning to say no. All in all it makes a good deal of sense, and Dr Chatterjee adopts an informal, conversational style, replete with anecdotal case studies and personal experiences to support his approach. It is an extravagantly produced book, richly illustrated, though it might have been more encouraging to include fewer photos of the exemplary author — running, eating, meditating, exercising, shopping, and contemplating the landscape — and more of some average mortals for whom, one supposes, the book is intended.

Dougal Jeffries,

Retired GP, Falmouth, Cornwall.

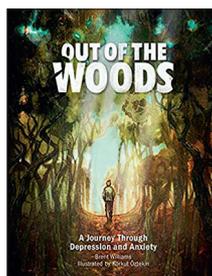
Email: dougal6@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp20X707633>

Out of the Woods: A Journey Through Depression and Anxiety

Brent Williams and Korkut Öztekin

Educational Resources Ltd, 2017, HB, 160pp, £19.95, 978-0473390068



THROUGH THE WOODS

Starting with a quote from Dante's *The*

Divine Comedy that sets the theme and lends the book both its title and central metaphor, Brent Williams's graphic novel *Out of the Woods* describes his journey through depression and anxiety, and back to health, illustrated wonderfully by Korkut Öztekin's masterful draftsmanship.

In middle age, the author, a community lawyer and filmmaker, unexpectedly finds himself in a deep depression. It takes some convincing from his doctors and friends before our man accepts the diagnosis, having spent a good deal of time trying to uncover the organic roots of his numerous symptoms, while exploring various alternative medical models to try to explain the way he is feeling. Mundane misery is interspersed with magic realism as Brent experiences a series of waking dreams, in which a bearded and bespectacled mentor character reveals the severity of his depression and, via a couple of educational diversions into basic brain science, shows him what he must do to recover his mental health. The author follows some, but not all, of the advice of this mysterious guide, seeking help through psychotherapy, healthy eating, and exercise, while remaining averse to prescribed medication. Finding a decent therapist is a big help; Brent slowly recovers his gusto and begins to enjoy life's pleasures once more. In an unexpected twist, however, his nascent recovery is interrupted by a life-threatening physical illness, but a happy end ensues, nevertheless.

Comics don't have to be funny, and this one is not. The self-reflexive humour or irony that holds so many autobiographical graphic novels together is noticeably absent here, but the depth of the emotional honesty that Williams has poured into the work, combined with Öztekin's powerful visual storytelling, rendered in colourful line-and-wash, makes for a compelling and satisfying narrative, with which many readers will doubtless identify.

Ian Williams,

Comics artist, writer, and physician, Brighton.

Email: ian@ian-williams.co.uk

Ian Williams is a comics artist, writer, and physician. His graphic novel *The Bad Doctor* was published in 2014 and the follow-up, *The Lady Doctor*, in 2019. He named the area of study called Graphic Medicine, founding the eponymous website in 2007, which he currently co-edits. He is co-author of the Eisner-nominated *Graphic Medicine Manifesto*.

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