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Consciousness and Healing: Integral Approaches to Mind-Body Medicine

Marilyn Schlitz, Tina Amorok, and Marc S Micozzi, editors

Review by Doris Lora

“If I only had a heart,” the Tin Man laments in *The Wizard of Oz*. All the while he is unaware of the deep compassion already infusing his own behavior. Lest we think that modern medicine has completely lost its heart—and its practitioners their humanity—in a system gone mad, a recently released book highlights the research and insights of healing experts who not only speak from their science, but also from their compassionate hearts.

Opening with Ken Wilber’s brilliant introduction calling for “more effectively setting the stage for the extraordinary miracle of healing,” followed by Marilyn Schlitz’s eloquent, articulate statements inviting us into the emerging consensus of an integral medicine, *Consciousness and Healing* had my adrenaline pumping within the first few pages.

Schlitz and her coeditors Tina Amorok and Marc Micozzi state that the goal of integral healing is to bring into awareness a health and healing model that, in addition to using the best strategies of physical science, recognizes “personal relationships, emotions, meaning, and belief systems as fundamental points of connection” to the physical body. To that end, these essays and accompanying DVD geared to the academic and layperson alike offer both a sympathetic critique of the prevailing medical paradigm and a variety of well-researched alternatives that specify the role of conscious awareness in healing. Contributors range from such experts in the medical field as Deepak Chopra, Dean Ornish, Candace Pert, Larry Dossey, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Stanislav Grof, and

Rachel Naomi Remen to a multiethnic group of scientists, philosophers and healers, including William Braud, Thomas Berry, Willis Harman, Michael Lerner, Brian Swimme, Honglin Zhang, Sogyal Rinpoche, Nancy Maryboy, and IONS’ own James O’Dea.

How many physicians and nurses realize that they do not need formal training in “spirit nurturing,” a key ingredient of integral medicine? As hinted at in this collection of essays, being a “human, comma, being” automatically forges a heart-to-heart connection with each patient. Healing happens by being present and letting go. Add to this a physician’s up-to-date medical knowledge and modern medicine’s technological wizardry, and we have the potential for dynamite integral healers.

This book demonstrates connection and cooperation between all health providers and their patients, which oils the mechanism of courageous change. Contributors compassionately report their careful observations of what works and what doesn’t in the healing arts.

Through this approach, conventional and complementary healers alike are encouraged to step up to the uncertain adventure of transformation of consciousness, a concept that made less daunting and esoteric as one experiences the heartfelt personal accounts, simply daily exercises, and multitude of empirical data this book offers. ❖

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