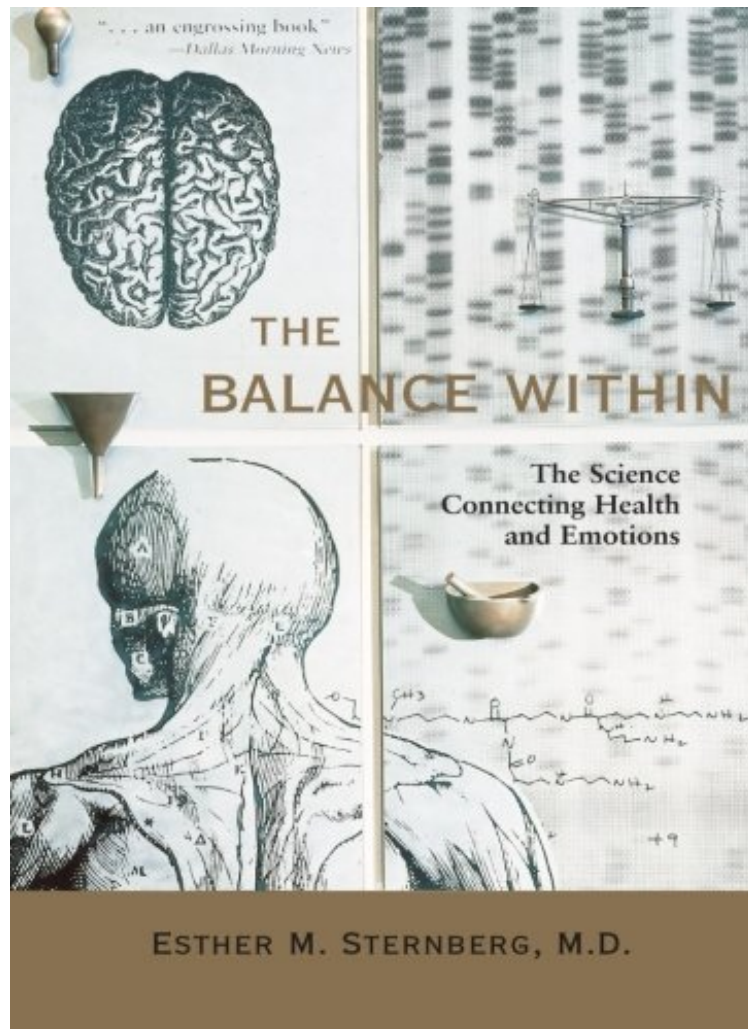


The Balance Within: The Science Connecting Health and Emotions

Esther M. Sternberg

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#33663 in Books Times Books 2001-05-07 2001-05-07Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 233.68 x 18.92 x 6.54l, .65 #File Name: 0716744457272 pages | File size: 61.Mb

Esther M. Sternberg : The Balance Within: The Science Connecting Health and Emotions before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Balance Within: The Science Connecting Health and Emotions:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good perspectiveBy paschimoThis is an excellent intro for those not familiar with the field. It discusses the relationship between the hormone system and the immune system, an expanding field of scientific research. The enunciation of the mechanisms, where the understanding exists today, is done well. And the extension to the placebo effect, and to belief as a physiological driver, is a bold hypothesis. Clearly the field is interesting and will see great advances in the coming decades. The descriptions of historic structures are not the best sections of the book. The writing style there is still scientific, when I would have appreciated a more literary

style. But any description of these places is still nice. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very good
By Rafael matias I do not recommend this book with you don't have a scientific expertise, due to the way the writer base her arguments. It turns out that the book is very interesting, but the scientific data makes everything more confusing. (I will reread the chapter about the scientific discoveries to fully understand the book) I recommend this book if you are enthusiastic about immunology, neurology, endocrinology and research... 20 of 21 people found the following review helpful. A must read for anyone who has experienced an autoimmune attack
By Susannah Danna This well-written interesting book became my bible in learning how stress can influence and/or cause an autoimmune attack. Understanding the connection between mind and body, and learning to cope with stress, is paramount to a complete recovery, so well explained by Dr. Sternberg.

Since ancient times humans have felt intuitively that emotions and health are linked, and recently there has been much popular speculation about this notion. But until now, without compelling evidence, it has been impossible to say for sure that such a connection really exists and especially how it works. Now, that evidence has been discovered. A thrilling scientific detective story, *The Balance Within* tells how researchers finally uncovered the elusive mind-body connection and what it means for our health. In this beautifully written book, Dr. Esther Sternberg, whose discoveries were pivotal in helping to solve this mystery, provides first-hand accounts of the breakthrough experiments that revealed the physical mechanisms - the nerves, cells, and hormones - used by the brain and immune system to communicate with each other. She describes just how stress can make us more susceptible to all types of illnesses, and how the immune system can alter our moods. Finally, she explains how our understanding of these connections in scientific terms is helping to answer such crucial questions as "Does stress make you sick?" "Is a positive outlook the key to better health?" and "How do our personal relationships, work, and other aspects of our lives affect our health?" A fascinating, elegantly written portrait of this rapidly emerging field with enormous potential for finding new ways to treat disease and cope with stress, *The Balance Within* is essential reading for anyone interested in making their body and mind whole again.

From Publishers Weekly The immune system was long believed to be autonomous--unconnected to the brain; Sternberg, a neuroscientist at the National Institute of Mental Health, focuses here on research done over the last few decades that disproves this belief. She methodically details the history of this science--describing, for example, the Nobel prize-winning work of three French scientists who, in 1958, discovered the "interleukins" (molecules that signal between cells), which led to further investigations into how immune cells communicate with the brain, and discussing the seminal but controversial work of Hans Selye, who in the 1950s explored the body's response to stress. Although Sternberg leavens her account with anecdotes and historical snapshots of early medical treatment, her litany of scientific experiments (mostly performed on rats) into the body-mind connection may overwhelm readers without any scientific background. Of greater interest are her reflections on the implications of this research for maintaining health and treating disease. According to Sternberg, physical and psychological stresses--such as prolonged lack of sleep, divorce or social isolation--can make people sick by adversely affecting their immune and hormonal responses. Conversely, a strong belief in healing rituals and prayer may help make them well (via the placebo effect). All in all, Sternberg is optimistic about the idea of bridging disciplines to develop new treatments for disease. Bw illustrations. BOMC selection; author tour. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist The director of the Molecular, Cellular, Behavioral Interactive Neuroscience Program at the National Institutes of Health gives us one of the best recent books on emotions and health. Sternberg effectively draws on her ample research and clinical experience to provide detailed descriptions of the interrelationships of the immune, nervous, and endocrine systems and how they in turn relate to emotions and the body. Into her clear scientific exposition, she folds the lives and works of such fascinating researchers as Wilder Penfield and Hans Selye. She has the personal touch, as when she stresses the importance of face-to-face communication and contrasts it to the impersonal aspects of Internet communication. She has a feeling for place and vividly depicts Montreal and other settings. Finally, in her citation of medical cases, she enlightens and stimulates, as, for example, when in recalling a classic case of alert perception, she reveals the importance of total-body tattoos in the study of the lymphatic system. William Beatty Dr. Sternberg weaves historical perspective, recent lab results, academic rigor, and popular appeal into an engrossing book. Dallas Morning News One of the best books on emotions and health. Booklist A tour de force, a romp through centuries of scientific discovery written by an expert in the field who brings us to that point where mind speaks to body. Abraham Verghese, author of *The Tennis Partner* *The Balance Within* delivers the latest scientific advances in prose that is clear and arrestingly beautiful. Sternberg has a gift for the illustrating detail, the clarifying allusion, the telling metaphor. With *The Balance Within*, Esther Sternberg joins Steven J. Gould, Richard Dawkins, and Edward Wilson in the current pantheon of great biology writers. Francisco J. Ayala, Donald Bren Professor of Biological Sciences, University of California, Irvine Few science books are a beautiful read but *The Balance Within* achieves exactly that. Esther Sternberg not only illuminates the connections between emotion and health with fascinating precision, but she manages to evoke the emotions themselves, from sunlight happiness to sheltering serenity. Deborah Blum, Pulitzer-Prize winning author of *Sex on the*

Brain, Professor of Journalism, University of Wisconsin-Madison This refreshing personal saga of research on brain-body interactions knits together historic vignettes with recent experimental approaches. The book is a welcome addition at a time when considerable puzzlement and confusion exists regarding alternative or complementary medicine. We learn to respect the powerful influences exerted by the brain on body function. Joseph Martin, M.D., Dean of Harvard University Medical School Many of the most pressing contemporary health problems are related to the everyday stressors of contemporary society. In this groundbreaking work, Dr. Esther Sternberg charts the mechanisms by which everyday stressors affect health and well being as well as the means for minimizing their deleterious effects. John T. Cacioppo, Ph.D., Tiffany Margaret Blake Distinguished Service Professor, The University of Chicago