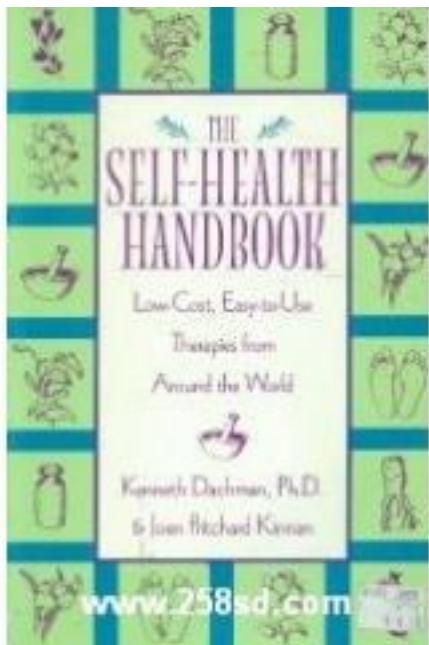


The Self-Health Handbook: Low-Cost, Easy-To-Use Therapies from Around the World



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INTRODUCTION
Want a hot conversational topic that's sure to spur controversy? Try healthcare. Debate about it spans borders—cuts across all economic levels—permeates political campaigns—and influences boardroom decisions. People everywhere are taking a new look at healthcare: what it means—what it costs—who should receive it—who should pay—and how it should be delivered. The way that governments—employers—and ordinary citizens answer these questions will have far-reaching consequences. As humankind has evolved, our concepts of what constitutes health—rare have

changed dramatically. In the beginning there was no healthcare except that provided by the individual through his or her wits and common sense. Yet people survived and even prospered. Gradually systems of folk medicine developed in various communities that were often remarkably similar despite vast geographic separations. With the rise of civilizations came a corresponding increase in the scope and sophistication of medical care. Trained physicians now treated the sick and counseled the well. Though their practices might differ, almost all early healthcare systems were holistic; that is, practitioners believed that the mind and body were one and could not be treated separately. Physicians treated the person and not the disease and most medications were derived from plants and other naturally occurring substances. With some modifications physicians practiced this type of medicine for centuries. Eastern civilizations and native cultures never abandoned the naturalistic approach but early in this century Western medicine took a different course. Spurred by technological advances and an emerging pharmaceutical industry Western medicine opted for more aggressive tactics. Myriad powerful synthetic drugs (many based on compounds originally derived from plants) replaced herbal teas and homemade tonics in the treatment lexicon. Researchers developed sophisticated scientific equipment that could plumb the depths of the human body as never before. Progress in medicine came to be measured by the latest miracle drug and cutting-edge technology. The "pill for an ill" philosophy shifted focus from the person to the disease and thus helped sever the mind-body connection that is the crux of holistic healing. Also, technological medicine made healthcare very complicated--and costly. Only trained physicians knew what was going on in this sophisticated high-tech environment. The patient simply said, "Okay doc" and swallowed the pill or underwent the treatment. Never

作者介绍:

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