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CLARION REVIEW ★★★☆☆ HEALTH & FITNESS

Health Smart Epiphany! A Simple Evidence-Based Approach to Prevent the Top Ten Killer Diseases from Cheating You Out of Your Best Years

J. V. Souadjian
CreateSpace (Aug 7, 2013)
Softcover $19.50 (470pp)
978-1-4775-7153-8

We all know by now that diet and exercise are healthy; Dr. Souadjian shows us why and how.

In a health-care system focused on diagnosis and treatment, prevention often gets short shrift. Dr. J. V. Souadjian aims to address this imbalance with his informative new reference book, *Health Smart Epiphany! A Simple Evidence-Based Approach to Prevent the Top Ten Killer Diseases from Cheating You Out of Your Best Years*. Based on his thirty years of experience in internal medicine, hematology, and oncology, Souadjian prescribes a comprehensive program for preventing serious illness by addressing lifestyle factors that rarely get adequate attention in today's busy doctors' offices.

Much of Souadjian's message will be familiar; diet and exercise are touted as cure-alls every day on the covers of national magazines and in television news headlines. What's different here is the solid background information Souadjian provides. He may not be breaking new ground with his admonitions to quit smoking and eat more fiber, but his knowledgeable discussion of the evidence behind this oft-heard advice is reassuring and motivating. Souadjian doesn't just say that it's smart to avoid secondhand smoke, for instance, he also provides study data about lung function that back him up. An extensive bibliography, organized by chapter, provides additional information for those interested in learning more.

Although it is divided into two formal sections, *Health Smart Epiphany!* can be seen as a three-part book. Part one discusses the reasons to use risk-reduction methods along with standard medical care, while part two offers the actual methods. These Souadjian offers from two perspectives: one section focuses on lifestyle decisions that can affect overall health, while the next considers risk management on a disease-by-disease basis. This makes the book easy to use as a reference manual—readers can dip into the section that interests them most—but also creates some repetition. An index would be a helpful addition.

Souadjian strives for a personal tone—he leads with empowering examples of patients who have made changes that dramatically improved their health, for instance. Some elements are distancing, however, like the presentation of patients by initials rather than by name. The bulk of the book is dedicated to the "top ten killer diseases," or TTKDs, and while Souadjian understandably spends a lot of time discussing the biology behind heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and so forth, his use of medical jargon and acronyms further separates writer from reader.

The wealth of information provided in *Health Smart Epiphany!* offers less a personal moment of discovery, as intimated in the title, and more a trustworthy manual that will add a prevention-based perspective to readers' reference shelves.

SHEILA M. TRASK (October 28, 2013)

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