

HEALTH & FITNESS

**Random Musings in Psychiatry**

Daniel Chinedu Okoro

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Four Stars (out of Five)

Illnesses occur randomly as do the questions selected to test medical students residents and doctors for board certification or recertification. The author designed *Random Musings in Psychiatry* as a quick-reference aid for psychiatric certification candidates as they prepare for these exams.

Board examinations consist of multiple choice and short answer questions and those who take the exams must have fixed in their minds diverse amounts of information. Some facts are easy to find while others can be difficult to locate. This book presents the more obscure information that psychiatric certification candidates need to know but can't readily pinpoint.

Daniel Chinedu Okoro's book is composed of topic lists instead of chapters. Some lists consist of just three items while others span several pages. Information listed under each topic ranges from symptoms risk factors and testing instruments to probable outcomes and legal issues. Topic subjects include conditions such as sleep and eating disorders Fragile X syndrome and many others. Content pages at the beginning of the book show topic titles.

A self-employed psychiatrist in Canada Daniel Chinedu Okoro is a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada and diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. His experience in post-graduate psychiatry as both candidate and practitioner encompasses the United Kingdom Canada and the United States.

The author offers convenient memory triggers to help readers recall significant details. Under the topic "Sleep form in Alzheimer's disease" he describes a symptom this way: "Decrease in REM (you know they don't REMember)."

A topic titled “The words of our elders are words of wisdom” lists primary textbooks the author recommends for broader understanding of possible examination content. He suggests online programs that would help students prepare and advocates joining study groups of “indigenous” residents to gain a more subjective view of the kinds of questions to expect. “Luckily the examinations now are becoming increasingly objective” he writes.

The author adds an occasional light touch to the otherwise serious subject matter. When presenting ideas for assessing malingerers he suggests that readers try to “understand the motive of the guy.” Once a malingerer is confirmed either by confrontation or corroboration through history or psychometric data he observes “they leg it out of the hospital.”

The five hundred pages of this book offer diverse and accessible facts to students studying for their psychiatric board exams. Okoro has designed an easy to use and well-organized book; he assumes his audience’s professional knowledge and wastes no space defining the common acronyms used in the psychiatric profession.

Certification candidates could employ this book to good advantage as they prepare for examination. The book would also serve as an excellent reference guide on the library shelf of any psychiatrist’s office.