

ForeWord Reviews

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Well-Being for Women: A Confident Approach to Living a Joyful Healthy & Productive Life

Stella Weller

Godsfield Press

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Many resources exist that address women's health issues or medical concerns. Few go beyond mere technical explanations to explore women's health from a whole-istic point of view by delving into mental and spiritual wellness.

The author has compiled a highly visual, quick reference work that touches on a number of women's health concerns. Weller's credentials in this field are not clearly evident, since the book lacks an introduction where this might be revealed. Instead, Weller includes a thorough bibliography from which one can assume the author has, at least, done her research.

The text provides useful information on complex conditions, Lupus or ovarian cancer, for example, but is not so technical that the reader fails to comprehend. Topics from general diet and exercise, sexuality and disease, pregnancy, mental health, and aging are covered. Each section uses copious illustrations, photos, and diagrams to rephrase the subject to make it quickly and easily understood.

Weller infuses a strong feminist sentiment throughout the text. The first chapter urges women to love themselves and nurture their self esteem because "how you feel about yourself powerfully affects almost every aspect of your life, from the way you function at work to the way you behave in intimate relationships." In another chapter dedicated to "mindwork," Weller demystifies meditation for the Western woman by demonstrating it as just another form of exercise. Sections on mental health and stress management, that offer ways to identify and rid one's self of stressors, would be of particular interest to the modern woman. Clutter and procrastination are time wasters, says Weller. She lists sources of help in the bibliography.

The use of stock photography makes the work seem somewhat like a textbook. Still, it would be an effective tool for a medical professional to find simplified answers to the questions of late teen and young adult women. The women depicted represent a broad range of body shapes, ethnic backgrounds and ages, making this text suitable for all women, at any stage of life. In keeping with its tone, the book lacks sections on make-up, hairstyles or fashion. Overall,

it would make a nice addition to any woman's bookshelf, juxtaposed to the latest glamour-oriented magazines.

Mary Spiro