



Your Health, Your Decisions: How to Work with Your Doctor to Become a Knowledge-Powered Patient

Robert Alan McNutt

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As a physician, Robert Alan McNutt comes from a position of knowledge and power, but he knows that the key to true health is to share knowledge rather than hoard it, to offer power rather than cling to it.

For many patients, when a doctor offers options, the patient feels immediately trapped into trying to make a decision. McNutt offers a process that helps patients communicate with physicians and know what questions to ask to end this feeling of helplessness. He uses real-life examples to help illustrate his points and to make change feel truly possible. He explains the role of studies and data on surgeries and medications, but the book is as much relational and problem-solving advice as it is medical information.

For many, becoming an empowered decision maker requires a significant shift in perspective. To help make these shifts, McNutt explains the benefits—and they're quite significant, medically, emotionally, and otherwise—and addresses common roadblocks people face in making the change.

On every page, his respect for patients, for people, shines through. This attitude is the book's greatest asset and the greatest gift it offers people facing health care choices, from everyday decisions to life-threatening conditions such as heart disease and breast cancer. The book's tone is calm and positive, and the concise chapters allow patients to take the opportunity to embrace change rather than feeling burdened by the proposition.

With McNutt's cooperative problem-solving insight, patients will feel like partners rather than pawns in the health-care system. His advice also equips parents and caregivers to be part of the decision-making process on behalf of those they love and care for. Medical professionals can also benefit from his insights as they seek to shift from positions of authority to that of guides for the patients in their care.

MELISSA WUSKE (Winter 2017)

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