



Relaxation Revolution: The Science and Genetics of Mind Body Healing

Herbert Benson, William Proctor

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Recent scientific breakthroughs—demonstrating that mind body strategies can actually “switch off” or “switch on” gene activity associated with health and disease—have triggered a mind body revolution in the medical world.

In the 1970s, Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard Medical School ushered in a new era of understanding in the field of mind body medicine. Coining the term “relaxation response,” Dr. Benson identified the body’s physiologic reaction that is the exact opposite of the stress (fight-or-flight) response. In the four decades since that initial discovery, Benson and his colleagues have established the first effective therapy to counteract the harmful effects of stress. They have explored how the relaxation response, the power of expectation and belief, and other mind body phenomena can produce healing in your own body.

A new era has dawned. Genetic research now shows conclusively that the mind can influence the body *down to the genetic level*. Your mind has the ability to change the way your body and your genes function.

We now have scientific proof that the mind can heal the body.

In *Relaxation Revolution*, Dr. Herbert Benson and William Proctor present the latest scientific findings, revealing that we have the ability to self-heal diseases, prevent life-threatening conditions, and supplement established drug and surgical procedures with mind body techniques. In a special “treatment” section, Benson and Proctor describe how these mind body techniques can be applied—and are being applied—to treat a wide variety of conditions, including:

- High blood pressure
- Anxiety and depression
- Infertility
- Insomnia
- Menopausal hot flashes
- Many pains, including backaches and headaches
- Phobias
- And much more

Relaxation Revolution details Dr. Benson’s recent work with colleagues in the field of genetics, which links mind body treatments to the healing of a steadily expanding number of medical conditions. Mind and body

have become part of a scientific and medical whole; together they represent a complete approach to healing and maximal well-being. In clear, straightforward language, Benson and Proctor cite the experiences of real people to show how mind body techniques have the potential not only to enhance healing but also to reduce health costs to individuals and to society as a whole. *Relaxation Revolution* shines a light on the future of medicine.

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