

A Doctors Perspective

The Anxiety State

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Over the last 26 years, since retiring from active medical practice, I have written four books on nervous illness, which are well known worldwide. Before I retired I was a physician. However, physicians are sometimes asked to treat nervously ill patients and it is essential for them to know how to do this, or at least to know where to refer the patients satisfactorily.

Gradually over the years, nervously ill people came to me for help, many of whom were acutely ill although they had been treated previously, some for a long time, by orthodox psychiatrists. Indeed, I saw so many of these suffering people that I began to question the use to the psychiatric treatment commonly given in those days.

The symptoms of nervous illness felt by these people were often so upsetting that many sufferers came asking for urgent relief. These symptoms included: attacks of panic, rapidly beating heart, weakness, fatigue, trembling, a feeling of difficulty in swallowing solid food, of taking a deep breath, and so on. Can you imagine such people's bewilderment and despair on being told of the possibility of lengthy investigation for a hidden cause? I became so concerned that I found a way of not only giving a quick relief of symptoms but also of giving a practical programme for recovery.

In an anxiety state, the sufferer is more or less constantly anxious, especially afraid of the symptoms. I often found that in time many nervously ill people were more concerned with the state they were now in, also with "what could happen next"! I explained that the symptoms of nervous illness are no more than the symptoms of stress and because I show how to cope with these symptoms and give a practical programme for recovery, people learn to be no longer frightened or bewildered by them. The need for quick relief is now well recognized.