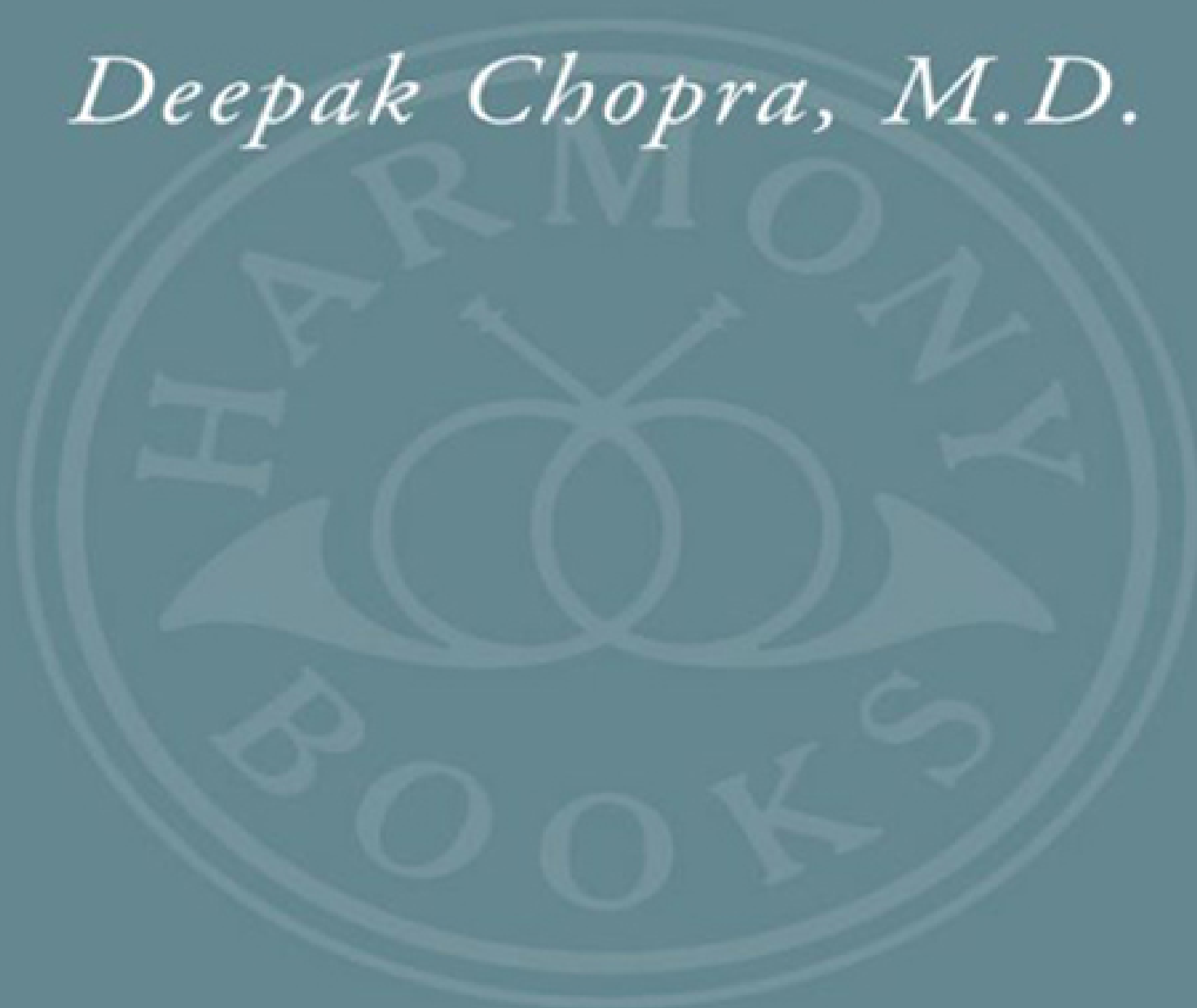


PERFECT HEALTH--REVISED AND UPDATED

The Complete Mind Body Guide

Deepak Chopra, M.D.



PERFECT HEALTH

The Complete Mind Body Guide

Revised Edition

DEEPAK CHOPRA, M.D.



THREE RIVERS PRESS • NEW YORK

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To Shankara
and the
Shankaracharya Tradition of Masters
for Preserving the knowledge of
The Wisdom of Life.



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Acknowledgments

I wish to offer my heartfelt thanks:

To my family, for their deep love and support, which is the basis for everything I do.

To David Simon, my friend and colleague, for his support in the updating of this book and the greater vision we share.

To a superb agent—and valued friend—Lynn Franklin, for her belief in this project.

To Huntley Dent, a close friend whose keen literary judgment helped me bring the original text to completed form.

To my editor, Peter Guzzardi, who insists on perfection and bringing out the best I can offer.

And to the dedicated family of doctors, nurses, teachers, and support staff of the Chopra Center for Well Being who are committed to living the ideals of perfect health every day in their lives.

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PART I

A PLACE CALLED PERFECT HEALTH

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Introduction

Remarkable transformations have occurred in the world since I wrote the first edition of *Perfect Health* almost a decade ago. Ten years ago the ideas that there was more to health than the absence of disease, that natural approaches could enliven our intrinsic healing system, and that the human body was a network of energy and information rather than a frozen anatomical structure seemed radical. And yet today we see that these concepts have become woven into the very fabric of our modern view of health and sickness, and of life and death. A recent report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that over 40 percent of Americans are now regularly accessing unconventional medical care that goes beyond a materialistic view of the human body. More than two in three medical schools have introduced courses on alternative and complementary medicine to their students. And, recognizing that patients are demanding greater choice and access, increasing numbers of insurance companies and health maintenance organizations are covering the costs of holistic medical care.

The scientific community has shifted from outright rejection and ridicule of alternative healing approaches to serious investigation. If you access the National Library of Medicine's database, you will find over forty thousand articles on alternative and complementary medicine with over sixteen hundred on herbal medicines alone. Meditation, yoga, massage, and nutritional approaches are increasingly embraced as mainstream tools for healing. St. John's wort, ginkgo biloba, and echinacea have become household words, with almost every pharmacy in America carrying its own line of natural medicines. Through the proliferation of journals, books, and the Internet, people have unprecedented access to information on health, and are taking increasing responsibility for their own well-being. Although this may be threatening to the established medical community, I see the trend toward increasing self-awareness and empowerment as a sign of expanding personal and collective health.