

### ***The Psychological Immune System***

Herman Kagan, PhD

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Reviewed by Paige Lovitt for Reader Views (8/06)

“The Psychological Immune System” was written to educate us on how the psychological immune system ties into the biological immune system. The author takes his theories beyond the individual’s functioning system and applies it to larger groups and organizations. Dr. Kagan extensively researched this topic and is well referenced. He also uses personal anecdotes to illustrate some of his points. This makes the information more interesting and the concepts easier to grasp.

If we have a healthy functioning psychological immune system, we are able to use our emotions to guide us into making good decisions. Dr. Kagan states, “It seems we comprehend life’s events through their emotional impact on us, and our emotions act as warning signals for the dangers we encounter.” Therefore, it is important that we maintain a healthy functioning system. As with our biological system, which functions to keep us alive, we need both systems to be healthy and for our survival. When our biological systems start failing, we get diseases and end up either in poor health or dead. When our psychological immune systems are not functioning properly we can make poor choices that are detrimental to our survival.

“The Psychological Immune System” is incredibly interesting and informative to read. Dr. Kagan includes a lot of anthropological information to show us how we evolved in this manner. He mentions historical events and cultures that are influenced by his theories. He also discusses how other creatures in the animal world are also guided by this system. While the information presented is informative enough to be used as textbook material, it is written in such a way that a non-student would enjoy reading the material for personal growth and to gain a better understanding of themselves, others, and different societies.

I highly recommend this book to people who are interested in self-growth, anthropology students, parents, and teachers. It is definitely well worth reading. The information gained can be useful for improving yourself, or for understanding how to guide others.