



# Is Religion Good for Your Health?: The Effects of Religion on Physical and Mental Health (Haworth Religion and Mental Health)

*Harold G Koenig*

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Is Religion Good for Your Health? takes you deep into the heart of the ageless debate on the importance of religion and faith to physical and mental health. On the one hand, you will learn about important research findings from cross-sectional, longitudinal, and intervention studies that have demonstrated positive effects of religious belief on both mental and physical health. On the other hand, you will learn how the vast clinical experiences of leading health experts suggest that religion can have negative effects on health. Integral to the book's exploration of the relationship between health and religion are the trends that have occurred in society over the last century. You will learn about significant demographic changes, changes in health and health care, and shifts in values, attitudes, and religious conviction, all of which have direct implications for health care providers, the clergy, the "baby boomers," and older adults. From Author Harold Koenig, a leading expert on religion and health who has frequently been interviewed by major broadcasting networks such as ABC, National Public Radio, the British Broadcasting Corporation, NBC, CBS, and "Ivanhoe Broadcast News," you will also learn about:

- pathological uses of religion
- the need for cooperation and collaboration between health and religious professionals
- studies on the relationship of religious beliefs and practice to physical conditions such as blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and cancer
- links between religious behavior and depression, anxiety, and drug use
- the waning of religion's influence in America
- first-hand accounts from patients who have faced painful and/or life-threatening illness

As Is Religion Good for Your Health? analyzes the pathological aspects of religion, you will begin to understand how religious beliefs have the capacity to strongly influence people's lives and their health, whether positively or negatively. Health care providers, public policy experts, religious professionals, medical researchers, and medical students will find the book's overview of the issues at stake, particularly the implications for our public health care system, crucial to the advancement of health care practice into the next century.

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