



# The Concepts of Psychiatry: A Pluralistic Approach to the Mind and Mental Illness

*S. Nassir Ghaemi*

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Because most psychiatric illnesses are complex phenomena, no single method or approach is sufficient to explain them or the experiences of persons who suffer from them. In *The Concepts of Psychiatry* S. Nassir Ghaemi, M.D. argues that the discipline of psychiatry can therefore be understood best from a pluralistic perspective. Grounding his approach in the works of Paul McHugh, Phillip Slavney, Leston Havens, and others, Ghaemi incorporates a more explicitly philosophical discussion of the strengths of a pluralistic model and the weaknesses of other approaches, such as biological or psychoanalytic theories, the biopsychosocial model, or eclecticism.

Ghaemi's methodology is twofold: on the one hand, he applies philosophical ideas, such as utilitarian versus duty-based ethical models, to psychiatric practice. On the other hand, he subjects clinical psychiatric phenomena, such as psychosis or the Kraepelin nosology, to a conceptual analysis that is philosophically informed. This book will be of interest to professionals and students in psychiatry, as well as psychologists, social workers, philosophers, and general readers who are interested in understanding the field of psychiatry and its practices at a conceptual level.

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