

Catastrophic Care: How American Health Care Killed My Father--and How We Can Fix It

David Goldhill

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HOW AMERICAN
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David Goldhill : Catastrophic Care: How American Health Care Killed My Father--and How We Can Fix It before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Catastrophic Care: How American Health Care Killed My Father--and How We Can Fix It:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A fantastic tour of a broken systemBy barrosd12This book should be

required reading for anyone who's ever wondered, "well, what exactly is so bad about our healthcare system?" In this fascinating read, David Goldhill approaches the matter of care from the lens of a business person, which I can wholly appreciate. The problems we face in healthcare today, he contends, are primarily a result of a broken marketplace for healthcare. We are not consumers in this system, we are pawns for powerful surrogates to extract profit from. Goldhill takes us on a whirlwind tour of almost literally every facet of care I've never even thought about, from Medicare and Medicaid to the broken rewards systems that are powering the next generation of physicians. Overall, I felt the analysis was incredibly well done and well researched, little was left to the imagination as to why and where our system has failed us, and even though the book itself seems to have come out before the ACA was enacted, it seems mildly prophetic in a lot of ways in showing how a continuation of a broken system can only continue to be broken. I think my favorite part of the book is that it doesn't heavily lean into the idea that America should be like Norway or Finland. It surprised me to learn those systems are also heavily problematic in terms of controlling cost. Rather, a more interesting example forward for America is Singapore, of all places. By the end of the book, we're treated to a comprehensive assessment of how to fix a system that waylays itself with profligate actors that have no incentive to change. In the next 5 years, we're likely to see a collapse in Medicare expenditures in a similar fashion to what happened with the housing industry. Goldhill's solution is elegant and pragmatic, in my opinion. He prescribes a three-pronged system that simultaneously moves incentives for insurers to only truly insure against catastrophic events, for marketplace consumers to save their own money and demand cost-effective care at a basic level and to do all this while managing to either spend the same amount of money we're currently pouring into a broken system or to even save money while doing it. 41 of 44 people found the following review helpful. The word is out - 'the Emperor (health care debate) has no clothes' By Ilya Valkovsky Written for a general (but thinking) audience, this book could really turn around all public discourse on health care and become a seminal work on the subject. The divisive health care debate of recent years is centered over WHO should shoulder astronomical medical costs. The issue of taming the exorbitant prices and costs is relegated to the side issue of waste and abuse. David Goldhill takes a new and different approach. He puts aside the standard assumption that health care is somehow exempt from the normal rules of economic activity. He focuses on WHY the costs became so exorbitant in the first place. Goldhill shows persuasively that the costs are the result of the very design of our current medical system, and the only way to bring the costs down to earth is to REPLACE entirely the current economic arrangements of our medicine - both the private insurance system and Medicare/Medicaid. That's a book of new ideas. These ideas are breakthrough innovative, brilliant, deeply thought through; analysis superb. As with all things new and complex, it requires an effort to understand. If you have any background or interest in economics, even the economics of everyday life, give it more consideration. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An argument to empower the most important players in healthcare - us, the consumers. By Reviewer Highly recommended. The author makes a clear and compelling argument that basic economic forces should have the primary role in allocating scarce healthcare dollars. Without standard market incentives and the interplay between buyers and sellers - like we see in the normal world for housing, food and other essential goods and services - the US will never be able to control the runaway costs of healthcare. The growth of Big Healthcare is staggering, and scary.

A visionary investigation that will change the way we think about health care: how and why it is failing, why expanding coverage will actually make things worse, and how our health care can be transformed into a transparent, affordable, successful system. In 2007, David Goldhill's father died from infections acquired in a hospital, one of more than two hundred thousand avoidable deaths per year caused by medical error. The bill was enormous - and Medicare paid it. These circumstances left Goldhill angry and determined to understand how world-class technology and personnel could coexist with such carelessness - and how a business that failed so miserably could be paid in full. *Catastrophic Care* is the eye-opening result. Blending personal anecdotes and extensive research, Goldhill presents us with cogent, biting analysis that challenges the basic preconceptions that have shaped our thinking for decades. Contrasting the Island of health care with the Mainland of our economy, he demonstrates that high costs, excess medicine, terrible service, and medical error are the inevitable consequences of our insurance-based system. He explains why policy efforts to fix these problems have invariably produced perverse results, and how the new Affordable Care Act is more likely to deepen than to solve these issues. Goldhill steps outside the incremental and wonkish debates to question the conventional wisdom blinding us to more fundamental issues. He proposes a comprehensive new way, where the customer (the patient) is first - a system focused on health and maintaining it, a system strong and vibrant enough for our future. If you think health care is interesting only to institutes and politicians, think again: *Catastrophic Care* is surprising, engaging, and brimming with insights born of questions nobody has thought to ask. Above all it is a book of new ideas that can transform the way we understand a subject we often take for granted.

From Booklist Dysfunctional and undisciplined. That is Goldhill's assessment of the current U.S. health-care system. President and CEO of the Game Show Network, Goldhill believes the trouble stems from a culture

lacking customer accountability: high prices, excess, errors, underinvestment in information technology, lack of follow-up." Spurred by the death of his father from a hospital-acquired infection, Goldhill has devoted considerable time and thought to repairing health care. His book sprouted from a 2009 article he penned for the Atlantic. Encounters with the health-care system usually involve gargantuan intermediaries—Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance companies, entities Goldhill cites for inefficiency. They also generate increased demand for services. His alternative to the status quo combines national health insurance (for everyone but not everything) with a market-based system that gets rid of intermediaries and allows individuals to deal directly with providers. Individual health accounts, catastrophic insurance with a high deductible, and health loans are key components. The health-care system is gashed. Goldhill thinks it's time to rip off the colossal Band-Aid and apply a different kind of balm. --Tony Miksanek "David Goldhill has written a devastating and utterly original analysis of what has gone wrong with the American health care system. Read it, and take a deep breath. He will convince you that our solutions are not solving our problems. They are making our problems worse."—Malcolm Gladwell "David Goldhill is a genius observer of a broken system in need of fresh ideas. His testimony and common-sense ideas are devastatingly important in light of out-of-control medical prices. A must-read for doctors, policy-makers and patients alike. Catastrophic Care is a defining book of our era, and a roadmap for fixing our country's leading debt driver. You will never see medical care the same way." —Marty Makary, MD, best-selling author of Unaccountable: What Hospitals Won't Tell You and How Transparency Can Revolutionize Healthcare "For those who are troubled by both the failures of our healthcare system and the misdirected diagnoses and prescriptions offered by pundits, policy experts, and politicians from across the political spectrum, David Goldhill offers a brilliant and much needed antidote. By calling out with remarkable clarity the numerous, but now almost invisible incentives and regulations that drive the dysfunction of our current system, Catastrophic Care provides an illuminating framework for understanding the crisis, and then a path to the kinds of reforms that will surely be necessary." —Jeffrey S. Flier, Dean of the Faculty, Harvard Medical School "[A] fascinating and infuriating expose of the American health care system . . . Goldhill persuasively argues that a consumer-driven system — which will require greater vigilance and commitment on the part of citizens in actively managing their health — is the first step toward sustainability and lower individual and government costs. . . . Goldhill's reasoned, logical alternative to the current system goes beyond political finger-pointing, and while his take is sobering, it's one that offers sound solutions." —Publishers Weekly (starred review) "[Catastrophic Care] is powerful—edge-of-the-seat riveting—because it is not, in any sense, a policy book. Rather, this is a story about saving ourselves . . . It steps outside of the established political debate and lexicon—one of the rare books addressing a major national policy issue that is able to do so in language not already debased by the problem itself . . . Alas, healthcare civilians can't actually read most books about healthcare (and if you can, then you are part of the problem). But you can read this one." —Michael Wolff, The Guardian "Highly readable presentation of one businessman's solution, likely to provoke discussion if not agreement." —Kirkus "Rarely has the irrationality of the [healthcare] system been so convincingly demonstrated, including the opaque and highly inflated prices of medical care." —Arnold Relman, The New York Times "Thought provoking . . . A for-profit business executive who actually states that better than adequate health care should be available to all people in the country . . . As an industry outsider—neither a clinician, policymaker, or someone who works for the healthcare industry—Mr. Goldhill observes and explains the issues in an understandable manner for the layperson." —New York Journal of Books "The best popular health care book . . . a crystal clear account of what has gone wrong and how to fix it." —Tyler Cowen, Holbert L. Harris Professor of Economics, George Mason University "[A] comprehensive, thought-provoking, empirical, and well-written book." —Matthew Continetti, The Weekly Standard "Provocative." —Wayne Holliday, Decatur Daily "Goldhill's perspective is invaluable to the health-care discussion, elevating his personal tragedy into an impressive body of research. Written with both pain and passion, this book provides an informative and relatable treatise." —Elizabeth J. Eastwood, Library Journal "Innovative . . . Goldhill presents a convincing argument in many ways, and this book already has challenged policymakers to examine his proposals." —William P. Moran, Charleston (SC) Post and Courier "David Goldhill isn't your typical policy expert. He is the chief executive officer of GSN. That's right, the Game Show Network. What does he know about health care? Quite a bit, it turns out." —Chelsea Conaboy, Boston Globe, White Coat Notes "About the Author David Goldhill is president and chief executive officer of GSN, which operates a U.S. cable television network seen in more than 75 million homes and is one of the world's largest digital games companies. He is a member of the board of directors of The Leapfrog Group, an employer-sponsored organization dedicated to hospital safety and transparency. Goldhill graduated from Harvard University with a BA in history and holds an MA in history from New York University."