Witchdoctors and Psychiatrists: The Common Roots of Psychotherapy and Its Future

by E. Fuller Torrey

According to the dictionary, a witchdoctor is a person who practices witchcraft, and the term is often associated with traditional healing practices in various cultures. In the context of psychotherapy, the term is used to highlight the overlap between traditional healing practices and modern psychotherapeutic methods. E. Fuller Torrey, in his book “Witchdoctors and Psychiatrists: The Common Roots of Psychotherapy and Its Future,” explores the historical and cultural roots of psychotherapy, comparing it to the practices of witchdoctors and psychiatrists.

The book discusses the evolution of psychotherapy and its relationship to traditional healing practices, emphasizing the commonalities and differences between the two. Torrey argues that psychotherapy, like witchcraft, has been practiced across cultures and has its roots in the beliefs and practices of the people. He also discusses the role of psychiatrists in society, comparing their work with that of healers, medicine men, and priests in other cultures, and considers the future of psychotherapy.

Torrey’s work is a unique blend of cultural anthropology and psychiatry, offering insights into the historical development of psychotherapy and its relationship to traditional healing practices. The book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the history and cultural context of psychotherapy.