



The Tending Instinct: Women, Men, and the Biology of Nurturing

Shelley E. Taylor

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A groundbreaking work that reveals how the instinct to "tend and befriend" is vital for human society.

In times of crisis and upheaval, our responses to stress become especially important. We have long heard about the "fight or flight" response, but renowned psychologist Shelley E. Taylor points out that hardwired in females -- both humans and those of other species -- is an instinct that can transcend "fight or flight." Their "tend and befriend" response is not only demonstrable but, as Taylor deftly explains in this eye-opening work, a key ingredient in human social life.

With great skill and insight, Taylor examines stress, relationships, and human society through the special lens of women's biology. She draws on genetics, evolutionary psychology, physiology, and neuroscience to show how this tending process begins virtually at the moment of conception and literally crafts the biology of offspring through genes that rely on caregiving for their expression. Taylor also examines what drives women to seek each other's company, and to tend to the young and the infirm -- acts that greatly benefit the group but often at great cost to the individual.

The Tending Instinct will forever change the way we view ourselves, and will revolutionize our understanding of the role of women and nurturing in maintaining a stable society.

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