

Memoir focuses on overcoming anxiety

‘Cured’ is by Seattle doctor

Seattle physician and researcher Dr. Anne McTiernan’s first memoir, “Starved,” was published in late 2016. The book focused on how she experienced neglect and abuse in her childhood, which led first to dangerous malnourishment, then to obesity, followed by obsessive dieting — and finally to a career as a nutrition doctor.

McTiernan is back with a second memoir. “Cured” covers some of the same territory of the first book, particularly with regard to her dysfunctional childhood. But this time McTiernan focuses less on coming into a healthy relationship with her physical body and more on the work she has had to do to achieve mental health.

Whether it was in spite of, or motivated

by, the lack of nurturing she received as a youngster, McTiernan has been driven by ambition for a long time.

“Cured” begins when, as a young mother herself, she earns a doctorate in epidemiology. But just a few years later, she concludes that opportunities for women in her field are hard to come by. (Among other things, this book offers a telling flashback to the limitations women faced in the late 20th century.)

She decides to go back to school to become a medical doctor. This means uprooting her husband from his job and her two young daughters from their customary routines to move from Seattle to New York for med school.

McTiernan describes her feelings of insufficiency and isolation as she juggles

This week’s book

‘Cured’ by Anne McTiernan

Central Recovery Press
— 298 pages — \$18.95

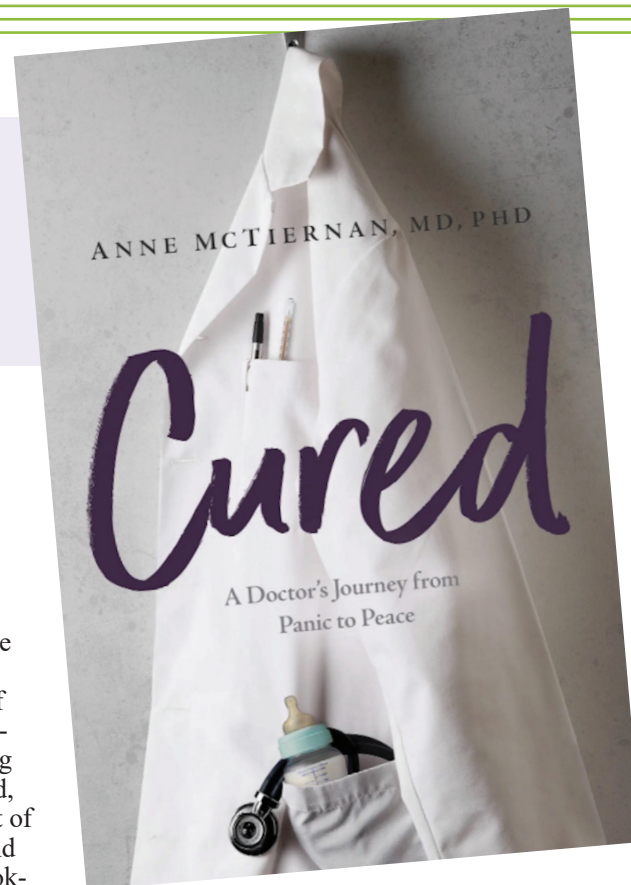
motherhood and family life with the tough demands of medical training. And as the only mother among her fellow students, it’s difficult to participate in whatever social life they lead outside of school.

Within a few months of beginning classes, McTiernan is suffering debilitating panic attacks. Her husband, grappling with his own set of challenges in a new job and new community, while looking after their daughters so she can study, is not always emotionally available to her.

“I felt like I was facing a behemoth on my own, with no one to guide me, no one to assist me,” McTiernan wrote. “I was the reluctant hero on a journey with no map or signposts, and I was running out of fuel.”

She turns to psychotherapy to try to sort things out.

Most people suffering from chronic anxiety don’t like to talk about it, but the condition is more common than we think. One in five Americans suffers from some kind of anxiety disorder — but if we regard this as a personal failing rather than a recognized disability, it often goes untreated, according to McTiernan.



By sharing her personal experience with anxiety, which includes elements both petty and profound (for even minor complaints can seem insurmountable when one is hobbled by anxiety), McTiernan demonstrates that this is a condition that can be addressed and mitigated. In her own case, asking for help led her on a slow but steady journey that taught her how to identify and share her emotions and build her self-confidence. “Cured” offers an encouraging story about developing resilience.

The Bookmonger is Barbara Lloyd McMichael, who writes this weekly column focusing on the books, authors and publishers of the Pacific Northwest. Contact her at barbaralmcm@gmail.com.

Celebrate! July 4, 2021

Fourth of July Parade

3 p.m. in Warrenton
S. Main Ave from SW 1st to 9th

Fireworks Display

10 p.m. in Astoria
Look to the sky over the Columbia River near downtown

With COVID safety in mind, we are asking for everyone's help to keep crowding to a minimum during this holiday weekend. Please be courteous to those around you, and pack out what you bring in, like food containers, personal fireworks & other garbage.



Thanks for making the 4th of July a blast!

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