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Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain

By Antonio Damasio

Penguin Random House LLC, 2005. Softcover. Book Condition: New. A renowned neurologist demonstrates what many have long suspected: emotions are not a luxury, they are essential to rational thinking. Far from interfering with rationality, his research shows the absence of emotion and feeling can break down rationality and make wise decision making almost impossible. Library Journal says, "The idea that the mind exists as a distinct entity from the body has profoundly influenced Western culture since Descartes proclaimed, "I think, therefore I am." Damasio, head of neurology at the University of Iowa and a prominent researcher on human brain function, challenges this premise in a fascinating and well-reasoned argument on the central role that emotion and feelings play in human rationality. According to Damasio, the same brain structures regulate both human biology and behavior and are indispensable to normal cognitive processes. Damasio demonstrates how patients (his own as well as the 19th-century railroad worker Nicholas Gage) with prefrontal cortical damage can no longer generate the emotions necessary for effective decision-making. A gifted scientist and writer, Damasio combines an Oliver Sacks-like reportage with the presentation of complex, theoretical issues in neurobiology. Recommended for wide purchase." Antonio Damasio is a profound thinker...



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