Acknowledgments

Gut Feelings is the work of over seven years. During that time, I have examined its central question, “how does healing emerge from human suffering?” from a variety of perspectives, with my own chronic illness as stimulus and example. Many sources have helped me towards answers. My task has been to integrate these different ideas into a coherent whole. I have done this in two ways: by using my own experience — physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual — as the narrative link among very different texts, and also by continually reinterpretting my earlier conclusions in the light of new events and ideas as I met them. This second process has taken place through the creative discipline of writing. Each facet of the story I tell in this book was refined in the light of the others as I tried to make it as clear as I could for different audiences and readers during these years.

My first audience was often my students, especially in ‘Mind, Body and Emotion’ and ‘Culture and Health’, units I developed and taught from 1996-2002 at the University of Western Sydney. When students recognized a connection I was trying to make between their reading and their lives, I knew to retain it. When they did not, I knew I must either abandon it or rethink it and express it more precisely, and their responses taught me how. The stories of chronic illness they gathered themselves, to tell and write and ponder, enriched my understanding of suffering and healing. I thank them all. Another audience comprised academics and health practitioners who considered many of my evolving ideas at conferences, in seminars, and eventually as submissions to a variety of journals. Critical comments and new references from these listeners, referees and reviewers took my thinking in new directions. I thank them too.

As a result of the method I have used in writing it, parts of this book have been revised and expanded from conference presentations and published papers. I acknowledge them here and list them for readers interested in following the development of my ideas outside the pages of this book. Chapter Two has evolved from “Gut Feelings: Emotions, Ethics and Irritable Bowels”, presented at The Australian Sociological Association (TASA) Annual Conference, University of Wollongong, December 1997. Chapter Four includes some material first given as “Theodicies of Suffering in Chronic Illness Narratives,” at the International Sociological Association Congress in Brisbane, July 2002. Different parts of Chapter Five have appeared in earlier versions as “Transcendental Meditation, Reiki and Yoga: Suffering, Ritual and Self Transformation,” Journal of Contemporary Religion, 16 (3) (2001): 329-

Chapter Seven was originally presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Studies in Religion (Sydney University, September 1999) and published in 2001 as “Weal and Woe: Suffering, Sociology and the Emotions of Julian of Norwich,” *Pastoral Psychology*, 49 (3): 187-203. The discussion of Barbalet’s and Lupton’s books in Chapter Seven also includes extracts from reviews I wrote for the *Journal of Sociology*, 34 (3) (1998): 331-332 and 35 (3) (1999): 385-386.

Chapter Eight began as a paper on “Spiritual Autobiography” for a seminar in the Department of Studies in Religion, University of Queensland, Brisbane, on 19 May, 2000. This chapter also contains material from “Sources of Hope in Chronic Illness”, presented at the Annual TASA Conference of 2001 at the University of Sydney and published on the CD-ROM of conference proceedings. A revised version of “Sources of Hope” appears in *Health Sociology Review*, 10 (2) (2002) 99-109. Permission to reproduce the photograph of Epstein’s statue *Jacob and the Angel* was obtained from The Estate of Jacob Epstein/Tate, London.

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