



**Lost Selves and Lonely Persons: Experiences of  
Illness and Well-being Among Tamil Refugees in  
Norway (Carolina Academic Press Ethnographic  
Studies in Medical Anthropology)**

*Anne Sigfrid Gronseth*

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This ethnography is based on a long-term field study of experiences of illness and wellbeing as Tamil refugees resettled in one of the small fishing villages along the arctic coast of northern Norway. Departing from a medical model, the study expands to a client-centered model that focuses on the Tamils' experiences in everyday life, as they move between Tamil and Norwegian social worlds. The author argues that Tamil illness is not only a biomedically defined reference to traumatic and individualized explanations, but is also defined by tensions in embodied expectations and perceptions in ongoing social life. The book addresses migrant experiences of loss of embodied meaning, identity, and belonging, together with the often-present stigma and low social status in the local community. While going beyond Tamil pain and illness, the study demonstrates how the Tamils exert a complex agency that allows them to pursue their core values as well as human existential needs in a quest for wellbeing and success.

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