the psychology of health and health care

A CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE  FIFTH EDITION

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Preface

With each new edition of The Psychology of Health and Health Care: A Canadian Perspective, we as authors learn more and more about this fascinating field of health psychology. In writing this fifth edition, we have reinforced our belief that the field continues to mature and expand, learning from other branches of psychology and from other disciplines.

As learners and as authors, we continue to feel very fortunate to be able to work in a country in which issues, opinions, and data are so very accessible. In the late 1990s, when we first began conceptualizing this book, we were convinced that the topics of health psychology manifest themselves in unique ways in Canada. After writing this fifth edition, we hold fast to that conviction. While many psychological theories developed in the United States and elsewhere apply well internationally, it is still the case that, when it comes to health and health care, our geography, demography, history, and health care system make Canadians unique, even in the face of significant, though debated, reforms to the American health care system. Our experience in writing this edition continues to confirm that Canadians are very active in research that goes beyond descriptions of our health to explore the factors affecting it. Again, you will find hundreds of new references as this research is discussed throughout the book.

HOW BEST TO USE THIS BOOK

The fifth edition of The Psychology of Health and Health Care: A Canadian Perspective is organized into major parts and chapters. The division of topics into major parts is a new addition to the book. You will see that we are continuing to place the work of health psychology in larger disciplinary and societal contexts, especially in Part 3 entitled Bigger Pictures: The Health of Populations. Chapters continue to be the traditionally used organizational elements. This book presents topics that are commonly found in most health psychology textbooks. Stress and coping, health communication, pain, and chronic and life-threatening illnesses are examples of such topics. However, this edition also contains chapters on some topics that are often covered in less detail by other texts. Examples include psychoneuroimmunology, health promotion, and health and physical activity.

Instructors are invited to use the book’s chapters as they see fit for their educational context. For example, nursing and medical students may want to focus more on chapters such as Psychoneuroimmunology, Health Communication, The World of Health Care, Pain, and Chronic and Life-Threatening Illnesses.

Health psychology is essentially an applied discipline, and each chapter of our book opens with a vignette intended to provide students with a realistic context for what they are about to read. In this way, we begin each chapter with an applied focus. Students will also find case studies throughout the book. In addition to the analysis we provide, students can discuss these case studies in lectures and seminars.

WHAT’S NEW IN THE FIFTH EDITION

This fifth edition includes new features that highlight the key concepts for each chapter. We have rethought the structure of our “advance organizers” that help students start thinking about a chapter before delving into it. Correspondingly, we have restructured
our chapter reviews to enhance students’ recall and help them think about the material in
deep rather than surface ways.

The most noticeable expansion found in this fifth edition is Part 3: The Bigger
Picture: The Health of Populations. The material in this section reflects health psycholo-
gists’ growing appreciation for the interdisciplinary nature of their work—that no
challenge in health can be understood solely from one perspective. The section also
acknowledges that, while working with individuals is still a fundamental reality in health
care, health is more dramatically improved by focusing on populations. No single health
care practitioner can have as much impact as can one well-implemented and thoughtful
policy on clear drinking water.

SUPPLEMENTS

The following instructor supplements are available for downloading from a password-
protected section of Pearson Canada’s online catalogue. Navigate to your book’s catalogue
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Test Item File  Available in Microsoft Word, the test bank includes a wide variety
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