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# Your Psychological and Spiritual Well-Being

## Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter in the text, the student should be able to:

1. Identify the characteristics of emotionally healthy persons.
2. List and give examples of the three major areas of positive psychology.
3. Discuss the health benefits of spirituality.
4. Identify ways to enrich one's spiritual life.
5. Describe four ways that sleep affects daytime well-being.
6. Identify risk factors in college students for mental health problems.
7. List the symptoms of major depression and discuss the pros and cons of using antidepressants.
8. Discuss some of the factors that may lead to suicide, as well as strategies for prevention.
9. List the criteria for considering therapy for a mental health problem.

## Chapter Summary

This chapter reports the latest findings on making the most of psychological strengths, enhancing happiness, and developing the spiritual dimension of your health and your life. It also explores an often overlooked dimension of physical and emotional well-being: sleep

## Lecture Outline

- I. Emotional and Mental Health
  - A. Psychological health encompasses both our emotional and mental states—that is, our feelings and our thoughts.
    1. Emotional health generally refers to feelings and moods.

- a. Characteristics of emotionally healthy persons, identified in an analysis of major studies of emotional wellness, include the following.
    - i. Determination and effort to be healthy.
    - ii. Flexibility and adaptability to a variety of circumstances.
    - iii. Development of a sense of meaning and affirmation of life.
    - iv. An understanding that the self is not the center of the universe.
    - v. Compassion for others.
    - vi. The ability to be unselfish in serving or relating to others.
    - vii. Increased depth and satisfaction in intimate relationships.
    - viii. A sense of control over the mind and body that enables the person to make health-enhancing choices and decisions.
  2. Mental health describes our ability to perceive reality as it is, to respond to its challenges, and to develop rational strategies for living.
    - a. The characteristics of mental health.
      - i. The ability to function and carry out responsibilities.
      - ii. The ability to form relationships.
      - iii. Realistic perceptions of the motivations of others.
      - iv. Rational, logical thought processes.
      - v. The ability to adapt to change and to cope with adversity.
    3. Culture helps to define psychological health. In our diverse society, many cultural influences affect Americans' sense of who they are, where they came from, and what they believe.
- II. The Lessons of Positive Psychology
- A. The three major areas of positive psychology are the study of positive emotions, such as hope and trust; positive traits, such as wisdom and courage; and positive institutions, such as strong families and democracy.
  - B. Know Yourself
    1. Conscientiousness.
      - a. Associated with fewer risky behaviors.
    2. Extraversion.
      - a. Associated with more risky behaviors.
  - C. Develop Self-Compassion
  - D. Boost Emotional Intelligence — EQ (emotional quotient) is the ability to monitor and use emotions to guide thinking and actions.
    1. Measured by strong social or interpersonal skills.
    2. Associated with more productivity at work and happiness at home.
  - E. Meet Your Needs
    1. According to Maslow, human needs are the motivating factors in personality development.

- a. First, we must satisfy our basic physiological needs, such as those for food, shelter, and sleep.
  - b. Only then can we pursue fulfillment of our higher needs—for safety and security, love and affection, and self-esteem.
  - c. Few reach the state of self-actualization, in which one functions at the highest possible level and derives the greatest possible satisfaction from life.
- F. Boost Self-Esteem
1. Self-esteem is belief or pride in ourselves; it gives us confidence to dare to attempt to achieve at school or work, and to reach out to others to form friendships and close relationships.
  2. Self-esteem is based on what you believe about yourself. It is not something you are born with; it develops over time.
  3. One of the most useful techniques for bolstering self-esteem and achieving your goals is developing the habit of positive thinking and talking.
- G. Pursue Happiness
1. Genetics accounts for 50 percent of your happiness.
  2. Life circumstances account for 10 percent of your happiness.
  3. Forty percent of your happiness depends on what you do.
- H. Become Optimistic
1. Optimism is the inclination to anticipate the best possible outcome.
- I. Manage Your Moods
1. A mood is a more sustained emotional state that colors our view of the world for hours or days.
  2. The most effective way to banish a sad or bad mood is by changing what caused it in the first place.
- J. Developing Autonomy
1. Internal locus of control.
  2. External locus of control.
- III. Spiritual Health
- A. Spiritual health involves our ability to identify our basic purpose in life and to experience the fulfillment of achieving our full potential.
1. Spirituality is a belief in a higher power.
  2. Religiosity refers to various spiritual practices.
- B. Spirituality and Physical Health
- C. Deepen Your Spiritual Intelligence — the capacity to sense, understand, and tap into the highest parts of ourselves, others, and the world around us.
1. Spiritual intelligence, unlike spirituality, does not center on the worship of an external god, but on the discovery of a wisdom within.
- D. Clarifying Your Values

1. Values are the criteria by which you evaluate things, people, events, and yourself; they represent what's most important to you.
  - a. Carefully consider the consequences of each choice.
  - b. Choose freely from among all of the options.
  - c. Publicly affirm your values by sharing them with others.
  - d. Act out your values.

E. Enrich Your Spiritual Life

F. Consider the Power of Prayer

1. Some scientists speculate that prayer may foster a state of peace and calm that could lead to beneficial changes in the cardiovascular and immune systems.

G. Cultivate Gratitude

1. A grateful spirit brightens mood, boosts energy, and infuses daily living with a sense of glad abundance. How can you let your gratitude grow?
  - a. Keep a gratitude journal.
  - b. Record three things you are grateful for every day.

H. Forgive

1. Being angry, harboring resentments, or reliving hurts over and over again is bad for your health in general and your heart in particular.

IV. Sleepless on Campus

A. What Happens When We Sleep?

1. Stage 1: A twilight zone between full wakefulness and sleep, the brain produces small, irregular, rapid electrical waves. Muscles relax and breathing is smooth and even.
2. Stage 2: Brain waves are larger and punctuated with occasional sudden bursts of electrical activity. Eyes no longer react to light and bodily functions slowly.
3. Stages 3 and 4: Constitute the most profound state of unconsciousness. The brain produces slower, larger waves; sometimes referred to as "delta" or slow-wave sleep.

B. Sleep Disorders

1. Insomnia: A lack of sleep so severe that it interferes with functioning during the day.
  - a. Relaxation therapy: may involve progressive muscle relaxation, diaphragmatic breathing, hypnosis, or meditation.
  - b. Cognitive therapy: challenges misconceptions about sleep and helps shift a poor sleeper's mind away from anxiety-inducing thoughts.
  - c. Stimulus control therapy: individuals who do not fall asleep quickly must get up and leave their beds until they are very sleepy.
  - d. Sleep restriction therapy: sleep times are sharply curtailed in order to improve the quality of sleep.

2. Breathing Disorders (Snoring and Sleep Apnea)
  3. Movement Disorders
  4. Circadian Rhythm Sleep Disorders
- C. How Much Sleep Do I Need?

## Discussion Questions

- Discuss the concept of psychological health as it relates to the other five dimensions of health. Can psychological health be separate and distinct from the other components without affecting them? How so? How does it or doesn't it contribute to the holistic model? How do the other dimensions affect one's psychological health?
- Ask students what it means to love and accept themselves. Can one accept and love another without first loving oneself? How? Why? How does this relate to Maslow's hierarchy of thinking?
- Ask students what emotional intelligence means to them. Discuss with students how they might go about developing and strengthening their emotional intelligence. Discuss the benefits of possessing emotional intelligence. What role does an individual's EQ play in their everyday life or career? Ask them which they would rather have, a high IQ or a high EQ. Why?
- Ask students what factors contribute to happiness. Compare these characteristics to those cited for contributing to good psychological health. Ask students to make a list of the things that make them happy. Do they think of the things on the list when they make choices or decisions that may affect their happiness? Why?
- Discuss the concept of sleep deprivation as discussed in the text. Ask for volunteers who have experienced it to share their symptoms or experiences. Ask others to share the strategies and rituals they use to reduce sleep deprivation and maximize restful sleep. How might they improve their sleep rituals? Why is it important at this point in their lives to get enough sleep?

## **Classroom Activities**

### **Activity #1: Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

**Purpose:**

To assist students in identifying their own potential.

**Time:**

This activity will take 10 to 15 minutes.

**Introduction:**

Introduce to students the idea that not reaching our fullest potential can impact our health.

**Method:**

1. Introduce to students Maslow's hierarchy of needs and review the various levels within this model.
2. Have students make their own pyramid and write a brief statement about how they have reached each level, or not reached a particular level.

**Discussion:**

1. Ask students to identify areas that they are meeting.
2. Ask students to identify areas that they are not meeting.
3. How do they feel meeting or not meeting a particular area has influenced their life?
4. Are there areas in life for which students believe meeting each "step" isn't necessary to achieve the next level? Why or why not?
5. Ask students to identify someone they believe has reached the self-actualization level. Why?

### **Activity #2: Enhancing Self-Esteem**

**Purpose:**

To improve self-esteem.

**Time:**

This activity will take 10 to 15 minutes.

**Introduction:**

Enhancing self-esteem and personal well-being is a lifelong process.

**Method:**

Have students ask themselves the following questions:

- a. How do I feel about my life in general, positively or negatively?
- b. Do I constantly send myself negative messages?
- c. What is one area of my life that I would like to improve on?

Write two positive affirmations that you will repeat to yourself whenever you feel those negative or self-defeating thoughts begin to enter your mind.

**Discussion:**

1. What factors have contributed to your feelings about your life in general, whether they are positive or negative?
2. Will your positive affirmations help derail any negative observations you have of yourself?
3. What role does self-esteem play in the ability to set and establish goals?

### **References, Readings, and Resources**

## Books

Jeeves, Malcolm A., and Brown, Warren. *Neuroscience, Psychology, and Religion: Illusions, Delusions, and Realities about Human Nature*. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2009.

Provides an overview of the relationship between neuroscience, psychology, and religion that is academically sophisticated yet accessible to the general reader.

Nelson, James. *Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality*. New York: Springer Verlag, 2009.

The past century has seen the relationship between psychology and religion progress from wary antagonists, to strange bedfellows, to complementary world views. *Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality* explores this continuing dialogue.

Pargament, Kenneth L. *Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy: Understanding and Addressing the Sacred*. The Guilford Press, 2011.

From a leading researcher and practitioner, this volume provides an innovative framework for understanding the role of spirituality in people's lives and its relevance to the work done in psychotherapy.

Thoele, Sue Patton. *The Courage to Be Yourself: A Woman's Guide to Emotional Strength and Self-Esteem*. Atria Books, 2011.

Geared to women who too often find themselves meeting the wants of others at the expense of their own needs, the book provides necessary tools to help readers transform their fears into the courage to express their own authentic selves.

Brown, Brené. *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are*. Minneapolis: Hazelden, 2010.

This book explores living an emotionally healthy life and learning to love yourself.

## Audiovisual Resources

*10 Things You Should Know About Sleep*. DVD. New York: Films Media Group, 2009.

Even though many experts recommend eight hours of sleep a night, getting that much rest often seems impossible. This program offers 10 scientific ways to get quality sleep, and more of it.

[http://films.com/id/16900/10\\_Things\\_You\\_Should\\_Know\\_about\\_Sleep.htm](http://films.com/id/16900/10_Things_You_Should_Know_about_Sleep.htm)

*How to be Happy! Positive Psychology in Action*. DVD. New York: Films Media Group, 2008.

This program illustrates the application of positive psychology through a powerful workshop in which participants increase their awareness of what creates happiness by performing acts of indulgence, altruism, and gratitude.

[http://cambridge.films.com/id/15696/How\\_to\\_Be\\_Happy\\_Positive\\_Psychology\\_in\\_Action.htm](http://cambridge.films.com/id/15696/How_to_Be_Happy_Positive_Psychology_in_Action.htm)

*Self-Esteem and Identity in the Digital Age*. DVD. New York: Films Media Group, 2007.

How we see ourselves influences who we are. In this video, a student named McKenna helps viewers understand why good self-esteem is so important and what they can do to improve their own. Interviews with a developmental psychology expert and a high school basketball player reinforce why good self-esteem is such a valuable thing to have. Correlates to all applicable national and state educational standards including the NCLB Act. [http://films.com/id/16359/Self-Esteem\\_and\\_Identity\\_in\\_the\\_Digital\\_Age.htm](http://films.com/id/16359/Self-Esteem_and_Identity_in_the_Digital_Age.htm)

### **Internet Resources**

#### *National Association for Self-Esteem*

The purpose of this organization is to fully integrate self-esteem into the fabric of American society so that every individual, no matter what their age or background, experiences personal worth and happiness.

<http://www.self-esteem-nase.org/>

#### *National Sleep Foundation*

This informative site features information on sleep disorders; healthy sleep, support, and advocacy; and online resources on sleep.

<http://www.sleepfoundation.org>

#### *Authentic Happiness*

Authentic Happiness is the homepage of Dr. Martin Seligman, Director of the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania and founder of positive psychology, a branch of psychology that focuses on the empirical study of such things as positive emotions, strengths-based character, and healthy institutions.

<http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/Default.aspx>

#### ***A note regarding the Online Journal:***

An Online Journal is offered as a gradable assignment in MindTap. If you do not use MindTap in your course, an alternate online journal can be used. One alternative is Penzu

Classroom. Penzu Classroom allows students to register for an online journal for free with a specific class code as set up by you, the instructor. These journals can be assigned and then auto-graded and returned to students electronically. Click here for more information and to sign up: <http://penzu.com/content/products/classroom>.