



FOUNDATIONS *of* **Health Psychology**



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of

Health Psychology

EDITED BY

Howard S. Friedman and Roxane Cohen Silver

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

2007

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UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press, Inc., publishes works that further
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Oxford New York
Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

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Published by Oxford University Press, Inc.
198 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016

www.oup.com

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Foundations of health psychology / edited by Howard S. Friedman and Roxane C. Silver.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13 978-0-19-513959-4

ISBN 0-19-513959-3

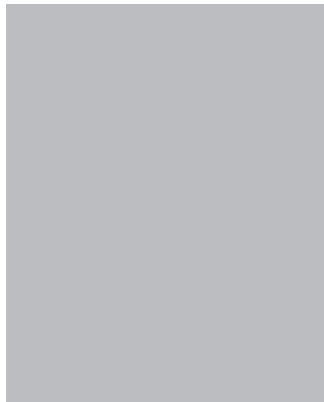
I. Clinical health psychology. I. Friedman, Howard S. II. Silver, Roxane Cohen.

R726.7.F68 2007

610.1'9—dc22 2005035996

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free paper



Preface

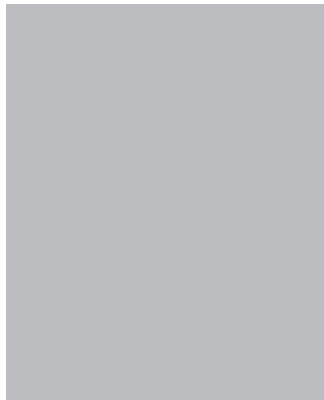
Although the formal field of health psychology is only 25 years old, it has burgeoned into a major scientific and clinical discipline. Health psychology has excellent scientific journals, thousands of scientists and practitioners, and many students. Yet there has not been sufficient statement and explication of the underpinning concepts on which this flourishing field is built. The present foundational volume provides this conceptual base.

In 1954, the psychologist Gardner Lindzey edited the first edition of the *Handbook of Social Psychology*. Lindzey noted that it was important to present his rapidly expanding new discipline at a level of difficulty appropriate for graduate students and other scholars new to the field. In a like vein, the current volume is aimed at graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, new researchers, and other investigators seeking the firmest possible basis for successful research and practice—this time in the young field of health psychology. A reader who grasps and internalizes the core concepts in the well-developed, well-integrated, and well-written chapters herein will be soundly prepared for years of work in health psychology.

The chapters are authored by some of the very best health psychology scholars in the world. The contributors were instructed to focus on the back-

ground and the *fundamentals* of a particular core area of health psychology—things that will stick with the reader for many years. This volume does not attempt to be exhaustive; indeed, there are many detailed review articles about current research available in health psychology each year. Further, this book does not take a medical model approach. Rather, it is aimed more *theoretically, conceptually, and methodologically*, around *psychological levels of analysis*. These are the core unique strengths of health psychology.

The social psychologist Kurt Lewin said that there is nothing so practical as a good theory. We share this view and believe that once one has achieved a deep understanding about how to think about, measure, and study biopsychosocial processes, one can delve into a variety of specific problems, interventions, and conditions. The sophisticated concepts and methods of psychology can inform and help address many problems of the human condition, including matters of health. There are thus here no groupings by disease (“cancer, heart disease,” etc.), no surveys of the full applied health psychology landscape, and no fine-grained instructions of technique. Rather, we believe that the most intelligent work in health psychology will develop if it is built on a wise and deep understanding of the intellectual bases of the discipline.



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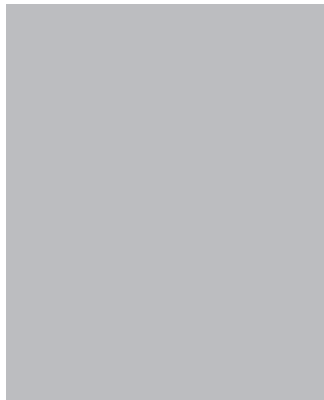
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