
Nutrition Psychology

Improving Dietary Adherence

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Introduction

For years, the field of psychology has been applied to other disciplines to enhance our quality of life. Psychology has been applied to the field of sports so that athletes can maximize their ability on the playing field and to the legal system so that the validity of eyewitness memory can be better understood. Businesses have long relied on psychologists for selection methods and tests for personnel, yet one discipline has yet to be tapped—the field of nutrition. As obesity and type II diabetes continue to dramatically rise in the United States, the timing for a partnership between the fields of psychology and nutrition (adherence) could not be more opportune. We are excited to bring you this unique partnership between the two disciplines in the form of this textbook.

This text was written with a variety of students and practitioners in mind. We believe that health science, kinesiology, and psychology students; nurses; nutritionists; and doctors, as well as patients, will benefit from the information and practical applications illustrated in this text. The text encompasses all types of dietary adherence programs such as gluten-free, weight-loss, low-sodium, and a nutritionally balanced regimen.

Psychological research has long shown that human behavior can be analyzed and understood from several different perspectives (e.g., behavioral, cognitive, biological, psychoanalytic). We have devoted each chapter in the text to a different psychological perspective while illustrating that perspective's practical applications to nutrition adherence. The reader will become aware of how the environment, a person's cognitions and emotions, one's biology, and even the subconscious all play a role in the extent to which he or she adheres to a prescribed nutrition regimen. After presenting relevant research findings in each chapter, adherence strategies, application illustrations, and workbook-type exercises will be given.

We hope that this text will serve as a springboard for future collaborations between researchers in the fields of psychology and nutrition. May your journey through the text be enlightening!

About the Authors

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