

Pre-conference Workshop

Psychological Correlates of Physical diseases: the Cognitive Orientation Approach

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Cognitive orientation is a theoretical approach focused on identifying psychological correlates of specific diseases, including personality, motivational and emotional variables. It is a model developed in the framework of a comprehensive theory of motivation. Cognitive orientation is based on the assumption that cognitive contents and processes play a role as background variables or risk factors in regard to physiological states leading to pathology and as factors predisposing to health-related behaviors. Cognitive orientation has originated a research methodology and a set of intervention procedures focused on identifying and changing the psychological correlates relevant for states of disease. It is supported by a rich and variegated set of empirical studies referring to diseases, such as cancer, or heart disease, pathological states, such as eating disorders, health-relevant behaviors, such as compliance in diabetes patients or undergoing tests for early detection of breast cancer, as well as fertility problems. The cognitive orientation approach provides a new venue for understanding the psychological aspects underlying disease formation and a set of tools useful for the practitioner as well as the researcher in health psychology.

AIM: The workshop aims to offer a theoretical, methodological and applied perspective on the applications of cognitive orientation in health psychology. The presentation and discussion will be structured around the following issues:

- (i) The role of psychological factors in the onset of disease: Theory and research
- (ii) The methodology of identifying the relevant psychological factors involved in a state of health disorder or problem, such as disease, or compliance with health instructions
- (iii) The procedures of intervention designed to change or modify the psychological correlates of states of health.

Examples from research and clinical practice will accompany the presentation. The participants will be encouraged to explore and acquire the methodology and intervention procedures by practical applications including actual examples, and role playing. Research tools will be presented and their use explained.

Intended participants: Students, graduate students, practitioners and research workers in health psychology.

Date: September 1st, 2010

Duration: 9am – 12pm

Fee: 50 euro; reduced fee: 35 euro (for students and residents of one of the listed countries)

