

# PSYCHOLOGY for LIVING

*Adjustment, Growth, and Behavior Today*

ELEVENTH EDITION



Steven J. Kirsh  
Karen Grover Duffy  
Eastwood Atwater

Eleventh Edition

# Psychology for Living

ADJUSTMENT, GROWTH, AND BEHAVIOR TODAY

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*For my father-in-law, Sri Ram Bakshi. Thanks for the love and support  
you've given me over the years ... not to mention the goat curry.*

**~SJK**

*To Hugh, Ted, Al, and all our other veterans, past, present, and future:*

*Welcome Home.*

**~KGD**

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# PREFACE

This book is intended for readers interested in applying psychological insights and principles to their own lives as a way of achieving a better understanding of themselves *and* of living more effectively. To this end, we have included material from the major perspectives of psychology, including the psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral, and humanistic viewpoints. Since a well-rounded text cuts across several branches of psychology, we have included contributions from clinical, personality, social, and developmental psychology, as well as from the important fields of cognitive, biological, and health psychology. Our aim is to increase readers' understanding as well as their knowledge about personal adjustment, in order that they may continue learning on their own.

Major Features of this eleventh edition are explained in the following sections.

## NEW TO THIS EDITION

We have made some changes to the content of the book to reflect changes in the field of psychology in addition to world events. First, there are nearly 320 new references as well as new glossary terms. Second, you will also find new or additional information on the following topics:

- Technology and how it is benefiting yet at the same time perplexing our lives.
- Applications from the field of positive psychology.
- The ecological perspective on human development.
- The impact of parental monitoring and different parenting styles on youth.
- The impact and proliferation of handheld devices such as PDAs and cell phones.
- The malleability versus fixedness of personality.
- The definition and application of defensive pessimism.
- Bullying and cyber-bullying.
- Children's understanding of death.
- Why we make up excuses for or misdeeds.
- Obesity, the obesity stigma, and body image.
- The insanity defense.
- Academic dishonesty.
- What to do when someone tells you they are suicidal.
- Panic disorder and dysthymia.
- The relationship between music and suicide.
- Infertility, infertility treatments, and adoption.
- Updated U.S. census figures (and world population growth) throughout the book.
- Recent research on body image and the influence of the media.
- New research on post-decision regret, including hindsight bias.
- Frenemies.
- What makes a face attractive?
- Women in management positions and their experience with the glass cliff.
- Updated research on the impact of electronic communication at work.
- The issues surrounding having a therapist of a similar or different race.
- The resurgence of interest in the trait approach to leadership.
- Inclusion of new information on posttraumatic stress syndrome.
- The prominence of resilience in everyday life and in coping with stressors.
- The influence of the media in promoting eating disorders.
- Data on the prevalence of personality disorders.
- The concept that well-being is different from the mere absence of disorder and stress.
- The movement away from theories of stages of bereavement and toward interest in growth theories of bereavement.

- The continuing threat of terrorism and how it has changed the way we live and cope.
- Expanded information on the concepts of individual and collective societies.
- Changes in the American family and how they affect individual members.
- The effects of the baby boomers on society as they enter late adulthood.
- Thoughtful analysis of the role ethnicity and race play in health care, psychotherapy, and other areas.
- More coverage on cultural effects of nonverbal communication.
- Additional information on child pornography and sexual assault.

## ORGANIZATION

The chapters of this book stand alone; that is, you can read them out of order and still understand all of the material even though you have not read a preceding chapter. The introductory chapter on self-direction and social change remains at the beginning, of course. The second large unit is about development or the state of “becoming.” The chapters on childhood and adulthood can be found here. The third large unit pertains to the individual in the present or in a state of “being.” Here you will find the chapters on self-concept, health, personal control, and decision making, as well as on emotion and motivation.

The next large unit is about the social side of adjustment and growth. Here are located the chapters on friends, groups (leaders and followers), and work and leisure. This unit is followed by an apt unit about closer intimate relationships. This short unit contains two chapters, one each on sexuality and on committed or intimate relationships. Finally, any book about personal growth and adjustment would be incomplete without including material on the challenges each of us faces. The last unit contains chapters on stress, mental disorders, therapy, and death and dying. Please let us know how you feel about this organization, and remember that the chapters are self-contained so they can easily be read in any order you wish. We can be reached at kirsh@geneseo.edu and duffy@geneseo.edu.

## LEARNING AIDS

Several features have been included to assist the student in making the best use of this book:

- A How to Study section at the beginning of the book provides suggestions for studying and test taking.
- Chapter outlines at the beginning of each chapter give students an overview of what will be covered.
- Learning objectives identify what students are expected to attain in regard to knowledge, understanding, and application.
- Terms that may be new to students are boldfaced and are followed by an italicized definition that is repeated in the glossary.
- Special-interest boxes, figures, and tables contain interesting and important material supplemental to the text.
- A glossary at the end of the book defines key, boldfaced terms in the text.
- End-of-chapter summaries, arranged by learning objectives, help the reader to grasp the main points of the chapter.
- Self-tests, consisting of 10 multiple-choice questions, help students to assess their understanding of the material covered.

## APPLICATIONS

- One or two self-scoring inventories in each chapter enable students to apply the concepts and principles covered in the text. These inventories are designed by us, so please note that

they have no scientifically derived validity or reliability. They are merely meant to be tools for self-exploration and self-understanding and should be interpreted as such.

- End-of-chapter exercises heighten the student's involvement in the material.
- Questions for self-reflection encourage students to relate the material in the text to themselves.

## SUPPLEMENTS

### Instructor's Manual (0-205-90947-7)

The instructor's manual is a wonderful tool for classroom preparation and management. Each chapter in the teaching aids section includes a chapter overview, lecture suggestions, discussion questions, class activities, and media resources.

### Test Bank (0-205-90948-5)

A set of tests, containing representative multiple-choice, true-false, short-answer, and essay questions, each with a page reference, difficulty rating, and type designation, are available for each chapter. The tests are also available in the **MyTest (0-205-95088-4)** computerized version for ease in creating tests for the classroom.

### PowerPoint Presentation (0-205-90906-X)

Completely revised, the PowerPoint presentation is an exciting interactive tool for use in the classroom. Each chapter pairs key concepts with images from the textbook to reinforce student learning.

### MySearchLab with Pearson eText (0-205-90958-2)

For over 10 years, instructors and students have reported achieving better results and better grades when a **Pearson MyLab** has been integrated into the course. **MySearchLab** provides engaging experiences that personalize learning, and comes from a trusted partner with educational expertise and a deep commitment to helping students and instructors achieve their goals. Features of **MySearchLab** include:

#### eText

Just like the printed text, you can highlight and add notes to the eText online or download it to your iPad.

#### Writing & Research

Access to various academic journals, census data, Associated Press news feeds, and discipline-specific readings. Also, a wide range of composition and grammar tools aid students throughout the writing process, helping them to produce more effective papers.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to Dr. Eastwood Atwater for providing us with the opportunity to take over this well-established book. While he is no longer with us, we hope that he would approve of our continued efforts at producing the same high-quality book he wrote. Many thanks to the professors who adopted past editions and provided feedback to us. We really do appreciate your comments and take them to heart. Special thanks goes to Amber Chow and Diane Szulecki at Pearson Education for all of their patience and excellent guidance. To our friends and family, a big thank you for nudging us along when we got discouraged about getting this and other books completed, especially given the vicissitudes of daily life and the distracting tug at our heart strings of the sun, moon, stars, spouses, children, and many critters who needed petting.



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# HOW TO STUDY

Students give many excuses about why they haven't done well on a test. Occasionally, they will admit outright, "I just didn't study." But more often they will say, "I really studied for that test. I can't understand why I did so poorly." A common problem is waiting until the last minute to study. But in many instances, students just don't know how to study. Regardless of whether you fall into this category, chances are you could improve your studying habits by applying one of the following time-honored methods of studying.

## THE PQ4R METHOD

The PQ4R method gets its name from the six overlapping stages for studying material such as textbook chapters—preview, question, read, reflect, recite, and review.\* Extensive experience has shown that this method can improve your understanding and memory, and thus your test performance.

### Preview

It's a good idea to look over the chapter as a whole before you begin it. When you read a novel, you usually start at the beginning and read straight through so as not to spoil the surprise ending. But with concepts and factual material, it's just the opposite. Here, it's important to get an idea of the material as a whole so you can put the details in context as you read.

- First, look over the table of contents.
- Next, skim through the chapter, looking at the headings and subheadings.
- Then, read the chapter summary.
- Finally, decide how much you want to read at a sitting.

### Question

Once you've looked over the chapter, you may be curious about the material. A helpful technique is to ask yourself questions about the material. Then read the chapter with the aim of finding the answers to your questions. One way to do this is to turn each boldfaced heading and subheading into a question. For example, the first major heading and subheadings in Chapter 1 on self-direction are

- Social Change
- Living in a Technological World
- Living with Other Social Changes
- How Certain Is Our Future?

Now use these headings and subheadings to think up some questions. Here are some examples: What is social change? I know I live in a technological world, but how does that relate to social change and self-direction? What are some of the other social changes that I have witnessed? With terror alerts and other dramatic changes, just how certain is my future? Your use of such questions may prove even more effective if you jot them down, and then, as you read, write down your answers.

### Read

Make it a point to understand what you're reading, digesting the material in one section before proceeding to the next. Skimming through material without comprehending it leads to superficial

\*E. L. Thomas and H. A. Robinson, *Improving memory in every class: A sourcebook for teachers* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1972).

understanding at best, but more often, to downright confusion. In contrast, when you take the time to understand what you read, you'll also retain it better. If you're not clear about the meaning of a word, check the glossary of terms at the end of the book. If you can't find the word in the glossary, look it up in one of the better dictionaries such as *Webster's New World Dictionary*. Also, feel free to make explanatory notes to yourself in the margins of the pages of your textbook.

## Reflect

A good way to improve your understanding of something is to pause periodically and reflect on it. Ask yourself: Do I really understand this material? Could I explain it to someone else? If the answer is "no," then you'll need to reread the material. It's also helpful to mark or underline key passages in the chapter. This makes you an active participant in reading and provides you with key passages to review for tests. Some students prefer to mark or underline as they read. Others prefer to read through the material and then go back and highlight the most important points. Experts prefer the latter approach, because we usually have a better idea of the key passages after we've read through the material. Here are some suggestions for marking or underlining:

- Read through each section before marking or underlining.
- Mark only key passages or ideas.
- Use a marker or pen. Pencil often smears.

## Recite

Perhaps you've had this experience: You look up someone's telephone number, but no sooner have you closed the phone book than you've forgotten the number. You reopen the book and find the number again. But this time as you close the book, you repeat the number to yourself, either silently or audibly. You're improving your memory through recitation—the act of repeating or speaking aloud. Recitation improves your memory in several ways. First, by focusing your attention on the page a bit longer, you can encode the material better, thereby ensuring accurate storage of the material. Repeated practice may also help you to retrieve the material when you need it.

There are several ways to use recitation. First, the act of reflection, or asking questions about the material, mentioned earlier, is itself a form of recitation. Second, you may also recite by closing the book and mentally recalling what you've just read. A third way is to recite aloud, either by discussing the material with a classmate or by sharing your reactions or asking questions about it in class. A fourth way is to make a written outline of what you've read. We highly recommend this method because it forces you to select the main ideas in the material. Occasionally, students attempt to escape the thinking process by simply copying down the headings and subheadings, including little else. Others include too much detail, which becomes distracting. Instead, be selective. You should be able to outline an entire chapter of this book in just several written pages, depending, of course, on how large you write. The entire process of selecting the major ideas and writing them down is an excellent form of recitation. It also provides you with a handy guide to review for the test.

The amount of time spent on recitation depends on the material covered. When you're trying to remember isolated bits of information, like names or numbers, up to 80 percent of your time should be spent in recitation. But when you're learning ideas or concepts that are highly meaningful and well organized, perhaps you would spend only 20 percent of your time in recitation. Personal experience will help you to determine which method of recitation works best for you.

## Review

When you're ready to review, reread the summary at the end of the chapter to give yourself a sense of the material as a whole. Then look back over the material in the chapter, paying special attention to the key ideas you've marked or underlined under each heading and subheading. If you've made

a written outline of the chapter, review this, too. Ideally, you should review the material periodically, to offset the rapid decline in retention once you've learned something. It's recommended that you review the material within 24 hours of the initial reading, and then again 72 hours later. After this, it's a good idea to review the material about once a week until you're tested on it.

When you're ready, do the self-test at the end of each chapter. Then check your responses against the list of correct answers provided in the back of this book. When you miss a question, it's important to go back and look up the correct answer. Otherwise, you may make the same mistake again. You may observe that the order of test items parallels the sequence of material in the chapter, thus facilitating your use of the self-test for study purposes.

## **WHERE AND WHEN TO STUDY**

Once the semester is under way, you're ready to plan your study schedule. Consider your class schedule, the workload in each course, and other commitments, such as a part-time job or family responsibilities. Be realistic. Don't try to study too much material at one time.

First, it's important to find a place to study that is free from distractions. Then use this place only for studying. In this way, you'll develop a set of associations that will strengthen your study habits. One of the worst places to study is on your bed. The bed is associated with fatigue; thus, you may find yourself falling asleep rather than studying. When you find yourself daydreaming or worrying about something else, take a short break and return when you're ready to study. When you finish studying, leave this place. By consistently doing so, you'll associate this place with studying and feel more like studying only there.

It's also important to set aside particular times for study. You may wish to study for a given block of time and quit at the end of this period regardless of how much you've read. Or you may want to study until you've covered a certain amount of material. Either way, it's best to study in reasonable blocks of time, about one to three hours. After a long stretch, you may have difficulty concentrating on the material at hand. That's why it's a good idea to take a short break at least once an hour, or even on the half-hour when you're covering very difficult material. Also, you might select other things you enjoy doing and make them contingent on completing your study goal for a given time slot. For instance, if you'd like to call a friend or watch television, do your studying first. Then make your call or watch TV as a reward to yourself.

Above all, don't procrastinate. Distribute your study times realistically so you don't try to absorb too much material at a time. For instance, if you must cover four chapters in this book for a test, plan to read no more than one chapter in a given time slot. Spacing out your study time cuts down on boredom and fatigue and also allows your memory time to consolidate the material. Your mind may continue absorbing the material in the intervals between study periods. This is especially important to keep in mind when you're learning complex or difficult material.

## **TAKING TESTS**

When taking a test, stay calm and reasonably relaxed. By keeping your anxiety at a mild to moderate level, you minimize its interference with your thinking process. If you encounter a question that makes you especially anxious, note this on the question sheet or test itself. Then proceed to do the remaining questions before returning to tackle the difficult question(s). Realizing that you've completed most of the test helps you to concentrate on the more difficult items.

Regardless of the type of test, take time to read the questions carefully. Make certain you understand what the instructor is asking. Don't read things into a question, making it more complicated than it is. If the item looks particularly confusing, raise your hand and ask the instructor to rephrase the item. Be sure also to read every single choice for multiple-choice questions before selecting the correct one.

Before answering an essay question, take a few moments to jot down a brief outline on the back of a page. This helps to keep your thoughts on the subject while you write. If your test

includes both multiple-choice and essay questions, first outline the essay question. Then complete the multiple-choice questions before writing out the essay answer.

After you've read a multiple-choice question and selected an answer, it's best to reread the question to make certain your answer matches the question. This helps to avoid simple "forgetting" mistakes, because material stays in our short-term memory for only about 30 seconds. By the time you've decided on the correct answer, chances are you've forgotten the exact wording of the question. Consequently, it's helpful to reread the question before marking your answer. This time, read the answer choices in reverse order.

Learn to eliminate incorrect answers before settling on the correct one. For instance, if there are four possible answers, eliminate the two that are the least plausible. With only two remaining answers to choose from, you have a 50–50 chance of selecting the correct one. Answers containing words like *always*, *never*, *only*, *must*, and *totally* often imply sweeping assertions and can usually be eliminated early on.

Should you ever change your answer? It all depends. If you have studied reasonably well and feel good about your answer, stick with it. If you have strong doubts about an answer, however, especially if you're not well informed on the subject, it might pay to reconsider. At the same time, a lot depends on the individual. In going over tests with students, we've found that anxious, impulsive students may initially choose an incorrect answer and would benefit from taking another look at their answer. On the other hand, students who lack self-confidence will often change a correct answer to an incorrect one because they distrust their own abilities. As a result, we suggest keeping track of the answers you change. Then go over each test, recording the number of answers you changed from wrong to right, and vice versa. Take this information into consideration throughout future test taking.

Finally, there are other ways you can learn from your test results. If your instructor goes over the test in class, make it a point to attend that day. Find out what you missed and, equally important, why. Were the questions different from what you expected, requiring, say, the understanding of concepts rather than factual information? If you didn't do well on an essay test, ask your instructor how you can do better next time. Try not to waste time making excuses or blaming your instructor or yourself. Find out what you need to do in order to improve your test performance next time. Then modify your study habits and test taking accordingly. Good luck!

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Steven J. Kirsh** is a Professor of Psychology at The State University of New York at Geneseo. He received his Ph.D. in developmental psychology from Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Kirsh's primary areas of research focus on the influence of violent media on emotion recognition and social information processing. He has published *Children, Adolescents, and Media Violence: A Critical Look at the Research, 2nd Ed.* (2012) and *Media and Youth: A Developmental Perspective* (2010) as well as numerous scientific articles and book chapters.

**Karen Duffy** is a Distinguished Service Professor–Emerita, at the State University of New York at Geneseo. She received her Ph.D. in social and personality psychology from Michigan State University. Dr. Duffy served as a family mediator for the New York Unified Court System. She has also served on the executive committee and as the chief instructor for the training institute for the New York State Employee Assistance Program (EAP), as well as on the board of directors for a shelter for domestic violence and on an educational committee for a family planning agency. She has consulted to a variety of work settings on stress management, EAPs, and other work issues. She is a member of the American Psychological Society. Dr. Duffy has written several other books, including *Community Mediation: A Handbook for Practitioners and Researchers and Community Psychology*. She has also edited several hard-copy and web-based annual editions for another publisher, on topics including psychology of personality, social psychology, introductory psychology, and adjustment. She has held two Fulbright Fellowships to St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia. While in Russia, she worked with AIDS International, several children's shelters, and other community agencies. More recently, she completed two humanitarian aid trips to Mongolia.

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# Psychology for Living

ADJUSTMENT, GROWTH, AND BEHAVIOR TODAY





# Chapter One

## Self-Direction in a Changing World

### Social Change

- Living in a Technological World
- Living with Other Social Changes
- How Certain Is Our Future?

### The Challenge of Self-Direction

- Self-Direction and Society
- Positive Psychology and the Humanistic Perspective
- The Ambiguity of Personal Freedom
- Taking Charge of Our Lives
- Living in Today's Individualistic Society

### Themes of Personal Growth

- Living with Contradictions and Uncertainty
- Continuity and Change
- The Experience of Personal Growth
- Beyond Individualism

### Chapter Summary

### Self-Test

### Exercises

### Questions for Self-Reflection

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

*After completing this chapter, you should be able to*

- 1.1 Explain how technology is changing the way we communicate and live.
- 1.2 Discuss other recent social changes unrelated to technology.
- 1.3 Explain the concept of self-direction.
- 1.4 Compare individualistic and collectivist societies.
- 1.5 Define positive psychology.
- 1.6 Summarize the humanistic perspective.
- 1.7 Discuss what it means to take charge of your life.
- 1.8 Describe some of the problems of using self-help books.
- 1.9 List some characteristics that change over time and list some that remain the same.
- 1.10 Describe the three-phase cycle by which we experience personal growth.
- 1.11 Explain why it is important to move beyond individualism.

**Z**achary is a freshman in college in the late 1800s. He is among the privileged few to attend an institute of higher learning, mostly because his family is sufficiently well off to send him to school. Zachary travels to college by train, passing through miles of farmland and forests along the way. He keeps in touch with his family by letters. Zachary hopes to be a physician, an occupation pretty much closed to women in the 1800s. Zachary lives at a boardinghouse for male college students. He takes his meals there but studies at the library, where he reads by gaslight. He writes papers by hand. No one, absolutely no one, is using a mobile phone in Zachary's library.

Karen, Zachary's great-granddaughter, is a first-year college student of the twenty-first century. She is able to attend college because of financial aid from private lenders and the government. Karen travels back and forth to college by plane several times a year. To keep in touch with her family, she has only to pick up her walkie-talkie enabled phone, send a text message, or post a status update on Facebook or Twitter. Electricity lights up the room in which Karen reads and powers the computer she uses for term papers and correspondence. Karen, who lives in a coed dormitory, is accustomed to mingling with students from different ethnic and racial groups on campus, and about half of them are women.

Karen hopes to be a physician, as did Zachary, who planned to be a general practitioner. Zachary knew some patients could not give him money, so he would take produce, wool, or other products in payment. Karen, on the other hand, wants a posh office, working hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and an answering service so she can enjoy her private life. She knows she will set up her financial accounting system to accept credit cards, not eggs and bacon.

## SOCIAL CHANGE

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Explain how technology is changing the way we communicate and live.
- 1.2 Discuss other recent social changes unrelated to technology.

### Living in a Technological World

Both Zachary and Karen lived in eras of rapid **social change**, defined as *changes in social patterns and institutions in society*. Social change can occur in any time period and be planned in advance

**BOX 1-1** Did you know that . . .

- You would have to sit motionless for 8 hours in order to have the first camera invented take your picture.
- A child playing with a Game Boy (in 2000) had more available computing power than NASA did when it first sent men to the moon.
- There are more than 17 billion devices connected to the Internet.
- The first Apple II hard drive could only hold 5 megabytes worth of data.
- It took only 4 years for there to be 50 million users on the World Wide Web. By contrast, it took TV 13 years and radio 38 years to accomplish the same feat.

*Source:* Based on “Technology Facts,” from FunFactz.com, 2012.

or totally unplanned. Planned changes are those created and engineered by humans, for example, building a new housing development wired for the most current technology. Unplanned changes are created by nature or by social accident, such as tsunamis and hurricanes or unexpected shifts in the population of a country due to disease or famine (Moritsugu, Wong, & Duffy, 2010).

In Zachary’s lifetime, America slowly transformed from an agrarian society to an urban one, and numerous inventions of the industrial revolution made transportation, farming, and manufacturing better and easier. Shortly thereafter, America was transformed from a frontier society to an industrial giant. Karen, in turn, takes technological change for granted. She believes that medical advances will soon have a cure for many life-threatening illnesses, including AIDS and cancer. She worries that the shortages of fossil fuels in addition to increased greenhouse gases are changing the world she knows. Meanwhile, she has learned that spiraling social change is normal and inevitable, although she occasionally wonders what lies ahead. Karen knows that social change is not always planned or positive.

All of us now realize that the galloping rate of technological, scientific, and social change occurs worldwide and has far-reaching (global) consequences. For your consideration, many of the demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience that ultimately led to the overthrow of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak’s regime were organized through Facebook, with 20-year-old Khaled Kamel’s page, “We are all Khaled Saeed,” leading the path to revolution (Hauslohner, 2011). Social change seems to be a pervasive condition of our time, and technology has expanded interconnectivity of peoples and increased awareness of a common, global humanity (St. Clair, 2011).

Across the globe, Internet use has spiked in the past decade. Since 2000, the number of Internet users has increased by 2527 percent in Africa, 1987 percent in the Middle East, 1037 percent in Latin America/Caribbean, 709 percent in Asia, and 150 percent in North America. Moreover, 44 percent of the world’s Internet users are located in Asia; only 13 percent are found in North America (InternetWorldStatistics.com, 2012). Table 1-1 reveals current home media and Internet use in the United States and comparable countries.

**Table 1-1** Media in the Home: A Comparison of Three Countries

Medium	United States	New Zealand	United Kingdom
TV	>99	>99	>99
Video game console	87	66	66
Internet access	84	72	79
iPod or MP3 player	76	56	69

*Source:* Broadcasting Standards Authority (2008), and Childwise (2010). “Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds” by Victoria J Rideout, et al. Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010.

Technology makes relationships among people more fluid, flexible, and portable and has freed us from the constraints of being in only one place. Technology connects us to more people more of the time; it also equips us to work both at home and at our job sites, blurring the boundaries between them (Amichai-Hamburger, 2009). Technology, in fact, may be the most powerful engine of change in today's world (Sood & Tellis, 2005). People in almost every country are growing up in a world of greater interdependence because of technology. The revolution in communication, in particular, is re-creating the world in the image of a “global village,” in which every aspect of life—every thought, act, and institution—is being reconsidered in light of what is happening to people in other parts of the world (Shah, 2007).

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### Exploration 1.1: Technology

**www.cpsr.org** A site supported by computer professionals concerned about the responsible use of technology in society. Their motto is “Technology is driving the future; it is up to us to do the steering.”

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Although people recognize the fact of change, they often disagree on the direction in which we're headed (Kohut & Wike, 2008). Is it changing for better or worse? Some assume that the world as we know it will last indefinitely and that all the changes around us will not shake the familiar social, economic, and political structures that hold our society together (Moen & Roehling, 2005). A larger proportion of people, however, fed by a steady diet of bad news about crime, economic problems, world crises, the threats of terrorism, natural disasters, and possible nuclear destruction, have adopted a bleaker view (Huddy, Khatib, & Capelos, 2002). And yet others worry that digitalization and technology will damage or threaten local cultures and economies (Shah, 2007). However, worries about the negative effects that new technologies have on society are nothing new, as they have been around for hundreds of years. In the late 1800s, scholars believed that reading novels lead to bloated imaginations, over-excited nervous systems, and distorted views of reality. Newspapers were thought to cause unnatural, rapid shifts in attention, which ultimately undermined the mental health of the reader. During the early 1900s, movies were thought to teach depravity and immorality, and the cinema was marked as a training ground for criminals. Moreover, the comic books of the 1940s–1950s were believed to glorify violence, stimulate unhealthy ideas about sex, laud delinquency, and teach lawlessness. Simply put, throughout history, new technological advances, especially those related to media, have been vilified as “evil influences” on society (Starker, 1989).

From this generation forward, many forms of employment are and will be affected by automation and computerized systems. The increasing need for technical solutions places a premium on intellectual and technical knowledge. In turn, educated, middle-class workers will make up a larger proportion of the workforce in comparison to blue-collar workers, at least in the United States. One major problem related to increasing people's knowledge and use of technology, however, is that *some people fear technology, a phenomenon referred to as **technophobia*** (Wagner, Hassanein, & Head, 2010). For example, some people are apprehensive about using computers because they worry they will break the computers, make costly errors, or look stupid. This has created a seeming digital divide. Those individuals who are already less powerful use technology least; they are perhaps the very individuals who could benefit from knowledge about technology in order to improve their jobs, social standing, and economic conditions (Mehra, Merkel, & Bishop, 2004).

Interestingly, the overall technology picture is changing, as “on the go” technology (cell phones and other wireless handhelds) is reducing this digital divide (Horrihan, 2008).

**Table 1–2** The Social/Cultural Dimension of the Information Revolution: How the World Has Changed

- More information flowing with less obstruction
- Information flowing independent of distance
- Increasing opportunities for economic cooperation across borders
- Greater opportunities to profit globally
- The erosion of censorship
- People being inundated with vast quantities of information
- The democratization of information
- A growing gap between rich and poor
- Empowerment individuals vis-à-vis their governments
- Gradual adaptation to a surplus of information

Source: Alterman (1999).

These technological changes, along with other scientific discoveries, are moving Americans, Canadians, Koreans, Swedes, and other technologically advanced societies away from manufacturing and industry to service-oriented and technological employment, just as the Industrial Revolution moved Zachary's generation from agricultural to manufacturing jobs. For an interesting summary of other ways in which technology has changed our world, see Table 1–2.

### Living with Other Social Changes

What other changes can we expect in today's global village? One additional change will be continued population expansion and attendant worries about the health of our environment, including sufficient water and arable land, increased pollution, poverty, unemployment, and a plethora of related problems (Worldwatch.org, 2012). The world population stands at around 7 billion, with almost 150 new people born every minute. Furthermore, pollution as well as exhaustion of natural resources are problems for all countries and are contributed to by our increasing population. As mentioned above, another dramatic change will be the increase in the diversity of the population in the United States. Table 1–3 documents some of these

**Table 1–3** Changes in Our Population

As you can see from this table, the percentage of the population made up by minorities as identified by the U.S. Census Bureau is increasing.

Population	1990—% of total	2010—% of total
White	75.6	72.4
Black or African-American	11.7	12.6
Hispanic*	9.0	16.3
Asian	2.8	4.8
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.7	0.9
Race other than above	0.1	6.4
Two or more races	Not available	2.9

\*Hispanics are the fastest growing segment of our population.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census (2012). <http://www.census.gov/>.

historic changes. Beyond the data in the table, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that by 2042 minorities will no longer be “minorities” and that by 2050 they collectively will represent 54 percent of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, Census, 2012). An increasing number of immigrants from various regions of the world are entering this country too, bringing with them a wealth of cultural ideas, languages, and customs. Accommodating these individuals, and the **cultural diversity** that they bring, will not always be easy, for some people are closed-minded, and rather ignorant of, insensitive to, or bigoted about cultures different from their own (Lamb, 2009).

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## Exploration 1.2: Cultural Diversity

[www.edchange.org/multicultural/](http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/) Find songs, quotations, speeches, documents, and research related to multicultural issues.

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### How Certain Is Our Future?

How each of us understands the changes and trends in today’s world is somewhat like the proverbial question of whether we perceive a partly filled glass as half empty or half full. Pessimists tend to see the glass as half empty; optimists see it as half full. Social forecasters, who speculate on our long-term future, admit that we live in uncertain times—both good and bad (Kohut & Wike, 2008). They nevertheless project a fairly optimistic future. Although they do not necessarily agree on what the future holds for us, they typically see it as promising. Do you?

Social forecasters view many of the problems of our time as the growing pains of success rather than the harbingers of doom. While the problems of overcrowding, unemployment, environmental pollution, social inequality, and poverty cannot be dismissed, such issues perhaps should be seen as temporary phenomena with which society must deal rather than the inevitable foreshadowing of the end of civilization. Societies can and do rebound from problems that at the time appear to be insurmountable (Moritsugu et al., 2010).

## THE CHALLENGE OF SELF-DIRECTION

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1.3 Explain the concept of self-direction.
- 1.4 Compare individualistic and collectivist societies.
- 1.5 Define positive psychology.
- 1.6 Summarize the humanistic perspective.
- 1.7 Discuss what it means to take charge of your life.

### Self-Direction and Society

Rapid social changes and the growing importance of information and access to technology heighten the challenge of **self-direction**, which is *the need to learn more about ourselves and our world as a means of directing our lives more effectively*. Self-direction helps us respond to many life events as either a threat or a challenge. For example, some individuals find on-line dating to be both exciting and stimulating; they relish the opportunity to quickly meet so many new, and different, types of people. Others view on-line dating as overwhelming and are fearful about making their personal lives available for inspection to so many people with just the click of a mouse.

Another issue is that the world is seemingly changing and shrinking, in large part due to the technological changes discussed earlier. Given this, there are bound to be cultural clashes,

disputes, and sometimes out-and-out warfare. On a daily basis, people from one society are bound to conflict with or misunderstand others from a different society (Moritsugu et al., 2010). Here's a specific cultural example related to technology. A study of electronic advertising (i.e., SPAM) found that whereas Korean SPAM includes an apology for the unsolicited nature in which the product information was sent, SPAM in the United States does not. Not surprisingly, Koreans are more likely than Americans to think it is rude to complain about receiving unsolicited electronic advertisements (Park, Lee, & Song, 2005).

We are increasingly exposed to other cultures due to the diversity of the U.S. population, ever-changing technology, and easier modes of travel.



The study of culture, then, is extremely important to our understanding of one another. **Culture** is broadly defined as *the ideas, customs, arts, and skills that characterize a group of people during a given period of history*. To that end, one commonly used system for classifying cultures is via the orientation taken toward the individual in that culture. **Individualistic societies** are *societies in which individual gain is appreciated more than general societal gain*. Individualistic societies are sometimes referred to as *independent or autonomous* cultures, where the sense of self is developed based on privately held attitudes, preferences, and judgments. Another term for individualistic culture is *individual-level* culture. Individualistic societies can be contrasted to **collectivist societies**, *in which collective or societal gain is cherished over individual advancement*. Collectivist societies are also known as *interdependent* societies, where the sense of self is based on attitudes, preferences, and judgments held by others. Another way to refer to collectivistic cultures is as *consensual-level* (or *group-level*) or *embedded* cultures (Kitayama & Uchida, 2005; Matsumoto, 2007). Thus, the pressure to conform to group or cultural pressures in collectivist societies is far greater than in individualistic societies.

If you have only lived in the Western world you may be familiar with individualistic societies but unfamiliar with collectivist ones. Describing his childhood in a collectivist society, Joseph

Lemasolai Lekuton, born Maasai in Kenya, said about his childhood in this nomadic society, “In my tribe, the village is you, and you are the village. . . . Everyone older than you will tell you what to do. And you never defy their orders” (Court, 2003, p. 5). In contrast, people from Western cultures enjoy personal freedom, independence from others, and take greater pride in personal achievements than do people in collectivist cultures. By the same token, people from individualistic societies may be more vulnerable to insecurity, confusion, and loneliness. Rest assured that there are other dimensions along which societies and cultures vary (Cohen, 2009), many of which will be pointed out in subsequent chapters.

In contrast to North American and European societies, many Eastern and Asian cultures remain collectivist in nature. Some contemporary scientists argue, however, that the contrasts are not as sharp between individualistic and collectivistic societies as once thought (Oishi et al., 2005). Ask yourself whether this could be because of the technological revolution we are experiencing today. In the same vein, it is important to remember that any label applied to a culture *cannot and does not* capture the individual variations that exist within that culture (Matsumoto, 2007). For example, although there is culture-level consensus in many Western societies about the value of equality, prejudicial viewpoints, such as ageism, racism, sexism, and homophobia, are still prevalent.

## Positive Psychology and the Humanistic Perspective

**Positive psychology** is an umbrella term for the study of positive emotions, positive character traits, and positive actions that allow individuals and institutions to thrive (Seligman, 2011). Those in the field of positive psychology investigate diverse areas, such as teaching techniques that help students flourish, managerial strategies that maximize the productivity of workers, and the virtues that people possess, like the capacity for courage, love, and compassion. Thus, a major goal of positive psychology is to explore the best of human behavior, rather than the worst, which has been the traditional focus of much of psychological research (Baumgardner & Crothers, 2009).

Similarly, psychologists in the humanistic perspective focus on what makes human existence distinctive, such as the meaning and richness of subjective interpretations, the holistic characteristics of experience, and our capacity to willfully choose and determine behaviors and thoughts for ourselves (Fischer, 2003; Lenderking, 2005). The **humanistic perspective** consists of a group of related theories and therapies that emphasize the values of human freedom and the uniqueness of the individual. Thus, both positive psychology and the humanistic perspective have called our attention to the constructive side of psychology. Individuals are now being viewed in the light of their potential for health and fulfillment as well as in terms of their vulnerabilities and maladjustments. Two of the main ideas in the humanistic perspective are the phenomenal self and self-actualization. Let’s take a look at each.

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### Exploration 1.3: Positive Psychology

<http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu/> Learn more about the field of positive psychology by reading articles or becoming a participant in online experiments. This site is sponsored by the leading researcher in the field of positive psychology, Martin Seligman.

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**THE PHENOMENAL SELF** The **phenomenal self** is the individual’s overall self-concept available to awareness. Here, the term *phenomenal* refers to that which is apparent to or perceived by the senses—in short, reality as experienced by the individual. Carl Rogers (1980), a leading humanistic psychologist, emphasized that it is this “perceived reality,” rather than absolute reality, that is the basis of behavior. Essentially, human behavior is the goal-directed attempt by individuals to satisfy needs as they experience or perceive them. In other words, how a person sees and interprets events in the environment determines how the person reacts to them.