

SPENCER A. RATHUS

JEFFREY S. NEVID

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE CHALLENGES OF LIFE

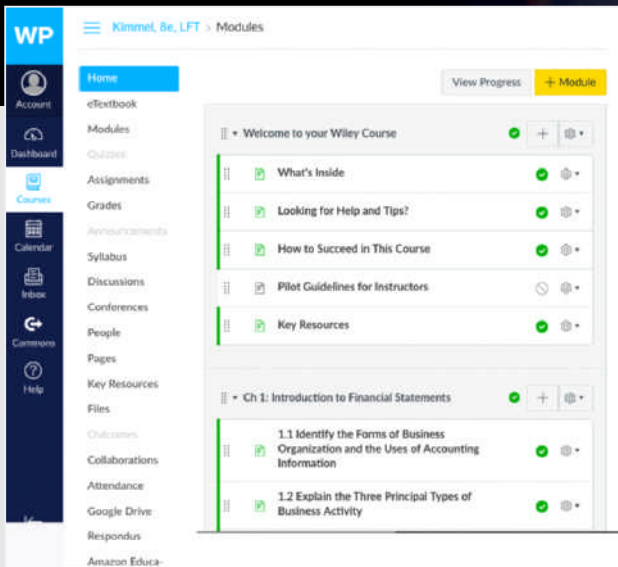
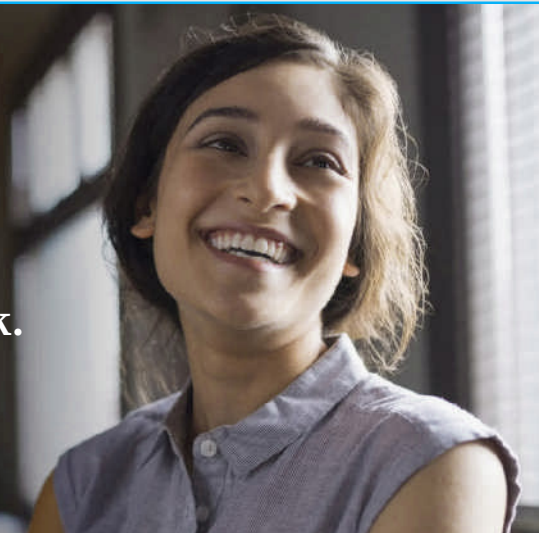
ADJUSTMENT AND GROWTH

14th Edition



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Psychology and the Challenges of Life

Fourteenth Edition

Psychology and the Challenges of Life

Adjustment and Growth

Fourteenth Edition

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WILEY

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COVER PHOTO: © JGI/Tom Grill / Getty Images

This book was typeset in 9.5/11.5 Source Sans Pro at Lumina Datamatics and printed and bound by Quad/Graphics. The cover was printed by Quad/Graphics.

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EPUB ISBN: 978-1-119-52961-3

The inside back cover will contain printing identification and country of origin if omitted from this page. In addition, if the ISBN on the cover differs from the ISBN on this page, the one on the cover is correct.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Nevid, Jeffrey S., author. | Rathus, Spencer A., author.

Title: Psychology and the challenges of life : adjustment and growth / Spencer A. Rathus, College of New Jersey, Jeffrey S. Nevid, St. John's University.

Description: Fourteenth edition. | Hoboken, NJ : John Wiley & Sons, Inc., [2020] | Jeffrey S. Nevid appears as the first named author in earlier editions. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019027665 (print) | LCCN 2019027666 (ebook) | ISBN 9781119533498 (paperback) | ISBN 9781119611844 (adobe pdf) | ISBN 9781119529613 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Adjustment (Psychology) | Psychology.

Classification: LCC BF335 .N475 2020 (print) | LCC BF335 (ebook) | DDC 155.2/4—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019027665>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019027666>

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

As we undertook the fourteenth edition of *Psychology and the Challenges of Life*, we sought to answer a basic question: What would the psychology of adjustment look like if we were writing the first edition and not the fourteenth?

The Psychology of Adjustment for the 2020s

A first edition written today would continue to reflect on the ways in which psychological science can help us better understand ourselves and adjust to the many challenges we face in our daily lives. In almost every other way, it would look rather different. In the years that transpired since the first edition, the discipline of psychology has developed strong cognitive, evolutionary, and neuroscientific leanings. Psychoanalytic theory, behaviorism in its early forms, and even humanistic theory have all adjusted—or given way—to the recognition that we dwell within bodies that have significant influences over our thoughts, feelings, and behavior; but that we are also more capable than previously recognized of comprehending the world as it is and of making rational judgments. We can truly be the masters of our fates.

Stress remains a focal topic today as it did when the book was first conceived, but the sources of stress have undergone some changes. Concerns about money, work, health, and interpersonal relationships weigh upon us now as they did then, but, as we see below, the physical, social, and political climates have changed so that people—young people especially—are also stressed by gun deaths in the nation, suicides, climate change, the treatment of immigrant and migrant families, and sexual harassment and assault (American Psychological Association, 2017, 2018d; see Table 1). According to

TABLE 1 Percent of Americans Feeling Stressed by Issues in the News

	Generation Z (ages 15–21)	Adults Overall
Mass shootings	75	62
Rise in suicide rates	62	44
Climate change and global warming	58	51
Separation and deportation of immigrant and migrant families	57	45
Widespread sexual harassment and assault	53	39

Source: American Psychological Association. (2018d). *Stress in America: Generation Z. Stress in America™ Survey*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, p. 3.

the American Psychological Association (2018d), nearly three out of four (72%) members of “Generation Z,” aged 15 to 21, fear that they will be shot in their schools! The new edition also fully covers effects of climate change, including the wildfires in California and hurricanes throughout the South and the East. (See photo.)



As another example, multiple editions of this text—and of nearly all other psychology texts—have focused on weight control. That topic remains in the fourteenth edition and is updated, but we now address the problem of fat shaming with equal force.

Evolutionary psychology and heredity have reared their heads as major sources of information and input on nearly every topic related to the psychology of adjustment. Behavior therapy and cognitive therapy, once sparring partners, have declared something of a truce in the mutual recognition that each demands empirical evidence for its methodologies and that even the purest cognitive interventions often profit from behavioral “homework.”

Also consider that in the days of Masters and Johnson, sexual dysfunctions were seen as primarily the products of performance anxiety and traditionalist attitudes; we now understand that biology plays a major role in many cases, but that anxiety, attitudes, and the extent of one’s sexual knowledge and skills still play important roles in sexual functioning and sexual problems.

What’s New in the Fourteenth Edition

The fourteenth edition encompasses all these trends in psychology and related sciences. As noted, we have also shifted emphases to incorporate the changes in an ever-developing

society—from new sources of stress to demographic changes in the population to the #MeToo movement. We have been merciless in the material we have consigned to the afterlife of cyberspace. We have added what is crucial for life in the 2020s. A brief glance at the references will show that we have thoroughly updated the research base of the book. While key theoretical writings and studies from the days before 2000 remain, there are hundreds of new studies and other sources cited from the 2010s. The fourteenth edition has a new feature, two new chapters, numerous changes throughout every chapter, and a revised pedagogical package.

A New Feature: Adjustment in the Digital Age

No reader of this preface will need convincing that professors and students alike have embraced the digital age. We shop online, find recipes online, conduct research online, share our lives through online social networks, and communicate online.

A new feature for the fourteenth edition, *Adjustment in the Digital Age*, comments on the relevance of digital devices to our psychological adjustment and development as individuals. It highlights the dangers and pitfalls of the digital age, but also emphasizes the ways in which mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and desktop computers can enrich our lives.

As examples, *Adjustment in the Digital Age* features alert readers to the problems associated with:

- Becoming cellphone zombies
- Internet addiction
- Sexting
- Fake news (maybe it isn't what you think it is)
- Swiping right to hook up (are we headed toward a dating apocalypse?)
- The (alone and depressed?) iGen generation (see photo)



Tino Tedaldi/Cultura/Getty Images

Adjustment in the Digital Age features also highlight some bright possibilities:

- Using social media positively
- Apps for relaxation
- Apps that help you track your physical activity
- Apps that help women cope with the symptoms of menopause
- The positive aspects of dating apps
- Apps that predict “safe” periods during which to have sex
- Apps for rape prevention
- Telepsychology

What's New—Chapter by Chapter

We almost balked at writing this section of the preface. We cannot count the number of new sentences and paragraphs or the new references. Instead, we decided we should focus the chapter-by-chapter listing of what's new on some more visible elements of the fourteenth edition—new chapters on (1) Studying, Time, Tests, and Money; and (2) Gender and Sexual Orientation—coverage of new topics, updated coverage of topics we have addressed in earlier editions, and new features.

Chapter 1. Psychology and the Challenges of Life

- **A Closer Look:** The Mental Health of College Students
- Updated data on racial/ethnic diversity in the United States
- **Adjustment in the Digital Age:** Smartphones and Social Media as Research Tools

Chapter 2. NEW CHAPTER: Studying, Time, Tests, Money—Meeting Challenges of Student Life

- Explication of the SQ4R method
- Additional study tips
- Time management
- Coping with distractions, e.g., videogames, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter
- **Adjustment in the Digital Age:** Cellphone Zombie Apocalypse!
- Tests: Kinds of test questions, managing test anxiety
- APPLYING PSYCHOLOGY TO THE CHALLENGE OF . . . Out-of-Control Spending

Chapter 3: Personality Theories and Measurement

- Jung's archetypes and the characters in the *Star Wars* film series
- **Adjustment in the Digital Age:** Social Media: “I Get By with a Little Help from My (338) Friends”
- Updated coverage of the Big Five personality theory

Chapter 4: Stress and Coping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter opening vignette about hurricanes and other natural disasters • The latest sources of <i>Stress in America</i> (American Psychological Association) • A Closer Look: Many Students Enter College Already Stressed • APPLYING PSYCHOLOGY TO THE CHALLENGE OF . . . Pain Management • Figures describing the body’s response to stress • The role of cognitive appraisal in coping with stress • Coping by problem solving • Adjustment in the Digital Age: “Calm”—Apple’s Favorite App of the Year
Chapter 5. Psychological Factors and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The biopsychosocial model of health and illness • Ethnicity and health/gender and health • Snapshot of college drinking • SELF-ASSESSMENT: Do You Have Alcohol Use Disorder? • APPLYING PSYCHOLOGY TO THE CHALLENGE OF . . . The Opioid Epidemic • Vaping • Adjustment in the Digital Age: Internet Addiction • A Closer Look: A Large Woman Seeks Medical Care
Chapter 6. Developing More Healthful Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated section on overweight and obesity • A Closer Look: Fat Shaming • Adjustment in the Digital Age: How Do I Shape Up . . . on Facebook? • Updated data on physical activity, including who meets the federal guidelines for physical activity, and college students’ self-reports • Adjustment in the Digital Age: Is Fitbit Fit? What About Those Physical Activity Monitors? • College students’ self-reports on sleep
Chapter 7. The Self in a Social World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter opening vignette about self-presentation as similar to going onstage • Self-presentation online • Adjustment in the Digital Age: Sexting: Of Smartphones, Sex, and—Sometimes—Death
Chapter 8: Social Influence: Being Influenced by—and Influencing—Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APPLYING PSYCHOLOGY TO THE CHALLENGE OF . . . Combating Prejudice and Discrimination • Current examples of the use of emotional appeals in persuasion • Adjustment in the Digital Age: On Fake News (or Fake Nooze?) • SELF-ASSESSMENT: The Assertiveness Schedule
Chapter 9. Adulthood Today: Themes and Variations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded coverage of emerging adulthood • Expanded coverage of parenthood and role overload, parenthood in dual-earner families, and the great divide in the ages at which women have their first babies • Adjustment in the Digital Age: Symptoms of Menopause? There’s an App for That • Expanded coverage of cognitive development in middle and late adulthood • Coverage of the life review • APPLYING PSYCHOLOGY TO THE CHALLENGE OF . . . Successful Aging • A Closer Look: <i>Día de los Muertos</i>—The Day of the Dead
Chapter 10. NEW CHAPTER: Gender and Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded coverage of gender identity • Updated coverage of gender differences in cognition, personality, and social behavior—and their origins • A Closer Look: Women in STEM Fields • Updated coverage on being transgender • Updated coverage of the numbers of LGBT people in the population • Updated coverage of sexual orientation and contemporary society • Adjustment in the Digital Age: Grindr • Updated coverage of same-sex marriage

Chapter 11. Relationships and Conflict Resolution

- Updated coverage of ways in which people meet
- **A Closer Look:** Strippers: A Treat for the Eyes or the Nose?
- SELF-ASSESSMENT: The Triangular Love Scale
- Coverage of Hookups, Friends with Benefits, and Booty Calls
- **Adjustment in the Digital Age:** Swiping Right to Hook Up—Are We Headed Toward a Dating Apocalypse?
- Updated coverage of marital satisfaction: The nine psychological tasks
- **A Closer Look:** Relationship Satisfaction Among Heterosexual and Same-Sex Couples
- The biology of infidelity (really?)

Chapter 12. Sexual Response and Sexual Behavior

- The 13 basic reasons for having sex
- **A Closer Look:** Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)—an “Extreme Form of Discrimination Against Women”
- Updated data on masturbation, oral sex, vaginal intercourse, and anal sex
- SELF-ASSESSMENT: Do You Have a Problem with Cybersex Addiction?
- **Adjustment in the Digital Age:** Apps That Predict Safe Periods for Sex
- Updated data on the prevalence of sexual problems
- The #MeToo Movement
- Updated data on rape on campus
- **A Closer Look:** Sexual Assault on Campus—ACHA
- **Adjustment in the Digital Age:** Rape Prevention? There’s an App for That (Actually There Are Several)
- Updated data on HIV/AIDS and other STDs

Chapter 13. Psychological Disorders

- Updated data on the prevalence of psychological disorders
- Reorganization of disorders in accord with the DSM–V
- New case studies throughout chapter
- SELF-ASSESSMENT: Do You Have Illness Anxiety Disorder?
- Updated coverage of origins of anxiety-related disorders
- Updated coverage of mood disorders
- SELF-ASSESSMENT: Do You Call Yourself Names? Name Calling and Other Cognitive Distortions Associated with Depression
- **Adjustment in the Digital Age:** Life as a Member of the *iGen* Generation—Alone and Distressed?
- Updated coverage of the origins of schizophrenia, including the biopsychosocial model of schizophrenia
- Enhanced coverage of narcissistic personality disorder and antisocial personality disorder, and their origins

Chapter 14. Therapies: Ways of Helping

- New chapter opening vignette of “Miss Muffet”—a woman with a phobia for spiders who received virtual therapy for the problem
- Enhanced coverage of cognitive therapies
- SELF-ASSESSMENT: Are You Depressed?
- Enhanced coverage of couple therapy and family therapy
- **A Closer Look:** Students Helping Students
- Enhanced coverage of for whom therapy is effective: On psychotherapy and human diversity
- **Adjustment in the Digital Age:** If Being There Is a Problem, How about Telepsychology?
- Updated coverage of psychosurgery

Chapter 15. The Challenge of the Workplace

- New coverage of social cognitive career theory
- New coverage of the changing workplace
- New coverage of fastest-growing occupations and occupations with the highest projected increase in numbers
- **A Closer Look:** Lifelong Learning
- Updated coverage of job satisfaction
- Updated coverage of burnout
- New timeline of women in the workplace
- New coverage of mothers, more than fathers, experiencing career interruptions to care for a child or family member
- Updated coverage of the gender gap in earnings
- The Big Five and finding a career that fits

Features of the Fourteenth Edition

The fourteenth edition of *Psychology and the Challenges of Life* has the following features.

Adjustment in the Digital Age

This new feature, as described earlier, explores the “interfaces” between readers of the text and the digital age, including social media, digital communication, and the world of apps.

Self-Assessments

Self-scoring questionnaires stimulate students’ interest and provide self-insight by helping them satisfy their curiosity about themselves. These questionnaires also enhance the relevance of the text to students’ lives. Examples include:

- Dare You Say What You Think? The Social Desirability Scale
- How Much Stress Have You Experienced?
- Are You an Optimist or a Pessimist?
- Do You Have Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)?
- Are You an Active or a Passive Health-Care Consumer?
- Are You Getting Your Zs?
- The Triangular Love Scale (which may help students decide whether they are “in love” and, if so, just what *type* of love they are in)
- Do you have illness anxiety disorder?
- Are you depressed?

Applying Psychology to the Challenge of . . .

These are the self-help features—what to do about various adjustment issues. We advise readers when we believe they

might profit from visiting a psychologist or other health professional, but we also point out the types of things that readers may be able to do for themselves. Examples include Applying Psychology to the Challenge of . . .

- Boosting Personal Happiness
- All Those Self-Help Books—Are There Any Quick Fixes?
- Test Anxiety
- Out-of-Control Spending
- Pain Management
- Replacing Catastrophizing Thoughts with Rational Alternatives
- Coping with Menstrual Discomfort
- The Opioid Epidemic
- Weight Control
- Managing First Impressions
- Building Self-Esteem
- Combating Prejudice and Discrimination
- Self-Assertion
- Successful Aging
- Conflict Resolution
- Selecting a Method of Contraception
- Rape Prevention
- Suicide Prevention
- Preventing Burnout
- Finding a Career That Fits

A Closer Look

The “A Closer Look” features provide in-depth discussions of high-interest or current topics. Examples include:

- The Mental Health of College Students
- Are Our Traits Imprinted in Our Genes?
- The Importance of Being Bicultural
- Many Students Enter College Already Stressed

- “Fight-or-Flight” or “Tend-and-Befriend”? Gender Differences in Response to Stress
- A Large Woman Seeks Medical Care (problems encountered by overweight people who seek care for health-related matters)
- Fat Shaming (an all-too-common problem)
- Women in STEM Fields
- Sexual Assault on Campus

Pedagogy

The pedagogy of the fourteenth edition is adapted from the SQ4R study method originated by educational psychologist Francis Robinson. The SQ4R method enhances learning by encouraging students to adopt a more active role in the learning process. It is designed to help students develop more effective study habits, and to absorb and apply the information in the text. The acronym SQ4R stands for the steps:

- Survey
- Question
- Read
- Recite
- Reflect
- Review

Survey

We assist students in surveying the material with two features at the beginning of each chapter: Learning Outcomes and “Did You Know That?” items.

Learning Outcomes The learning outcomes—or objectives—help guide student reading by identifying main ideas and defining learning goals. These learning outcomes reappear, with a twist, in the chapter summaries.

“Did You Know That?” Items The “Did You Know That?” items follow the Learning Outcomes, and they are written in a stimulating way so that they not only work to expand the survey of the chapter but also to whet students’ appetite for diving into the chapter.

There is one “Did You Know That?” item from each chapter: Did you know that . . .

- You could survey 20 million voters and still not accurately predict the outcome of a presidential election?
- All work and no play make Alejandro and Alyssa dull students?

- Conservatives as a group are more conscientious than liberals, but liberals—again, as a group—are more open to new experiences?
- Fear can give you indigestion?
- More people in the United States die each year from smoking-related illnesses than from motor vehicle accidents, alcohol and drug abuse, suicide, homicide, and HIV/AIDS combined?
- Dieting has become the normal way of eating for women in the United States?
- We tend to hold other people responsible for their misdeeds, but to see ourselves as victims of circumstances when we misbehave?
- Most people in a psychology experiment were willing to torture an innocent person just because they were ordered to do so?
- Women with college degrees, on average, do not bear their first child until they are in their 30s?
- A majority of Americans support same-sex marriage?
- When couples cheat, men are usually more jealous about their partner’s sexual straying, whereas women are usually more jealous of their partner’s emotional attachment to someone else?
- The belief that women say “no” when they mean “yes” creates a social climate that supports sexual assault?
- Some people with personality disorders have no conscience and care about nothing but themselves?
- The originator of a surgical technique for reducing violence learned that it was not always successful when one of his patients shot him?
- Our genes help determine how satisfied we are with our jobs?

We also recommend that students be encouraged to flip through the pages of chapters before reading them. They will gain an overall view of the subject matter in that way.

Question

Many students find it helpful to read and complete assignments when they have a clear purpose in mind—in this case, to answer questions. One way for them to pose questions is to turn the heads in a chapter into questions. The “active” chapter summaries also turn the Learning Outcomes into questions for the students to answer.

As noted, the “Did you know that . . .” questions that begin each chapter are explained in the body of the text. These questions highlight key issues and points that are addressed in the chapter. Students can be encouraged to test themselves after they have read the chapter to see whether they can explain why each of these items is true.

Read

Surveying the material in each chapter by flipping through the pages and picking out key terms will help students then read through the text. In addition to flipping through the pages, students may even read the chapter summaries before they read through the chapter itself.

We made every effort to stimulate students' reading through the chapter-opening features, chapter-opening stories or vignettes, and an accessible prose style. Here and there students will find a personal story about the authors or a splash of humor. All this will prompt further reading.

Running Glossary Research shows that most students do not make use of glossaries at the end of books. Searching for the meanings of terms is a difficult task and distracts them from the subject matter. Therefore, the text has a running glossary. Key terms are in bold type in the text and are defined in the margins near to where they appear. Students can therefore readily find the meanings of key terms without breaking their concentration on the flow of the material (see photo).



Zoonar GmbH/Alamy Stock Photo

Recite

Students can be encouraged to consider the questions they create by converting section heads into questions and the questions in the *Recite—An Active Summary* section at the end of each chapter. Answering these questions in their heads or aloud helps make their learning an active process. It also connects their learning with the parts of the brain (and throat!) used in speech.

Reflect

Students learn more effectively when they reflect on what they are learning. Psychologists who study learning and

memory refer to reflection as elaborative rehearsal. One way of reflecting on subject matter is to relate it to things one already knows about, whether it be related material or events or experiences in one's own life. Reflection makes material meaningful and easier to remember. It also makes it more likely that students will be able to apply the information to their own lives.

“Think About It” Items The “Think About It” questions in the section reviews are all designed to help students relate the information in the text to their own lives. Not only will reflection help them learn the material, but it will also help students apply the information to enhance their own lives.

Here are examples of “Think About It” items:

- What are the problems associated with the statement, “Biology is destiny”? How can belief in this saying impair your efforts to cope with adjustment problems and grow as a person?
- What kinds of human diversity do we find in the United States?¹ What kinds of challenges are faced by people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, by women, by older people, by gay men and lesbians, by older people, and by people with disabilities?
- When did your ancestors come to the United States?¹ To what ethnic group did your ancestors belong when they came to the United States? What was their life like in the early days after coming to the United States? How is your own life different or the same?
- What hassles do you encounter on a daily basis? Do you see them as impossible obstacles or as opportunities to solve problems and grow as a person?
- If you are overweight, what kinds of fat shaming have you encountered? If your weight is in the normal range, what kinds of fat shaming have you subjected other people to? Or are you totally innocent? What can you do about fat shaming?
- Consider the profiles you post on your social networks. In what ways are the profiles “strategic”? Do you present yourself differently on different networks? Why? Do you use your real name or a pseudonym? Why? Have you made any mistakes in things you have posted online? For example, have you posted things by accident? What can you do to be more strategic in the future?
- Do you harbor feelings of prejudice? Toward which group or groups? Do you have any thoughts about where the feelings originated, or why you maintain them, if you do? Do you think it would be better to work on softening the feelings? If so, how might you be able to do that?
- Are you an emerging adult? Would you describe yourself as fully adult? Why or why not? What would be, or was, necessary in order for you to feel that you have reached full adulthood?

¹Of course, if you're a Native American, the answer is approximately 13,000 years ago!

- Do you remember becoming aware of being a boy or a girl (or something else)? We'll help you out here: you were too young at the time to remember it now. Do you remember ever thinking about what you should be doing as a boy or girl and whether you were doing it "properly"? Have you known males or females who behave in gender-nonconforming ways? What has been the response of their peers? Have you ever wondered about whether your gender identity is congruent with your sex?
- The question has been asked over and over again whether "opposites attract" or whether "birds of a feather flock together." Which of these views describes your own relationships? Which describes the relationships of friends and family members? Explain why one or both of these maxims seems to be accurate.
- In what ways are the sexual preferences of female and males similar? In what ways are they different? What does evolutionary psychology have to contribute to the understanding of female and male preferences in sexual activity?
- Cognitive theorists suggest that we can worsen symptoms of anxiety by blowing up or catastrophizing the harmfulness of a stimulus or of our bodily responses. Does such catastrophizing characterize you or anyone you know? Does it seem to create a vicious cycle? Explain.
- Imagine that you're driving on the freeway and someone mouths curses at you and then cuts you off. There is certainly good reason to be annoyed, but how could the things you say to yourself about the incident either work you up into a fit of anger or help you remain cool?
- Put yourself in the place of a worker who has experienced discrimination on the job on the basis of his or her gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. What psychological barriers do you imagine the individual might encounter in deciding whether or not to file a complaint? Do you see parallels with victims' concerns about filing complaints about sexual harassment and rape?

Review

Each section of each chapter is followed by a review. The review contains sentence-completion items, which encourage students to recall what they have learned in the section,

and the "Think About It" questions that encourage students to relate the material to their own lives.

Each chapter also ends with a *Recite—An Active Summary* section that revisits the Learning Outcomes and encourages the students to review the material by answering questions that are posed.

We also find it useful in our own teaching to encourage students to review the material at least weekly. In addition, we recommend that they flip through chapters before assessments and to check whether they can define each of the bold-faced terms. It even helps them to scan the photos and read the captions. Memory of one item triggers memory of another.

Ancillaries

The fourteenth edition of *Psychology and the Challenges of Life* is accompanied by an array of ancillaries that are intended to optimize learning and teaching.

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Acknowledgments

Although this is the fourteenth edition of a well-established college text, we continue to approach our work with the same enthusiasm and vigor we brought to our first edition more than 30 years ago. We are invigorated in our efforts by our continued collaboration with the many talented people of John Wiley & Sons, Inc., who are dedicated to the highest level of professionalism in college publishing. We gratefully acknowledge the fine group of publishing professionals who worked with us at John Wiley & Sons. Megan Garvin, assistant instructional designer, provided the day-to-day suggestions and feedback that helped guide the writing of the fourteenth edition. Veronica Visentin, Vice President and Director, Global Education, provided the thrust to launch the fourteenth edition. Glenn Wilson, executive editor, provided helpful ideas, and—in the great tradition of discipline editors—a fine lunch. Karen Staudinger, instructional design lead, oversaw the splendid design of the new edition and made sure that our keyboarded words found their way into print and life online.

We are most highly indebted to our many professional colleagues who over the years have participated in the growth and development of *Psychology and the Challenges of Life*. First, we thank our professional colleagues who participated in the review of the manuscript for this text through our many editions:

Martha Kuehn, Central Lakes College; Jane Thompson, Clayton College; Fred Heilizer, DePaul University; Paul Bartoli, East Stroudsburg University; Ann Chapman, Eastern Kentucky University; Greg Thomas, Garden City Community College; Sharon Thomas, Miami-Dade Community College; Judith Rohr, Tennessee Technical University; Jim Calhoun, University of Georgia; Diane Lodder, Wake Technical Community College; Bernardo Carducci, Shyness Research Institute Indiana University Southeast; Dorothy (Dot) McDonald, Sandhills Community College; Robert Osman, Onondaga Community College; Scott Potter, Marion Technical College; Richard W. Rogers, Daytona Beach Community College; Robert Schultz, Fulton-Montgomery Community College; Harold D. Andrews, Miami-Dade Community College, Wolfson Campus; Bob Arndt, Delta College; Bela Baker, University of Wisconsin—Green Bay; Helene Blakewell, Stephen F. Austin University; Jacinth Baubitz, Northwood Institute; Nancy Bowers, Pikes Peak Community College; Edward N. Brady, Belleville Area College; Kyle Ann Campos, Des Moines Area Community College; Desmond Cartwright, University of Colorado; David Chance, Central

State College; Steven Coccia, Orange County Community College; Norma Crews, DeKalb Community College; Jean De Vany, Auburn University; Richard Dienstbier, University of Nebraska; Steve Donahue, Grand Canyon College; William Dugmore, Central Washington University; Thomas Eckle, Modesto Junior College; Richard M. Ehlenz, Rochester Community College; Ron Evans, Washburn University; Jennie Fauchier, Metro Technical Community College; Eugene Fichter, Northern Virginia Community College; Ronnie Fisher, Miami-Dade Community College; Sharon Fisher, El Paso Community College; Lynn Godat, Portland Community College; Peter Gram, Pensacola Community College; Lawrence Grebstein, University of Rhode Island; Myree Hayes, East Carolina University; Barbara J. Hermann, Gainesville College; Gladys Hiner, Rose State College; Joseph Horvat, Weber State College; Richard Hudiburg, University of North Alabama; Gordon M. Kimbrell, University of South Carolina; Guadelupe King, Milwaukee Area Technical College; Clint Layne, Western Kentucky University; Gary Lesniak, Portland Community College; Arnold Le-Unes, Texas A&M University; Phyllis McGraw, Portland State University; Joseph McNair, Miami-Dade Community College, North Campus; Louis A. Martone, Miami-Dade Community College; Frederick Medway, University of South Carolina; Roland Miller, Sam Houston State University; Norma Mittenthal, Hillsborough Community College; Patrick Murphy, Spokane Community College; Tony Obradovich, DeVry Institute of Technology; Ginger T. Osborne, Rancho Santiago College; Arne Parma, Massachusetts Bay Community College; Carola Pedreschi, Miami-Dade Community College; Kathy Petrowsky, Southwestern Oklahoma State University; Robert Petty, University of Santa Clara; A. R. Peyrnan, Mississippi State University; Gary Piggrem, DeVry Institute of Technology; Chris Potter, Harrisburg Area Community College; and Jay Pozner, Jackson Community College.

Finally, we invite your comments and suggestions. Feel free to contact us at our e-mail addresses:

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Psychology and the Challenges of Life

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this chapter, you will be able to . . .

- 1. Explain** the differences between adjustment and personal growth, nature and nurture, and the clinical approach versus the healthy personality approach to the psychology of adjustment.
 - 2. Discuss** the ways in which our ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other aspects of diversity relate to our adjustment and growth.
 - 3. Explain** the importance of critical thinking, and enumerate principles of critical thinking.
 - 4. Explain** various methods of research, including the case study, the survey, naturalistic observation, the correlational method, and the experiment.
-

Did you know that . . .

- The incidences of anxiety and depression have been increasing among college students?
- Money does not necessarily buy happiness?
- Genetics influences many psychological traits and even preferences for different types of occupations?
- Women once were not permitted to attend college in the United States?
- By the year 2060, one in four or five Americans will be a senior citizen?
- You could survey 20 million voters and still not accurately predict the outcome of a presidential election?
- People typically use happier words in Twitter messages early in the morning than later in the day?
- People may respond positively to placebo drugs even when they know they are receiving placebos?

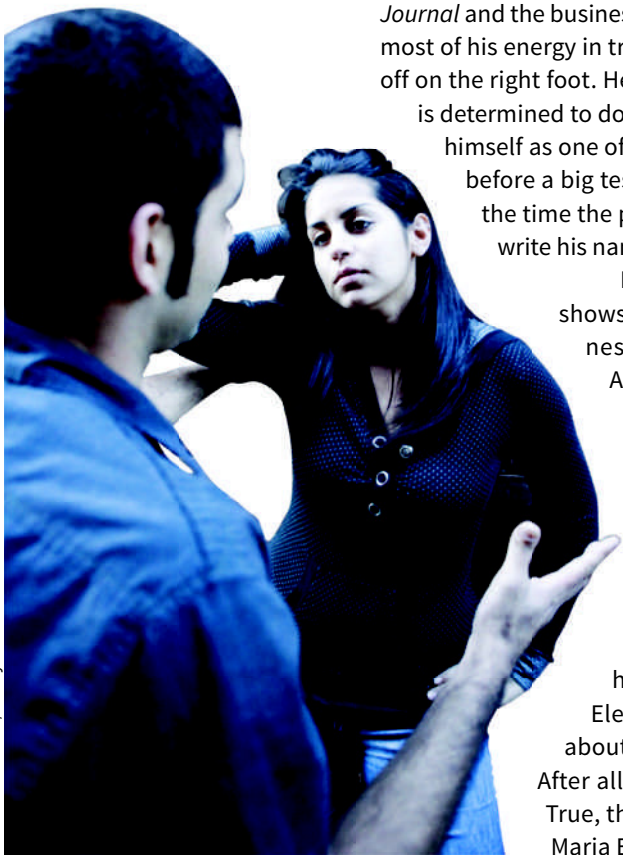
Maria Elena and Marco at

Odds They have been seeing each other for a while. Now Marco is pressing for sexual activity, but Maria Elena is uncomfortable with the idea. Yet she would rather not lose Marco. How does she resolve the conflict?

Kayla, 22, a fourth-year chemistry major, has been accepted into medical school in Boston. She wants to do cancer research, but her goal means another seven or eight years at the grindstone. Darryl, her fiancé, has landed a software engineering position in Silicon Valley, California. He wants Kayla to come with him, take a gap year or two to start a family, and then go to medical school in California. But Kayla hasn't applied to medical school in California, and there's no sure bet that she would "get in" there. If she surrenders her educational opportunity now, another one might not come along. Should she insist that Darryl accompany her to Boston, even though he hasn't been offered work there? Would he go? What if he surrenders his golden opportunity and their relationship falters because of resentment? Kayla has just been accepted into medical school—shouldn't she be happy?

Colin, 21, is a business student who is all business. Every day he reads *The Wall Street Journal* and the business pages of *The New York Times*. He is dedicated to his books and invests most of his energy in trying to construct a solid academic record so that he will get his career off on the right foot. He represents the first generation in his family to attend college, and he is determined to do college right. But sometimes he wonders why he bothers; he thinks of himself as one of those people who "just can't take tests." He begins to shake two days before a big test. His thoughts become jumbled when the papers are distributed. By the time the papers are on his desk, his hand is shaking so badly that he can hardly write his name. His grades suffer.

Maria Elena, 19, is a first-year student. She has seen all the TV talk shows and has gone to R-rated films. She knows all about the sexual openness of the dominant American culture, but her traditional Mexican American upbringing has given her a more conservative view. Despite the social and sexual pressures she observes around her and her desire to fit in, she has decided to wait for Mr. Right. At the very least, she is not going to allow social pressure to separate her from her values and her feelings. The man she has been seeing, Marco, has been patient—from his point of view. But lately he's been pressuring Maria Elena, telling her that they have more than a fly-by-night relationship and that other women are more willing to "fulfill their sexual needs" with him. Maria Elena's girlfriends say they understand her feelings but warn that Marco will eventually turn elsewhere. Maria Elena, in truth, is concerned about more than virginity; she also thinks about sexually transmitted infections such as genital herpes and HIV/AIDS. After all, Marco is 22 years old, and she doesn't know everywhere he's been. True, they could take precautions, but what is completely safe? In any event, Maria Elena does not want to be pressured. (See photo.)



Lisa, 20, a hard-working junior, is popular with faculty and dutiful with relatives. She works out regularly and is proud of her figure. But Lisa also has a secret. When she is sipping her coffee in the morning, she hopes that she won't go off the deep end again, but most of the time she does. She usually starts by eating a doughnut slowly; then she eats another, picking up speed; then she voraciously downs the remaining four in the box. Then she eats two or three bagels with cream cheese. If there is any leftover pizza from the evening before, that goes down, too. She feels disgusted with herself, but she hunts through her apartment for more food. Fifteen minutes later she feels as though she will burst and cannot take in anymore. Half nauseated, she finds her way to the bathroom and makes herself throw up the contents of her binge. Tomorrow, she tells herself, will be different. But deep inside she suspects that tomorrow might be much the same.

David, 32, is not sleeping well. He wakes before dawn and cannot get back to sleep. His appetite is off, and his energy level is low. He has started smoking again. He has a couple of drinks at lunch and muses that it's lucky that more alcohol would make him sick to his stomach—otherwise, he'd probably be drinking too much as well. Then he thinks, "So what difference would it make?" Sometimes he is sexually frustrated; at other times he wonders whether he has any sex drive left. Although he's awake, each day it's getting harder to drag himself out of bed in the morning. This week he missed one day of work and was late twice. His supervisor has suggested in a nonthreatening way that he "do something about it." David knows that her next warning will not be unthreatening. It's been going downhill since Sue walked out. Suicide has even crossed David's mind. He wonders if he's going crazy.

Kayla, Colin, Maria Elena, Lisa, David—each of them is experiencing a challenge that requires adjustment.

We face many challenges in life. Kayla is experiencing conflict. She wants to attend medical school but also wants to maintain the relationship with Darryl. Darryl is not a chauvinist, however. As it turns out, he accompanies Kayla to Boston and looks for work there.

Colin's challenge is test anxiety, plain but not so simple. Years of anxiety and fluctuating grades have led to a vicious cycle: He becomes so anxious that he often finds himself paying more attention to his bodily sensations and his troubled thoughts than to the test items themselves. His distraction then leads to poor grades and heightens his anxiety. Fortunately, there is a notice on a bulletin board that his college counseling center is offering a program for students with test anxiety.

Maria Elena's challenges also involve conflict—conflict with Marco and conflict within herself. She decides not to be pressured into a sexual relationship, and it happens that Marco does turn elsewhere. It hurts, but Maria Elena is confident that other men who are more sensitive to her values and concerns will understand and appreciate her.

Lisa faces the challenge of a distorted body image—she sees herself as being overweight when other people see her as being close to "skin and bones." That body image has led her to the eating disorder known as **bulimia nervosa**. The origins of eating disorders are complex and not fully understood, but they seem to be related to social pressures young women in our society face in adhering to unrealistic standards of thinness. Lisa does seek treatment, but only after her dentist informs her that the enamel on her teeth has begun to decay as a result of repetitive vomiting. Treatment is helpful in reducing episodes of binge eating and vomiting, but she continues to experience occasional lapses. "I'm on the right track," she says, "but I've still got a way to go."

David faces the challenge of depression. Feelings of depression are normal following a loss, such as the end of a relationship, but David's feelings have lingered. His friends tell him that he should get out and do things, but David is so down that he hasn't got the motivation. After much prompting, David consults a psychologist who, ironically, also pushes him to get out and do things—things such as the free (or almost free) turn-ons discussed in Chapter 2. The psychologist also shows David that part of his problem is that he thinks of himself as a loser who is destined to fail in everything he undertakes.

bulimia nervosa An eating disorder characterized by cycles of binge eating and purging—in Lisa's case, purging by throwing up.



Adjusting to College Life College life can be liberating and energizing, and then, especially for residential students, there's the laundry. For returning students, of course, laundry may have been a standard part of life for decades and simply continues to demand its time and place.

The challenges of life touch all of us at one time or another. That is what this book is about: adjusting to challenges as we get on with the business of living—growing, learning, building relationships, making sense of our value systems, establishing careers, making ends meet, and striving to feel good about ourselves. This book portrays our quest for self-development and brings psychological knowledge to bear on problems that may block personal growth. Some of these problems, such as anxiety, depression, and obesity, are personal in nature. Some are interpersonal, involving intimate relationships and sexuality. Others involve the larger social context—the workplace, prejudice and discrimination, environmental disasters, pollution, and urban life. (See photo.)

In this chapter we see that psychology is well suited to help us in our quests to cope with problems such as anxiety and depression and to help us manage stress, our personal relationships,

and other issues of daily life. We explore the richness of human diversity—facets of ourselves that contribute to our uniqueness. We discuss critical thinking, a scientific approach to life that enables us to analyze the claims and arguments of others to determine what is true and what is false. Then we examine the scientific procedures that psychologists use to gather knowledge.

A Closer Look

The Mental Health of College Students

Whether you are at a residential college or a commuter college, whether you are beginning college fresh out of high school or are a returning student, whether you are attending full time or part time, college life involves many changes that require adjustment. Many of the challenges of college life are academic and social, but some, such as athletics, fighting commuter traffic, or climbing flights of steps, can have a strong physical component. The Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH) has been tracking the mental health of college students for more than 30 years. (See photo.)

According to the CCMH, the two main reasons that college students seek counseling are anxiety and depression (see [Figure 1.1](#)). The incidences of anxiety and depression have been increasing from year to year. Other reasons for seeking help include problems in relationships, stress, family issues, and substance use and abuse. [Table 1.1](#) shows that about one student in three has considered suicide, and one student in ten has attempted suicide. More than one in three has experienced harassment, including sexual harassment, or bullying or abusive behavior.

This text explores the sources of anxiety and depression and the stresses that many of us face in college and throughout life.



“If College Is So Wonderful, Why Am I Anxious and Depressed?” Many college students seek counseling for anxiety, feeling hopeless and overwhelmed, suicidal thoughts, and substance abuse. Others seek help for problems in relationships, including issues with family members.

We also learn how we can apply psychology in our daily lives to combat stress and enhance our health and well-being. We also learn about people in the helping professions and when and how to seek their intervention.

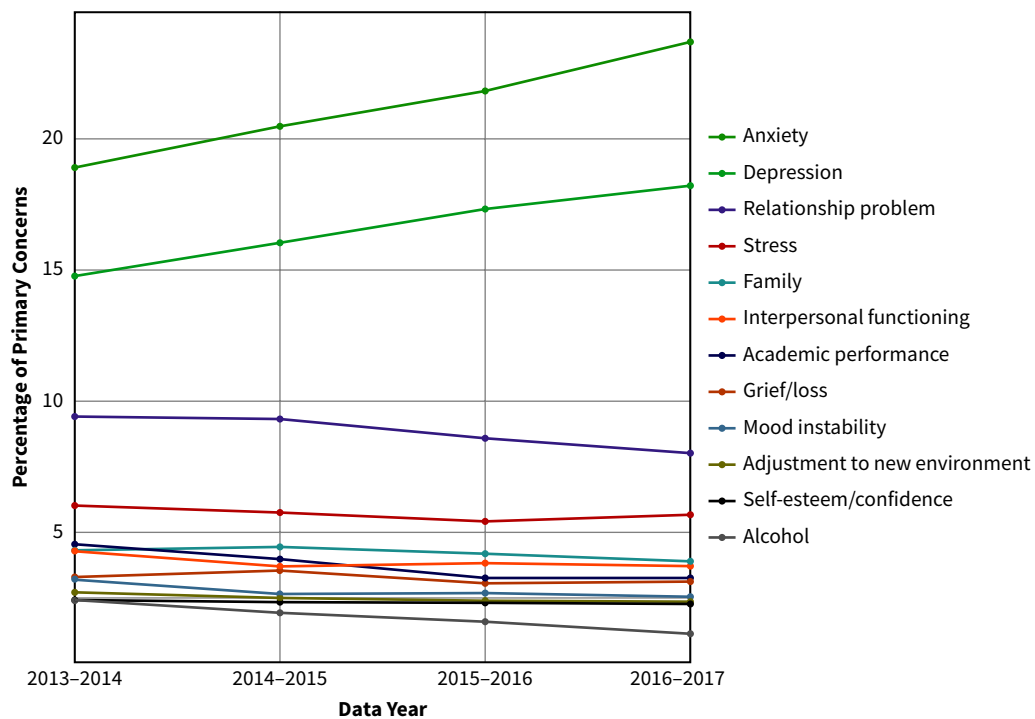


FIGURE 1.1 Top Ten Reasons That Students Seek Counseling The incidence of concerns over anxiety and depression has been rising, while other concerns—as concerns about relationships, stress, and family—have remained flat or are slightly decreasing. Data from 2013–2017, based on responses from 150,621 students.

Source: Chart #4, page 9. Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH) 2017 Annual Report. Penn State. Retrieved from https://sites.psu.edu/ccmh/files/2018/02/2017_CCMH_Report-1r4m88x.pdf (August 12, 2018).

TABLE 1.1 A Snapshot of College Students' Mental Health Issues

Problem	Percent Reporting Problem
Taken a medication for mental health concerns	34.2
Seriously considered suicide	34.2
Purposefully injured themselves	27
Been hospitalized for mental health concerns	9.8
Attempted suicide	10
Had unwanted sexual contacts or experiences	22.1
Experienced harassing, controlling, and/or abusive behavior	35.5
Attended counseling for mental health concerns	52.7

Note: These results are based on more than 161,000 college students on 147 campuses.

Source: Adapted from Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH) 2017 Annual Report. Penn State. Retrieved from https://sites.psu.edu/ccmh/files/2018/02/2017_CCMH_Report-1r4m88x.pdf (August 11, 2018).

Psychology and Adjustment

The science of psychology is ideally suited to helping people meet the challenges of contemporary life. **Psychology** is the scientific discipline that studies behavior and mental processes. Psychologists traditionally attempt to understand or explain behavior in terms of the workings of the nervous system, the interaction of genetic and environmental influences (“nature” and

psychology The science that studies behavior and mental processes.

adjustment Processes by which people respond to environmental pressures and cope with stress.

“nurture”), the ways in which we sense and mentally represent the world, the roles of learning and motivation, and the nature of personality and social interaction.

Many psychologists are concerned with applying psychological knowledge in helping people adjust better to their work and social environments, overcome emotional problems, and develop healthier behaviors. But what, then, is adjustment? **Adjustment** is coping behavior that permits us to meet the demands we face in the environment. Sometimes the demands are physical. When we are cold, we can adjust by dressing warmly, turning up the thermostat, or exercising. Holding down a job to make ends meet, drinking to quench our thirst, meeting the daily needs of our children—these, too, are forms of adjustment necessary to meet the kinds of demands we face in our lives.

Adjustment and Personal Growth: Two Facets of the Psychology of Adjustment

Literally speaking, to adjust is to change so as to better conform to, or meet, the demands of one’s environment. Adjustment is essentially reactive. It’s like a tennis game: The environment serves up the balls, and we return them as best we can. When we adjust, we respond to pressures that require us to adapt. But the psychology of adjustment goes beyond adjusting to environmental demands. It also addresses issues of personal growth. Whereas adjustment is reactive, personal growth is proactive. Our study of the psychology of adjustment is based on the premise that people are not merely reactors to their environments. People are also actors. Things not only happen to us; we also make things happen. Not only does the environment affect us, but we also affect the environment. In fact, we create novel environments to suit our needs. We must extend the psychology of adjustment to accommodate the creative and active components of the human experience—the ability to grow or develop as a person. Not only do we react to stress, but we also act on our environment in meeting our needs and pursuing our goals.

To achieve psychological fulfillment, we need to act, not merely react. We need to fill our lives with meaning and expand ourselves in directions that may not even be known today. Personal growth is more of a journey than a final destination, a process of development in which we continually examine who we are, where we are going, and what we want our lives to become.

Nature versus Nurture: Is Biology Destiny?

genes The basic unit of heredity, consisting of a segment of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA).

chromosomes Strands of DNA that consist of genes. People normally have 23 pairs of chromosomes.

Psychologists are concerned about the degree to which our traits and behavior patterns reflect our nature, or genetic factors, and our nurture, or environmental influences. Physical traits such as height, skin color, and eye color are biologically transmitted from generation to generation by **genes**. We have lungs rather than gills and arms rather than wings because of the information embedded in our genes. Genes are segments of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid), the stuff of which our **chromosomes** are made. Genes give rise to our biological structures and physical traits, but how do they influence our psychological or behavioral traits? The answer is complex.

Genes actually play important roles in determining many psychological traits, including intelligence, shyness, aggressiveness, leadership potential, thrill-seeking behavior, altruistic tendencies, aptitudes in music and art, and even preferences for different types of occupations (Ellis & Bonin, 2003; Malouff et al., 2008; Petersen & Dawes, 2017; Plomin & Deary, 2015; Reuter et al., 2010). Genetic factors also come into play in determining our likelihood of getting married (Johnson et al., 2004). However, genetic factors interact with environmental influences on personality and behavior in complex ways. In other words, there is no one-to-one connection between any one gene or genes and any particular psychological trait.

Genetic influences also contribute to adjustment problems we face in coping with stressful demands, including emotional problems such as anxiety and depression, as well as severe psychological disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, and even criminal or antisocial behavior (e.g., Duffy et al., 2014; Dunn et al., 2015; Kendler et al., 2012; Mihaljevic et al., 2017; Raine, 2018; Zimmermann et al., 2011). Genes also play roles in the development

of obesity and addiction to substances such as alcohol and nicotine (Freedman, 2011; Kendler et al., 2012; Young-Wolff et al., 2011). Researchers believe that personal happiness is also genetically influenced.

Although genetic factors play a role in psychological adjustment and effective behavior, biology is not destiny. Genes create a predisposition or likelihood, not a certainty, that certain traits, behaviors, abilities, or problem behaviors will develop. We need to understand that life experiences and the choices we make in dealing with challenging situations also play important roles. For example, you may have inherited a genetic predisposition that puts you at increased risk of developing problems with alcohol or other drugs. But whether you develop these problems depends on many environmental and psychological factors, such as your exposure to drug-abusing peers, development of skills for coping with stress without using or abusing drugs, attitudes and expectancies concerning drug use, and parental modeling of alcohol use or misuse.

In sum, genes alone do not dictate who we become or what we do with our lives. Psychologists believe that psychological traits are determined by a complex interplay or combination of nature (genetics) and nurture (environmental and learning influences), not simply by one set of factors or the other. By marshaling our personal resources, we can live up to our potential, whatever deck of genes we may have been dealt in life. This text focuses on the skills involved in marshaling these resources, such as acquiring more effective coping skills, developing more adaptive behaviors, and replacing maladaptive attitudes and beliefs with more adaptive alternatives.

The Clinical Approach versus the Healthy-Personality Approach

Most psychology-of-adjustment textbooks are written according to one of two major approaches: a clinical approach or a healthy-personality approach. The clinical approach focuses primarily on ways in which psychology can help people overcome personal problems and cope with stress. The healthy-personality approach focuses primarily on healthful patterns of personal growth and development, including social and vocational development. This text was written with awareness of both approaches to the psychology of adjustment. We examine both effective and ineffective ways of coping with stress. But there is equal emphasis on optimizing our potential through preventive and self-actualizing behavior. We aim to be comprehensive and balanced in our approach, to provide ample theory, research, and applications for coping and for optimal development.

The healthy-personality approach is part of a growing movement in psychology called **positive psychology**. Founded by psychologist Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania, positive psychology emphasizes the study of positive aspects of behavior, such as love, optimism, hope, helping behavior, and human happiness, rather than negative aspects such as psychological disorders, drug abuse, and antisocial behavior (Hojjat & Cramer, 2013; Seligman et al., 2005; Snyder & Lopez, 2007). Throughout this text we focus on these and other positive aspects of human experience, including successful aging, self-esteem, and self-actualization.

positive psychology

A psychological perspective that emphasizes the positive aspects of our behavior, such as our assets and virtues, rather than our weaknesses and deficits.

Positive Psychology and Happiness

The study of human happiness has emerged front and center in positive psychology, the movement in contemporary psychology that focuses on human assets and virtues. Today, psychologists are seeking to understand factors that contribute to happiness and ways of helping people increase their level of happiness and psychological well-being.

Despite popular belief, the extent to which money buys happiness tends to be exaggerated (Boyce et al., 2017). People may think they'd be a lot happier if they were wealthier, but evidence shows that for many people wealth makes only a minor contribution to happiness (Boyce et al., 2017; Proto & Rustichini, 2013; Sussman & Shafir, 2012). It turns out that above a certain moderate income level, about \$75,000 in today's dollars, increasing wealth does not add to substantial gains in happiness. As psychologist Daniel Gilbert puts it, "Once you get

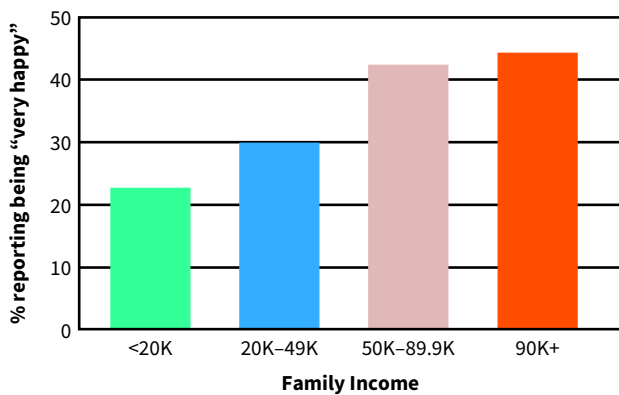


FIGURE 1.2 Happiness and Family Income Notice how happiness begins to level off above a moderate income level of \$50,000 to \$90,000.

Source: Kahneman, D., Krueger, A. B., Schkade, D., Schwarz, N., & Stone, A. A. (2006). Would you be happier if you were richer? A focusing illusion. *Science*, 312(5782), 1908–1910.

basic human needs met, a lot more money doesn't make a lot more happiness" (cited in Futrelle, 2006). Notice in **Figure 1.2** that happiness levels off at higher income levels. Even the extremely wealthy, including members of the Forbes 400 list of richest people in the United States, are merely a tiny bit happier than the general public, on average (Easterbrook, 2005). Nor does winning the lottery boost happiness in the long term. Any boost in happiness tends to fade within about a year or so of winning a jackpot (Waldinger, 2017).

So, if wealth isn't the answer to the eternal question of what makes people happy, what is? Researchers find some factors that link to greater happiness, including heredity (some people may have a genetic tendency toward having a happier disposition), having friends (a big plus), and religious faith (Kesebir & Diener, 2008; Lewis et al., 2015). People may have a genetically determined "set point" for happiness, a kind of personal thermostat that keeps their happiness and contentment around a certain level despite the ups and downs of life (Weiss et al., 2008). Having friends is a prescription for happiness that underscores the importance of connecting to people in meaningful and rewarding ways. In that sense we

might think of happiness as a kind of social contagion that can spread through networks of people who have close ties with one another (Fowler & Christakis, 2008; Roy-Byrne, 2009).

Perhaps money is no guarantee of happiness, but perhaps we can agree on one thing: Having money means that you're less likely to worry about money.

Applying Psychology to the Challenge of . . .

Boosting Personal Happiness

Although genetics may establish a set point around which personal happiness fluctuates, happiness does not remain static over the course of our lifetime (Fujita & Diener, 2005; Lucas, 2007). The founding figure in positive psychology, Martin Seligman, believes that personal happiness hinges on meeting three

fundamental challenges: (1) engaging in pleasurable activities, (2) becoming absorbed and engaged in activities in daily life, and (3) finding meaning or personal fulfillment through our life activities. Seligman offers several suggestions, including the following, designed to help people boost personal happiness (adapted from Seligman, 2003; Seligman et al., 2005): (See photo.)



Peathegee Inc./Blend Images/Getty Images

Can You Be Born Happy? Perhaps. There is a genetic component to happiness, and some people swing back toward happiness even after bad things happen. Other people are not so fortunate and tend to gravitate toward sadness even when things are going well.

- **Gratitude visit.** With your eyes closed, think of someone who has had a major positive impact on your life but whom you've never really thanked. During the next week, write a letter of thanks to the person, but don't mail the letter. Instead, arrange a visit to the person and when you arrive, read the testimonial letter and discuss what he or she has meant to you.
- **Three blessings.** Each night before going to bed, think of three things that went well during the day. Write them down in a journal and take a moment to reflect on them.
- **One door closes, another opens.** Reflect on the times in your life when a door has closed because of death or loss. But go further by linking this thought to a later experience in which a door opened for you. Come to appreciate the ebbs and flows of life experiences.
- **Savorings.** Plan a perfect day, but make sure to share the experience with another person.

Review

Sentence Completion

1. Psychology involves the scientific study of behavior and _____ processes.
2. _____ is coping behavior that allows us to meet the demands the environment imposes on us.
3. Personal growth involves _____ on the environment to fulfill our needs, not merely reacting to it.
4. By creating a predisposition, genes increase the _____ that we will develop certain traits, behaviors, abilities, or psychological disorders.

5. Psychologists believe that psychological traits are the product of an interaction of _____ and nurture.
6. The _____ to the study of adjustment is concerned primarily with how people can use psychology to cope better with stress and overcome personal problems.

Think About It

What are the problems associated with the statement, “Biology is destiny”? How can belief in this saying impair your efforts to cope with adjustment problems and grow as a person?

Human Diversity and Adjustment

Psychologists focus mainly on the individual and are committed to the dignity of the individual. Yet psychologists also recognize that we cannot understand individuals without an awareness of the richness of human diversity. People differ from one another in many ways—ethnicity, cultural background, gender, lifestyle, and so on. When it comes to studying the psychology of adjustment, we need to consider the role of diversity in how we cope with the challenges we face and develop our unique potentials.

Ethnic Diversity

The nation and the world at large contain more kinds of people and more ways of doing and viewing things than most of us might imagine. One kind of diversity involves people’s **ethnic groups**. But just what is an “ethnic group”?

An ethnic group is a subgroup that has a common cultural heritage, as distinguished by factors such as customs, race, language, and common history. One reason for studying ethnic diversity in the United States is that the experiences of various ethnic groups highlight the impact of social, political, and economic factors on human behavior and development. Moreover, factors such as discrimination and prejudice affect traditionally identified minority groups more than other groups. Some health concerns also affect some groups more than others. Studying human diversity also enables students to appreciate the rich cultural heritages and historical problems of the many ethnic groups in our society and the changes in the demographics of our society.

Yet another reason concerns psychological intervention and consultation. Psychologists are called on to help people of all ethnic groups solve personal problems. Without knowledge of the history and cultural heritage of those groups, psychologists could not hope to understand the aspirations and problems of individuals from those groups. (See photo.)

ethnic group A group of people who can be distinguished by characteristics such as their cultural heritage, common history, race, and language.



John Lund/Blend Images/Getty Images

The Array of Human Diversity We differ from one another in our race or ethnicity, our gender, our age, our sexual orientation, our health, and our coping ability. Can you think of other ways in which we are diverse? Now, perhaps more importantly, can you think of the ways in which we are alike?