



Psychosocial Resource Variables in Cancer Studies: Conceptual and Measurement Issues

Mark R Somerfield, Barbara Curbow

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Psychosocial Resource Variables in Cancer Studies reviews the literature on selected psychosocial resource variables in cancer in order to raise and examine conceptual and methodological issues and to offer suggestions for future directions in the field. It provides investigators and clinicians with a systematic treatment of the state of the art in research on specific resource factors and provides a careful consideration of more generic methodological and statistical issues in this research context. Editors Curbow and Somerfield define resources as aspects of a person or environment that are brought to bear on the maintenance or restoration of adaptation under taxing conditions. They hope Psychosocial Resource Variables in Cancer Studies is just the beginning of an ongoing discussion within the field of psychosocial oncology on the nature and use of resource variables. The book's topics are crucial since researchers appear to be committed to using resource variables to explain outcomes. Also, resource variables are increasingly considered as explanatory concepts in quality-of-life research. Psychosocial Resource Variables in Cancer Studies offers critical reviews of the major resource variables investigated in contemporary psychosocial oncology research. It provides timely information on vital issues in this research, emphasizing studies of the influence of personal and social resources on adaptation to cancer. Chapters cover topics such as:

- the use of resource variables in the explanation of individual differences in adaptation to cancer and cancer treatment
 - theories, measures, and methodological issues in the use of perceived control
 - the use of the transactional model of coping to examine issues surrounding coping and the management of cancer demands
 - religion and spirituality as resources in coping with cancer
 - social support in adaptation to cancer and survival
 - the clinical usefulness of research on psychosocial resources
 - major measures of psychological functioning in psychosocial oncology research
 - statistical and analytical issues in the use of resource variables
 - roles of qualitative and quantitative approaches in exploring resource variables
- The editors begin with an overview of the oncology field and offer comments on issues that can be generalized to all psychosocial resource variables. Next is a presentation of a series of review papers on selected resource variables, including perceived control, coping, religion and spirituality, and social support, followed by a discussion of the clinical utility of research on these resource variables. The book concludes with a discussion of important cross-cutting methodological issues, including the selection of psychological functioning outcome measures, the statistical analysis of resource variables, and quantitative versus qualitative approaches. Psychosocial Resource Variables in Cancer is a valuable reference and guide for health psychologists, clinical health psychologists, clinical social workers in oncology, medical sociologists, medical anthropologists, and oncology nurses. It may also serve as important reading material for courses in health psychology, physiological factors in health and illness, personality and diseases, and stress and coping.

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