



THE
PSYCHOLOGY
OF **HEALTH**

BY JOHN MASON & STAFF OF ACS DISTANCE EDUCATION

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CREDITS

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Photos: John Mason, Leonie Mason, Stephen Mason

Layout: Stephen Mason

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Published by: ACS Distance Education

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ISBN: 978-0-9942948-6-9

PREFACE

Psychology and health are intricately intertwined. Our physical health can impact on our mental health and vice versa. There are many examples of links between mental health and physical health problems which are not only detrimental to the individual's quality of life, but which put strain on health care services and the wellbeing of society as a whole. This book explores the complex relationship between health and psychology and the ways that understanding this relationship and good management of it can lead to healthier lifestyles.

CHAPTER 1 HOW A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CAN IMPACT ON PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Health is more than just the absence of disease or illness. Both physical health and mental health underlie our overall sense of wellbeing. Health is all aspects of our being including the social, emotional, psychological, spiritual, mental and physical parts.

HEALTH

The mind and body are inextricably linked - a decline in one correlates with a decline in the other. If we are mentally stressed, this can affect our physical body. If we are physically tired or feeling ill, this in turn can affect our mind and emotions.

DEFINITIONS OF HEALTH

But what do we mean by health? If we look at a purely physical definition of health, we could say that this when our body is free from injury or illness. But when we also take account of our mental health, we could state that it is our body and mind's condition. The World Health Organisation stresses the importance of the mental aspect of health in their definition.

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

