PSYC 1111-01 Introduction to Health Psychology

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This week, as I delved into various psychological theories, the concept of control particularly stood out as both intriguing and applicable. The exploration of how control interacts with stress and health within psychological frameworks reveals profound insights. Specifically, the theory is dissected into three distinct aspects: "Attributions and Control," "Self-Efficacy and Control," and "The Reality of Control." Each facet offers a unique perspective on how perceived control can mitigate stress responses, fundamentally altering our psychological and physiological states (Ogden, J., 2019).

Attribution theory posits that the way we attribute causality to the stressors in our lives significantly impacts our emotional and physical well-being. If an individual perceives a stressor as controllable, the stress response can be notably diminished (Ogden, J., 2019). For example, reflecting on a failed job interview, if one considers the failure as a result of controllable factors—such as inadequate preparation or poor performance—it encourages a proactive approach to managing future stress. This proactive mindset not only helps in reducing the intensity of stress but also in preparing more effectively for future challenges.

On the other hand, when stressors are viewed as uncontrollable, it can make problem-focused coping strategies more difficult to implement. This recognition often shifts the approach towards emotion-focused coping strategies. By adopting such strategies earlier, individuals can effectively shorten the duration of stress and mitigate its negative impacts. This shift highlights the adaptive nature of psychological responses, adjusting based on the perceived level of control over stress-inducing situations.

In personal contexts, applying this theory has transformative potential for improving health and resilience. By understanding and manipulating the control aspects of stressors in my life and the lives of my family members, we can enhance our overall well-being. It enables us to approach stressful situations with a sense of mastery and preparedness, which is crucial for maintaining mental health.

Expanding this application to a community level, the theory of control can serve as a cornerstone for public health initiatives. Community-wide programs that educate and empower individuals to perceive and exert control over their stressors can significantly bolster communal resilience. Workshops that focus on skills for identifying and managing controllable aspects of stressful situations could lead to a more robust, health-oriented community mindset.

Overall, the theory of control not only provides a lens to view and understand the role of psychological factors in stress management but also offers practical approaches for enhancing individual and community health. By fully embracing and applying this theory, we anticipate not only individual improvements but also a broader enhancement of community well-being.

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References

Ogden, J. (2019). *The psychology of health and illness: An open-access course. Semantic Scholar.*