

The Self in Understanding and Treating Psychological Disorders





The Self in Understanding and Treating Psychological Disorders

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Foreword

I have made the self-concept a central feature of my writing and treatment approach for more than five decades – it is a unifying feature in depression, positive and negative symptoms of schizophrenia, and personality disorders, to name a few. The notion that we have something in us that expresses itself in so many ways is puzzling, yet elegant and exciting. Up to now, we have had to dip in and out of the literature to piece together the various perspectives on the self in such disorders.

But now, we have this book. The editors have done an excellent job in providing us with a collection of up-to-date overviews of the existing literature on the concept of self from social, cognitive, philosophical, neuroscientific, and experimental perspectives. They have brought together experts in the field to consider the role of the self in our understanding of psychological disorders and their treatment. The self remains the centerpiece in this book, and is showcased in a diverse array of psychological problems ranging from depression to dementia.

I was very pleased to see that the authors in this book went beyond simply describing the role of self in our understanding of psychological disorders. Across the various chapters, the authors encourage us to consider how the concept of self is addressed in various models of psychological treatment such as cognitive therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, and psychodynamic therapy. In these chapters, the clinician will find a range of practical techniques for repairing or enhancing the self-concept of individuals in treatment. The message is clear. When psychological disorders are understood as disorders of self, clinicians can apply a fresh perspective towards treatment.

It is my pleasure to provide resounding praise for the team and contributors of this book.

> Aaron T. Beck, MD Emeritus Professor Department of Psychiatry University of Pennsylvania



Acknowledgments

The preparation of a book of this scope requires an amazing group effort from contributing authors, the editorial team and our supportive families, additional editorial supports, and our publishers and the production team at Cambridge University Press.

The editors started off as close colleagues and friends and ended up closer than ever before. On a personal note, I have been extremely lucky in my professional life to have been able to work with a group of individuals who started off as students but ended up as friends and colleagues, and who were then able to establish their own successful professional lives, opening up new collaborations and opportunities. While we no longer work in the same workplace or indeed city or country, that hasn't changed the quality of our interactions. It was indeed a privilege to work together on this as we have done from the outset. It was a particular pleasure to have Mario join us on this project, especially as he has been a fantastic support to Guy. At times, we needed some support in editing specialist chapters and it was great to be able to rely on colleagues such as Drs. Ross King and Rachel Shlomit Brezis. Throughout the long road that we took to completing the book, we were sustained by the belief that Richard Marley from Cambridge University Press had in the initial book idea and in our capacity to finish the project.

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Mike Kyrios on behalf of Richard Moulding, Guy Doron, Sunil S. Bhar, Maja Nedeljkovic and Mario Mikulincer