Chapter 12: Emotions, Stress, and Health

Key Terms

Writing Definitions

1. Emotion is a response of the whole organism involving three components: (1) physiological arousal, (2) expressive behaviors, and (3) conscious experience. (p. 498)

2. The James-Lange theory states that emotional experiences are based on an awareness of the body’s responses to emotion-arousing stimuli: a stimulus triggers the body’s responses that in turn trigger the experienced emotion. (p. 498)

3. The Cannon-Bard theory states that the subjective experience of an emotion occurs at the same time as the body’s physical reaction. (p. 498)

4. The two-factor theory of emotion proposes that emotions have two ingredients: physical arousal and a cognitive label. Thus, physical arousal is a necessary, but not a sufficient, component of emotional change. For an emotion to be experienced, arousal must be attributed to an emotional cause. (p. 498)

5. The polygraph, or lie detector, is a device that measures several of the physiological responses accompanying emotion. (p. 504)

6. Catharsis is emotional release; according to the catharsis hypothesis, by expressing our anger, we can reduce it. (p. 518)

7. The feel-good, do-good phenomenon is the tendency of people to be helpful when they are in a good mood. (p. 520)

8. Subjective well-being refers to a person’s sense of satisfaction with his or her life. (p. 520)

9. The adaptation-level phenomenon refers to our tendency to judge things relative to a neutral level defined by our prior experience. (p. 524)

10. The principle of relative deprivation is the perception that we are worse off relative to those with whom we compare ourselves. (p. 524)

11. Behavioral medicine is the interdisciplinary field that applies behavioral and medical knowledge to the treatment of disease and the promotion of health. (p. 527)

12. Health psychology is a subfield of psychology that studies how health and illness are influenced by emotions, stress, personality, lifestyle, and other psychological factors. (p. 527)

13. Stress refers to the process by which we perceive and respond to events, called stressors, that we perceive as threatening or challenging. (p. 528)

14. The general adaptation syndrome (GAS) is the three-stage sequence of bodily reaction to stress outlined by Hans Selye. (p. 529)

15. The leading cause of death in North America today, coronary heart disease results from the clogging of the vessels that nourish the heart muscle. (p. 532)

16. Type A personality is Friedman and Rosenman’s term for the coronary-prone behavior pattern of competitive, hard-driving, impatient, verbally aggressive, and anger-prone people. (p. 532)

17. Type B personality is Friedman and Rosenman’s term for the coronary-resistant behavior pattern of easygoing, relaxed people. (p. 532)

18. A psychophysiological illness is any genuine illness such as hypertension and some headaches that is apparently linked to stress rather than caused by a physical disorder. (p. 534)

Memory aid: Psycho- refers to mind; physio- refers to body; a psychophysiological illness is a mind-body disorder.

19. Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) is the study of how psychological, neural, and endocrine processes affect the immune system and resulting health. (p. 532)

20. Lymphocytes are the two types of white blood cells of the immune system that fight bacterial infections (B lymphocytes) and viruses, cancer cells, and foreign substances in the body (T lymphocytes). (p. 534)

21. Coping refers to any effort to alleviate stress using emotional, cognitive, or behavioral methods. (p. 538)

22. Problem-focused coping involves reducing stress by directly changing a stressor or how we interact with it. (p. 538)

23. Emotion-focused coping involves reducing stress by avoiding or ignoring a stressor and attending to the emotional reactions it triggers. (p. 538)

24. Aerobic exercise is any sustained activity such as running, swimming, or cycling that promotes heart and lung fitness and may help alleviate depression and anxiety. (p. 543)

Memory aid: A biofeedback device, such as a brain-wave trainer, provides auditory or visual feedback about biological responses.

25. Biofeedback refers to a system for electronically recording, amplifying, and feeding back information regarding a subtle physiological state. (p. 544)

26. Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is a collection of health care remedies and treatments that have not been accepted by medical science or verified by controlled research trials. (p. 546)