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Re-defining mental health and well-being: The potential contribution of positive psychology to nursing

Background: Although within contemporary psychology the psychiatric terminology of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychological Association still remains pervasive, there is now a growing momentum that is concerned not only with the alleviation of disorders but with the advancement of well-being, through the promotion of optimal functioning.

Aim: In light of the call for the re-definition of mental health and well-being, the present aim was to provide a response from the perspective of positive psychology. The potential contribution of positive psychology to such a redefinition is advanced across the three substantive areas of theory, measurement, and practice.

Main Contribution: First, the advances in the theoretical formulation and reformulation of mental health and well-being are critically presented. Second, the developments in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of


measuring instruments are illustrated. Third, the potential for the revision and extension of psychology practice are outlined. Across each of the three substantive areas, significant attention is given to contemporary examples.

Conclusion: In light of the present response, further attention is now required to research and promote positive psychology within allied disciplines such as nursing.

Speaker Biography

Christopher Alan Lewis is based at the Centre for Education Studies, University of Warwick (UK). He is also a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Bashkir State University (Ufa, Republic of Bashkortostan, Russia). He has held previous academic positions at Glyndwr University and the University of Ulster. He holds degrees in Psychology (BSc, MPhil, DPhil) and Education (MSc, MEd) from the University of Ulster (Northern Ireland), and Theology (MA) from Bangor University (Wales). He is a Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol), Chartered Health Psychologist (CPsychol (Health)), Chartered Scientist (CSci), and Associate Fellow (AFBPsS) of the British Psychological Society. He has published 243 peer-reviewed articles, 33 book chapters, 9 books, and 18 journal special issues (plus 2 in press). He is founding Co-Editor of the journal *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* since its inception in 1998.

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