

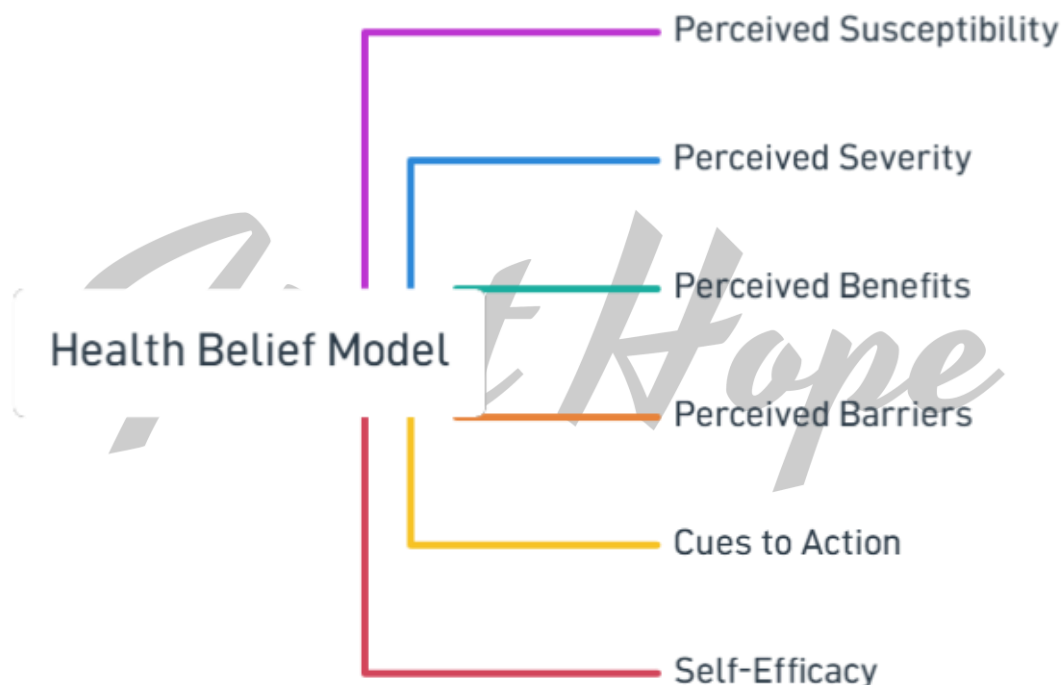
Health Psychology & Behavioural Interventions

Health Belief Model and Illness Behaviour

Basic idea

- The Health Belief Model explains how people's beliefs and perceptions influence their health-related decisions and behaviours.
- It helps explain why some people take preventive actions while others avoid healthcare services.
- Illness behaviour refers to how individuals recognize symptoms, seek medical help, and respond to illness.

Health Belief Model (Main Components)



1. Perceived Susceptibility

- This refers to a person's belief about their risk of developing a disease.
- People who believe they are at high risk are more likely to take preventive actions.
- **Example**
 - A person with a family history of diabetes may be more motivated to monitor blood sugar levels.

2. Perceived Severity

- This refers to how serious a person believes a disease or its consequences are.
- Greater understanding of disease seriousness may encourage people to seek treatment.
- **Example**

- A person who understands the complications of hypertension may follow medical advice more carefully.

3. Perceived Benefits

- This refers to a person's belief that a health action will reduce the risk or severity of illness.
- People are more likely to follow recommendations when they believe the action is helpful.
- **Example**
 - A person may receive vaccination because they believe it prevents serious infections.

4. Perceived Barriers

- These are factors that prevent people from taking health-related actions.
- Barriers may include cost, fear, lack of time, or difficulty accessing healthcare.
- **Example**
 - A patient may avoid treatment because of fear of side effects.

5. Cues to Action

- These are triggers that encourage a person to take health-related actions.
- Cues may include advice from healthcare professionals, symptoms, reminders, or health campaigns.
- **Example**
 - A reminder message may encourage a patient to attend a medical check-up.

6. Self-Efficacy

- Self-efficacy refers to a person's confidence in their ability to perform a health-related behaviour.
- Higher confidence increases the chance of maintaining healthy habits.
- **Example**
 - A patient who believes they can control their diet is more likely to follow nutritional advice.

Illness Behaviour

Basic idea

- Illness behaviour refers to how individuals identify, interpret, and respond to symptoms or illness.

- People may react differently to the same symptoms depending on their beliefs, experiences, and social background.

Stages of Illness Behaviour

1. Symptom Recognition

- A person notices changes in their body or health condition.
- Symptoms may be interpreted as normal changes or signs of illness.

2. Symptom Interpretation

- The person tries to understand the meaning and seriousness of symptoms.
- Personal beliefs and previous experiences influence interpretation.

3. Healthcare Seeking

- The person decides whether to seek medical advice or manage symptoms independently.
- This decision is influenced by perceived severity, accessibility, and support.

4. Treatment Response

- The person decides whether to follow medical advice and continue treatment.
- Positive beliefs about treatment improve adherence.

Factors Affecting Illness Behaviour

- Cultural beliefs influence how people understand illness.
- Previous experiences affect responses to symptoms.
- Family and social support influence healthcare decisions.
- Knowledge about health affects treatment-seeking behaviour.
- Emotional factors such as fear and anxiety may delay or encourage healthcare use.

Importance in Healthcare

- It helps professionals understand why patients behave differently.
- It improves patient education and counselling.
- It supports better treatment adherence.
- It helps identify barriers to seeking healthcare.

Psychosomatic Illnesses and the Mind–Body Connection

Basic idea

- Psychosomatic illnesses are physical conditions that are influenced or worsened by psychological factors such as stress, emotions, and thoughts.
- The mind and body are closely connected, and emotional experiences can affect physical health.
- Psychological stress can influence body functions through changes in hormones, immune responses, and nervous system activity.

Mind–Body Connection

Basic idea

- The mind–body connection explains how mental and emotional states influence physical health.
- Thoughts, emotions, and behaviours can affect the body's functioning.

Examples of Mind–Body Effects

1. Stress and Physical Symptoms

- Long-term stress can cause headaches, muscle tension, tiredness, and digestive problems.
- Stress hormones can affect body systems when they remain elevated for a long time.

2. Emotions and Health

- Strong emotions such as anxiety, anger, and sadness can influence physical symptoms.
- Emotional problems may increase pain, fatigue, and discomfort.

3. Behaviour and Health

- Behaviours such as poor sleep, unhealthy eating, and lack of exercise affect physical health.
- Healthy behaviours improve both mental and physical well-being.

Common Psychosomatic Conditions

1. Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

- Stress and emotional factors can worsen digestive symptoms.
- Symptoms may include abdominal pain, bloating, and changes in bowel habits.

2. Tension Headaches

- Stress and muscle tension can contribute to headaches.
- Relaxation and stress management may reduce symptoms.

3. Chronic Pain Conditions

- Emotional stress may increase the experience of pain.

- Psychological support can help patients manage pain more effectively.

4. Sleep Problems

- Anxiety and stress can interfere with normal sleep patterns.
- Poor sleep may further affect emotional and physical health.

Role of Healthcare Professionals

- Healthcare professionals should consider both physical and psychological factors.
- Patients' symptoms should be evaluated carefully before identifying psychological influences.
- Emotional support and stress management can improve overall health.
- A balanced approach helps provide complete patient care.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

Basic idea

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is a psychological approach that focuses on the relationship between thoughts, emotions, and behaviours.
- It explains that negative thoughts can influence emotions and unhealthy behaviours.
- Changing negative thinking patterns can improve emotional well-being and encourage healthier actions.

Main Principles of CBT

1. Relationship Between Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviours

- Thoughts influence emotions, and emotions influence actions.
- Changing unhealthy thoughts can lead to positive behavioural changes.

2. Identifying Negative Thoughts

- Individuals learn to recognize harmful or unrealistic thoughts.
- Awareness helps patients understand how thoughts affect their health.

3. Challenging Negative Thinking

- Patients learn to replace negative thoughts with more realistic and positive ones.
- This improves coping and problem-solving skills.

4. Behaviour Modification

- Patients practice new behaviours through gradual changes and activities.
- Positive experiences strengthen healthy habits.

Applications in Healthcare



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