

Lifestyle Psychiatry

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It is two thousand years since Hippocrates advised 'Walking is man's best medicine', 'Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food'. In more recent times, the World Health Organization has highlighted that preventing chronic diseases is of paramount importance and this involves acting on modifiable risk factors such as diet and physical inactivity.

Lifestyle Psychiatry describes the growing research evidence of the efficacy of physical exercise, diet, sleep and mind-body practices and their role in preventing and managing mental health conditions, as a stand-alone approach or in addition to other treatments. Lifestyle psychiatry is described as part of a larger lifestyle medicine movement.

The book is well-structured and easy to navigate. The chapter authors collate wide-ranging evidence and provide in-depth descriptions of the science of individual lifestyle factors' impacts on a variety of psychiatric disorders, in particular depression and anxiety.

The comprehensive references and recommended reading lists that accompany each chapter make the book a guide for further learning and exploration in this field. One of the chapters illustrates research findings about the effect of physicians' own health behaviour on their engagement with lifestyle medicine, which may be an aspect worth reflecting on at a time when the importance of self-care within the medical profession is more relevant than ever.

Although the book promotes lifestyle psychiatry, the authors maintain a balanced view, discussing the potential risks and challenges of implementing behavioural changes, and offer practical and helpful suggestions on how to incorporate lifestyle approaches into clinical practice.

Dr Mihaela Bucur  is a Consultant Psychiatrist with Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, working at Mid Sussex Assessment and Treatment Centre, Linwood, Haywards Heath, UK. Email: Mihaela.Bucur@sussexpartnership.nhs.uk

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