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The experience of being hospitalized

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Illness is a major stressor in one's life. Various symptoms of the illness put the body into a state of continuous stress, including pain, fatigue, and in more severe cases, immobility and even loss of bodily functions. Hospitalization may, then, follow. The experience of illness and hospitalization often exerts a great deal of psychological distress, as it is one of the most stressful and possibly frightening events in people's lives. Their daily routines and living environment change, and for the duration of their stay, they need to adapt to the hospital environment as their new home, resign themselves to the care of doctors and nurses, and get used to the unfamiliar surroundings and, often, unpleasant experiences associated with the course of treatment. Patients face threat to one's life, or the uncontrollable nature of one's condition which bring about a state of apprehension and hopelessness, worry and even a feeling of helplessness. Indeed, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder have been recognized to commonly occur in response to critical illnesses. Since the hospitalized patients' social contact is so limited, the competency of the medical staff in caring for the patients, the attitude and behavior of the physicians and the nurses towards the patients appears to be a key factor in the patients and their caregivers' perceived quality of care, and whether the patients can successfully cope with the stress of their hospitalization experience.

Biography

Ami Rokach holds a Ph.D. in psychology from Purdue University. He is the Executive Editor of the Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied, and is a clinical psychologist who combines offering individual, couple and sex therapy with teaching and research. Ami is an associate professor and is teaching psychology at The Center for Academic Studies in Israel, and is also a member of the psychology departments at York University in Canada, and Walden University in the USA. His therapeutic and research interests include loneliness, sexuality, couple & sex therapy, anxiety and phobias, traumatic experiences and personal growth, stress management, and palliative care. After 35 years of 'doing' psychology he is still intrigued by human nature, people's suffering, and the real opportunity that we all have to grow, flourish, and reinvent ourselves despite obstacles and painful experiences.

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