A Model of People at High Risk to Develop Chronic Stress-Related Somatic Symptoms: Some Predictions

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Certain measurable high-risk factors that predispose people to develop functionally based somatic disorders are identified. These risk factors compose a multidimensional model that encompasses variables involved in the predisposition, the precipitation, and the buffering of stress-related symptoms. These high-risk factors are (a) high or low hypnotic ability, (b) habitual catastrophizing cognitions and pessimistic belief systems, (c) autonomic lability or neuroticism, (d) multiple major life changes or multiple minor hassles over a short period of time, and (e) a deficit in support systems or coping skills or both. Data will be presented, pre/post testing, and the long-term follow-up on the High Risk Model.

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Factors Associated with the Long-Term Effectiveness of Biofeedback Therapy

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Data from long-term effectiveness studies of biofeedback therapy, as well as anecdotal evidence from clinical experience, reveal a number of factors associated with successful outcome. These studies include the treatment of migraine, tension, and mixed headaches, essential hypertension, anxiety states, chronic back pain, and other conditions. Among the factors associated with effectiveness are relaxation practice, training-to-criterion, belief or expectancy, integration of self-regulation concepts and skills into one's lifestyle, and self-efficacy. These factors represent both the ability to achieve low psychophysiological arousal and a cognitive process leading to a heightened sense of self-efficacy.

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