

Japanese Shintoistic Amulets

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Although Japanese are regarded as irreligious, they still occasionally practice some elements of both Buddhism and Shintoism. Most Japanese procure various amulets at Shinto Shrines in an attempt to alter their fate. This paper mainly explores practices centering around omamori which are those rectangular, colorful, cloth-bound amulets that are available at even neighborhood Shinto shrines. These amulets are carried for protective purposes or for enhanced personal power. This talk lists common amulets that are obtainable at Shinto shrines, notes the age and gender composition for each amulet, specifies the occasion or season when these amulets are procured, and identifies which shrine is sought to heighten the amulet's power.

A New Model of Patients' Values in Medical Decision Making with Cross-Cultural Applications

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Psychological study of patient values is a weak link in medical decision making. While increasing emphasis is placed on patients' rights to make medical decisions, little is known about patients' cognitions in valuing medical options. This study was designed to beta test a new, nonparametric and multivariate model of patients' valuing processes, using the decision to elect or forgo preventive bilateral mastectomy. Each participant in the US sample (N = 27) weighted the importance she placed on her own values regarding her medical options as well as the weights she placed on the values of significant others, including her physician, husband, female friends and relatives. Agglomerative cluster analysis performed on profiles of these weights yielded a definitive two cluster solution in which husband and physician comprised Cluster I; while Cluster II was comprised of patient and female friends/relatives. Euclidian distances evidenced extreme dissonance in value importance between patient versus husband and physician. Multidimensional scaling of relative desirability of each medical option from each of the five person perspectives emphasized the centrality of disfiguring procedures. The model provides a vehicle for better assisting patients to understand and more accurately reflect their values. It is presently in cross-cultural testing in the UK and Greece.

The Role of Motivational Types of Values as Psychopathological Personality Indicators

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Nowadays, the acknowledgement towards psychological and social factors role in health and illness has brought about consequences into further attempts to delve deeper into the realms of psychology. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of individual and cultural values as possible indicators toward psychopathological personality predisposition among the Javanese and Balinese people in Indonesia. As many as 762 subjects have taken part in this study, 255 subjects were try-out participants, while the other 507, consisting of men and women, were participants for the final analysis. Motivational Type of Values was proven to be excellent indicator toward personality predispositions and mental disorder symptoms. The findings also explain that a self-reward exists when good performance is happening, and poor performance will prompt unhappy feelings. Self-reward occurs if any of the Individual or Cultural Motivational values is not fulfilled, several psychological outcomes will emerge, whereas an over emphasis on certain values might be the reason for emotional and motivational weakening conditions. On a pathological stage, lack of values fulfilment and an over-emphasized course of action may trigger off mental disorder symptoms.

Personality Factors, Stressful Life Events and Social Support in Patients Suffered from Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) as Compared to Nonpatients

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The main goal of this study was to investigate personality factors, stressful life events and social support in coronary heart patients (CHD patients) and non patient individuals. In this endeavour 300 individuals (150 males, 150 females) were divided in two groups of patients (n = 150) and non patients (n = 150) at Rajaei Heart Hospital of Tehran, and completed the Stressful Life Events Questionnaire, NEO-PI inventory (short form) and the Quality of Social Relations Questionnaire. Data was analyzed through independent and dependent t-test and Pearson correlation coefficients. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between personality factors and CHD: i.e., CHD patients as compared to nonpatients significantly have: (i) lower level of Agreeableness, (ii) higher level of Neuroticism, (iii) lower level of Consciousness, (iv) higher level of Extraversion, and (v) lower level of Openness. Moreover, findings show that CHD patients had experienced more stressful life events and less social support than the nonpatients. The findings of this research indicate the importance of personality factors, social support and stressful life events in coronary heart disease.