This is the first textbook to focus specifically on disaster psychiatry. It brings together international experts to provide a comprehensive review of the psychological, biological, and social responses to disaster, describing evidence-based clinical and service-led interventions to meet mental health needs and foster resilience and recovery. Chapters address the epidemiology of disaster response, the neurobiology of disaster exposure, socio-cultural issues, early intervention and consultation-liaison care, the role of non-governmental organizations, workplace policies, and implications for public health planning at the level of the individual and the community. This book is essential reading for all those involved in preparing for traumatic events and their clinical and social outcomes for public health planning.

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Preface

Disasters are a prominent part of our history and will be a part of our future. From gene to protein, cell to organ, and individual to group, the complexity of human responses to disaster trauma is profound. Understanding both individual and community mental health responses to disasters is critical to developing and planning for postdisaster interventions across the biological, psychological, and sociocultural levels.

Disaster planning begins with individual, family, community, and workplace preparedness prior to a disaster. Effective interventions are dependent on rapid, effective, and sustained mobilization of resources. Evidence-based interventions at multiple levels strengthen clinical care and community responses and facilitate resilience and recovery. Knowing the psychiatric and behavioral responses to disaster enables medical experts and community leaders to communicate to the public, deliver evidence-based care, promote resilience, foster adherence to recommendations, encourage behaviors which can facilitate recovery, and sustain the social fabric of the disaster communities and nations.

This textbook, the first specifically on disaster psychiatry, brings together international experts to provide a comprehensive view of the psychological, biological, and social processes of response to, and intervention for, disaster mental health needs. The chapters present cutting-edge scientific knowledge with implications for clinical care and interventions, services and public health policy development. The volume is organized to provide scientific information
about psychiatric illness, disaster-related stress and health risk behaviors, as well as the treatment and public health services that are needed for disaster mental health care for individuals and communities in countries throughout the world. We believe that the comprehensive examination of disaster and its impact gives this textbook broad clinical and public health relevance.

The textbook is organized from basic concepts to care delivery and public health concerns. The information spans from the epidemiology of disaster response and disaster ecology to the neurobiology of disaster exposure; from early intervention to consultation-liaison care for injured disaster victims; from nongovernmental organizations and disaster care to workplace trauma and healthcare systems. The volume as a whole and each chapter have broad public health planning implications for individual and community mental healthcare following disasters and terrorism.

We hope that the knowledge in this volume of how mental health is altered by the experience of disaster trauma will lead to more effective approaches to treatment, intervention and recovery to inform both the mental health practitioner and the public health planner.