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978-1-108-40404-4 — Psychological Care in Severe Obesity

Edited by Stephanie Cassin , Raed Hawa , Sanjeev Sockalingam

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Psychological Care in Severe Obesity

A Practical and Integrated Approach

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
 79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
 It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108404044
 DOI: 10.1017/9781108241687

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First published 2018

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Cassin, Stephanie, editor. | Hawa, Raed, editor. | Sockalingam, Sanjeev, editor.

Title: Psychological care in severe obesity : a practical and integrated approach / edited by Stephanie Cassin, Raed Hawa, Sanjeev Sockalingam.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018003698 | ISBN 9781108404044 (paperback : alk. paper)

Subjects: | MESH: Obesity, Morbid – psychology | Obesity, Morbid – therapy | Obesity Management | Psychotherapy – methods

Classification: LCC RC552.O25 | NLM WD 210 | DDC 616.3/980651–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018003698>

ISBN 978-1-108-40404-4 Paperback

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To my daughter, Anaiya, who I love even more than psychology.

—*Stephanie E. Cassin*

To Joanne, Keira, and Tayla, for their unwavering support and inspiration. My creativity could not be possible without the joy you bring me each day.

—*Sanjeev Sockalingam*

To Roula, for being there.

—*Raed Hawa*

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Preface

This edited book serves as a practical and comprehensive guide to psychological care in severe obesity. Obesity is a complex disease of multifaceted environmental, genetic, and physiological etiologies. Some of the complications of obesity include cardiovascular disease, non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, obstructive sleep apnea, reflux, and cancer. Given the excess mortality, substantial morbidity, and economic toll associated with obesity, it is a disease that warrants an integrated and long-term approach to care.

Beyond the use of antiobesity medications and bariatric surgery, it is imperative to consider the broad spectrum of psychological treatments within the continuum of treatments for severe obesity and its comorbidities. In this book we focus on evidence-based and emerging psychosocial interventions in the treatment of severe obesity, including motivational interviewing, cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness- and compassion-focused interventions, technology-enabled psychological interventions, family-based interventions, and support groups. The book goes beyond a synthesis of the evidence base and provides practical approaches to apply these psychological therapies within the context of obesity management. The contents of these chapters also address the many psychosocial comorbidities of obesity, including disordered eating and mood, anxiety, and substance use disorders.

The reality is that empirical literature examining psychosocial interventions specifically for individuals with severe obesity is still in its infancy. Many of the time-limited psychosocial interventions that have been examined to date result in only modest and short-term weight loss. A more comprehensive and long-term treatment approach is warranted in the management of severe obesity, which may necessitate numerous medical and psychosocial interventions in sequence or combination for sustained improvement over time. Currently, no clinical guidelines exist to determine which type(s) of psychosocial interventions should be offered to particular patients with severe obesity, how those interventions should be integrated or sequenced, how long each intervention should continue, and when each intervention should be offered in the course of obesity care. The chapters in this book are intended to serve as a practical guide to help healthcare professionals make decisions regarding the types of psychosocial treatments that may be beneficial for particular issues warranting intervention and to illustrate how those treatments may be applied in clinical practice through the use of case vignettes and clinical dialogues.

A book of this magnitude would not be possible without the help of many people. We thank our contributors, who devoted extensive time and energy to each of their chapters, as well as Samantha Leung for her editorial assistance. We also thank the editorial team at Cambridge University Press, including Catherine Barnes, Nigel Graves, Sarah Marsh, David Mackenzie, Charlotte Brisley, and Allan Alphonse, for transforming our idea into a tangible product. Finally, we thank our patients, who provided us with inspiration each day to produce a resource that we hope will improve mental healthcare for all individuals being treated for severe obesity.

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