



Psychological Agency: Theory, Practice, and Culture

Roger Frie

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Agency is a central psychological phenomenon that must be accounted for in any explanatory framework for human action. According to the diverse group of scholars, researchers, and clinicians who have contributed chapters to this book, psychological agency is not a fixed entity that conforms to traditional definitions of free will but an affective, embodied, and relational processing of human experience. Agency is dependent on the biological, social, and cultural contexts that inform and shape who we are. Yet agency also involves the creation of meaning and the capacity for imagining new and different ways of being and acting and cannot be entirely reduced to biology or culture. This generative potential of agency is central to the process of psychotherapy and to psychological change and development. The chapters explore psychological agency in theoretical, clinical and developmental, and social and cultural contexts. Psychological agency is presented as situated within a web of intersecting biophysical and cultural contexts in an ongoing interactive and developmental process. Persons are seen as not only shaped by, but also capable of fashioning and refashioning their contexts in new and meaningful ways. The contributors have all trained in psychology or psychiatry, and many have backgrounds in philosophy; wherever possible they combinetheoretical discussion with clinical case illustration. **Contributors:** John Fiscali, Roger Frie, Jill Gentile, Adelbert H. Jenkins, Elliot L. Jurist, Jack Martin, Arnold Modell, Linda Pollock, Pascal Sauvayre, Jeff Sugarman

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