

Summary

Experiencing cancer

Psychosocial aspects

Cancer diseases are a growing problem not only in terms of individuals' health, but also in terms of society. Statistics show that the experience of oncological disease is becoming more and more common. A serious, potentially fatal disease undeniably affects life and functioning, not only physically but also psychologically and in the dimension of social functioning, an aspect which often seems to be overlooked in the discourse on this problem. In the case of oncological diseases, this impact is extremely significant. There is therefore a large and important body of research and practice in supporting the quality of life and everyday functioning of people suffering from oncological diseases.

The author refers to the theory and the results of her research (based on interviews with people suffering from cancer and specialists) and describes the extremely important aspects of living with and, apart from cancer, functioning as a patient, functioning in the family and in society.

The monograph consists of five chapters. The first presents the specificity of neoplastic diseases and anticancer treatment, as well as psychosocial aspects of the disease (focused on the psychological coping with cancer, the social perception of oncological diseases and the symbolic meaning given to them). The second chapter outlines the methodology of the research, the results of which are presented in the following chapters. Chapter Three is an attempt to present the specifics of functioning as a patient, with particular emphasis on the factors that affect quality of life during hospitalization and the specialist support needs of cancer patients. The fourth chapter deals with the issue of family functioning, focusing on the impact of the disease on the life of the family, on the parenthood of people struggling with cancer, love relationships and the sexual sphere. Chapter Five focuses on social functioning, which describes the risk of people suffering from oncology (self)social exclusion, and examples of negative reactions related to the disease, as well as social support (with particular emphasis on the forms of support most appreciated by patients), in addition to the aspect of self-help and patient organizations. After the main conclusions, the book ends with recommendations regarding the support for the psychosocial functioning of people suffering from oncological diseases.

This publication aims to familiarize readers with the specific difficulties and related needs of cancer patients, which may be the first step to a better understanding and better support for people struggling with cancer.