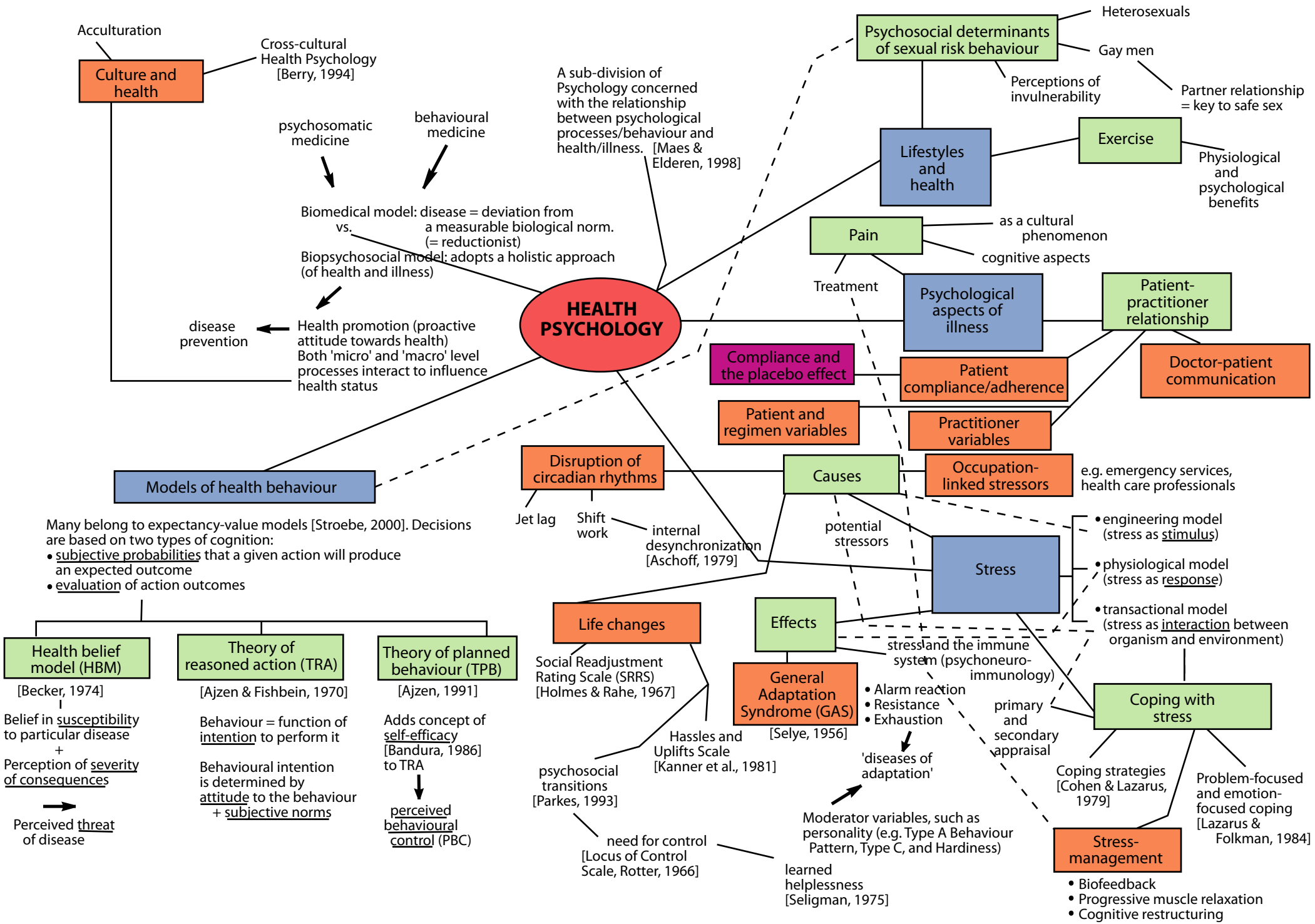
HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY
A sub-division of Psychology concerned with the relationship between psychological processes/behaviour and health/illness. [Maes & Elderen, 1998]
Culture and health
Acculturation
Cross-cultural Health Psychology [Berry, 1994]
psychosomatic medicine
behavioural medicine
Biomedical model: disease = deviation from a measurable biological norm. (= reductionist)
vs.
Biopsychosocial model: adopts a holistic approach (of health and illness)
Health promotion (proactive attitude towards health)
Both 'micro' and 'macro' level processes interact to influence health status
disease prevention
Psychosocial determinants of sexual risk behaviour
Heterosexuals
Gay men
Perceptions of invulnerability
Partner relationship = key to safe sex
Lifestyles and health
Exercise
Physiological and psychological benefits
Pain
as a cultural phenomenon
cognitive aspects
Treatment
Psychological aspects of illness
Patient-practitioner relationship
Compliance and the placebo effect
Patient compliance/adherence
Doctor-patient communication
Patient and regimen variables
Practitioner variables
Models of health behaviour
Many belong to expectancy-value models [Stroebe, 2000]. Decisions are based on two types of cognition:
• subjective probabilities that a given action will produce an expected outcome
• evaluation of action outcomes
Health belief model (HBM)
[Becker, 1974]
Belief in susceptibility to particular disease
+
Perception of severity of consequences
Perceived threat of disease
Theory of reasoned action (TRA)
[Ajzen & Fishbein, 1970]
Behaviour = function of intention to perform it
Behavioural intention is determined by attitude to the behaviour + subjective norms
Theory of planned behaviour (TPB)
[Ajzen, 1991]
Adds concept of self-efficacy [Bandura, 1986] to TRA
perceived behavioural control (PBC)
Disruption of circadian rhythms
Jet lag
Shift work
internal desynchronization [Aschoff, 1979]
Causes
Occupation-linked stressors
e.g. emergency services, health care professionals
potential stressors
Stress
• engineering model (stress as stimulus)
• physiological model (stress as response)
• transactional model (stress as interaction between organism and environment)
Life changes
Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) [Holmes & Rahe, 1967]
Hassles and Uplifts Scale [Kanner et al., 1981]
psychosocial transitions [Parkes, 1993]
Effects
stress and the immune system (psychoneuro-immunology)
General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)
[Selye, 1956]
• Alarm reaction
• Resistance
• Exhaustion
'diseases of adaptation'
Moderator variables, such as personality (e.g. Type A Behaviour Pattern, Type C, and Hardiness)
need for control [Locus of Control Scale, Rotter, 1966]
learned helplessness [Seligman, 1975]
Coping with stress
primary and secondary appraisal
Coping strategies [Cohen & Lazarus, 1979]
Problem-focused and emotion-focused coping [Lazarus & Folkman, 1984]
Stress-management
• Biofeedback
• Progressive muscle relaxation
• Cognitive restructuring