

Preface

This book is about human life and how to make the most of it. It is about the miracle of consciousness and how body and mind are connected. It is about our inner powers for healing, love and understanding. It is about our body shape and inner structure, how it is made and how it was developed during evolution. It is also about the universe we live in and the natural forces and laws that have made not only us, but all that exists. In the end of our analysis we come to a new understanding of Antonovsky's concept of salutogenesis – existential healing – and meaning of life, as it is experienced as *sense of coherence*. We understand how consciousness can interfere with body shape and mind, as it can with our immunological defences. We wish you a good journey though this strange and new-thinking book about human development.

It is not by their interpretation of it, which clearly suggests the importance of transcendence of "mind" over "matter". For substance abuse, it is a matter of "beliefs" about the meaning of taking drugs. Finally, sociologists believe that external social structures and processes determine human behavior. External environmental factors such as poverty, income inequality and alienation contribute to substance abuse.

There are two questions we should ask our selves when we use the above perspectives to look at human behavior. First, what are the strengths and limitations of using the above perspectives to understand human behavior? With specific reference to the biol-geneal perspective, while it is a scientific and objective approach, it has been criticized as reductionist and it fails to explain many human phenomena. For example, the use of drugs alone cannot treat substance abuse and prevent relapse. Second, it is theoretically and practically important to ask how different domains (i.e., biological domain and psychological domain) interact. For example, in times of adversity, how one's psychology (e.g., courage to fight and perseverance) may strengthen bodily strength and endurance is an important question to explore.

Against this background, I am very pleased to note that Vantegodt, Hermanson and Merrick have written this book titled "Human development: Biology from a holistic point of view". There are several unique features of this book. First, it unifies the fundamental problems of biology, medicine and neuropsychology. Besides, the nature of matter, life and consciousness as well as the brain-mind and body-mind issues are highlighted. Second, it gives a new perspective on life and biologic information, including living cell information system, relationship between biochemistry and morphogenesis, and the origin of cellular order. Third, discussion on the relationship between consciousness and human brain functions, including holistic human development, consciousness, and neurophysiology is