HANDBOOK OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
To My Students
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Preface

My dear readers. Thank you so much for your support in buying and reading this book. My intention has been to create a resource that will cover the A to Z of assessment. In other words, my aim has been to provide guidance that extends from larger issues on assessment, to clarifying the referral question, and through to writing up the report and consulting with your referral sources and clients. I hope it brings clarity, practical guidelines, insights, and useful strategies to your work. Feedback on the previous editions assures me that this is often the case. This fact makes it worth all those long hours hidden away inside a small room incubating ideas and reading, writing, revising, and editing.

As with the previous editions, I have tried to integrate the best of science with the best of practice. Necessarily, psychological assessment involves technical knowledge. But in presenting this technical knowledge, I have tried to isolate, extract, and summarize in as clear a manner as possible the core information that is required for practitioners to function competently. At the same time, assessment is also about the very human side of understanding, helping, and making decisions about people. I hope I have been able to comfortably blend this technical (science) side with the human. An assessment that does not have at least some heart to it is cold and lacking. To keep in touch with the practitioner/human side of assessment, I have continually maintained an active practice in which I have tried to stay close to and interact with the ongoing personal and professional challenges of practitioners. I hope that within and between the sentences in the book, my active involvement with the world of practice is apparent.

It has been seven years since the previous (fourth) edition. During that time, much has changed and much has remained the same. The big tests that professional psychologists use most frequently are unchanged. This is reflected in that the numbers and titles of the chapters are the same as they were in the fourth edition. However, there are important changes within these chapters. Two of the most important are revised chapters incorporating the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, Fourth Edition (WAIS-IV) and the Wechsler Memory Scale, Fourth Edition (WMS-IV). Another revision has been a somewhat more narrow focus for the chapter on screening for neuropsychological impairment, which has involved a focus on the Bender Visual Motor Gestalt Test, Second Edition (Bender-II) in combination with the relatively recently developed (1998) Repeatable Battery for the Assessment of Neuropsychological Status (RBANS). These are two fairly brief screening tests for neuropsychological impairment. The RBANS involves assessing a fairly wide number of domains (memory, visuospatial, attention, language) using revisions of assessment tools that have been frequently used in clinical neuropsychology. A final noteworthy addition has been the inclusion of greater information on diversity as reflected by separate test-related chapter subheadings entitled “Use with Diverse Groups.” This section reflects the more extensive use of assessment for a wide variety of populations and the importance of competently and sensitively working with diverse populations.