ANSWERS TO EXERCISES AND REVIEW QUESTIONS

PART TWO: PREPARING THE DATA FILE

Before attempting these questions read through Chapters 4 and 5 of the *SPSS Survival Manual*.

Creating a data file and entering data

2.1 Before you start using SPSS to prepare a data file and run analyses, it is important to check the SPSS Options. This is covered at the start of Chapter 4 of the *SPSS Survival Manual*. Use the following questions to review this material.

  (a) How do you change the order in which your variables are displayed (e.g. alphabetical order instead of file order)?

p. 28 Go to Edit and choose Options. In the Variable List section choose Alphabetical.

(b) How do you change the number of decimal places that are used as the default for new variables?

p.29 Go to Edit and choose Options. Select the Data tab. In the section labeled Display format for new numeric variables change the decimal place value to your desired value (eg. 0).

(c) If you wished to change the format used to display the output tables, where in the Options would you do this?
p.29 Go to Edit and choose Options. Choose the Pivot Tables tab.

2.2 The best way to learn how to set up an SPSS data file is to actually work through each of the steps yourself. At the back of the *SPSS Survival Manual* you will find a codebook for suver.sav (the file that was used to generate some of the output throughout the book) and the questionnaire that this came from. Use this codebook to set up a data file from scratch. Follow the procedures described in Chapter 4 to define each of the variables listed in the codebook. When you have finished, enter some pretend data—you can generate this data yourself by completing the survey presented in the appendix at the back of the *Manual*. Save the file as mydata.sav.

Screening and cleaning the data

It is very important that you check your data file for errors before beginning statistical analyses. These exercises give you practice with the process of screening your data and correcting errors.

2.3 Using the instructions provided in Chapter 5 of the *SPSS Survival Manual*, check the following categorical variables for out-of-range cases. You will need to open the survey.sav data file. Use the codebook provided in the appendix at the back of the *Manual* to guide you.

(a) sex
(b) marital status (marital)
(c) children (child)
(d) major source of stress (source)
(e) do you smoke? (smoke)

2.4 Using the instructions provided in Chapter 5 of the *SPSS Survival Manual*, check the following continuous variables for out-of-range cases. You will need to open the survey.sav data file. Use the codebook provided in the appendix at the back of the *Manual* to guide you.

(a) each of the items in the Optimism scale (op1 to op6)
(b) each of the items in the Life Satisfaction scale (lifsat1 to lifsat5)
(c) each of the items in the Perceived Stress scale (pss1 to pss10)