Chapter 13

Psychological Disorders

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Psychological Disorders

- Psychological Disorder
  - Behavior patterns judged to be:
    - Deviant (being different)
    - Distressful (cause distress)
    - Dysfunctional (disabling)
Perspectives on Psychological Disorders

- **Medical Model**
  - Concept that diseases have physical causes
  - Assumes psychological disorders diagnosed on basis of symptoms, treated & possibly cured through therapy, may include treatment in psychiatric hospital

- **Bio-Psycho-Social Perspective**
  - Assumes that biological, socio-cultural, & psychological factors combine & interact to produce psychological disorders
Classifying Psychological Disorders

- To describe disorder, predict future course, imply appropriate treatment & stimulate research into its causes
- **DSM-IV (DSM-IV-TR)**
  - American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th Edition)
  - Widely used system for classifying psychological disorders
Anxiety Disorders

- Distressing, persistent anxiety or maladaptive behaviors that reduce anxiety
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
  - Continually tense, apprehensive & in state of autonomic nervous system arousal
- Panic Disorder
  - Unpredictable minutes-long episodes of intense dread
  - Experience terror & accompanying chest pain, choking or other frightening sensations
Anxiety Disorders

- **Phobia**
  - Persistent, irrational fear & avoidance of specific object or situation

- **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**
  - Unwanted repetitive thoughts (obsessions) &/or actions (compulsions)

- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**
  - Haunting memories, nightmares, social withdrawal, jumpy anxiety &/or insomnia that lingers for 4 weeks or more after traumatic experience
Dissociative Disorders

- Conscious awareness becomes separated (dissociated) from previous memories, thoughts & feelings

- **Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)**
  - Formerly multiple personality disorder
  - Rare dissociative disorder in which exhibits 2 or more distinct & alternating personalities
Personality Disorders

- Characterized by inflexible & enduring behavior patterns that impair social functioning
  - Usually without depression or delusions
- Antisocial Personality Disorder
  - Person (usually man) exhibits lack of conscience for wrongdoing, even toward friends & family
  - May be aggressive & ruthless or clever con artist
  - Formerly sociopath or psychopath
Mood (Affective) Disorders

- Characterized by emotional extremes
- Major Depressive Disorder
  - 2 or more weeks of significantly depressed moods, feelings of worthlessness & diminished interest or pleasure in most activities in absence of drugs or other medical condition
  - “Common cold” of psychological disorders
Mood (Affective) Disorders

- Bipolar Disorder
  - Alternate between hopelessness & lethargy of depression & overexcited state of mania
  - Formerly manic-depressive disorder
- Mania
  - Hyperactive, wildly optimistic state
Schizophrenia

- Literally means split mind
- Group of severe disorders characterized by:
  - Disorganized & delusional thinking
    - Delusions – false beliefs, often of persecution or grandeur
  - Disturbed perceptions
    - Hallucinations – sensory experience without sensory stimulation
  - Inappropriate emotions & actions
- Positive vs. negative symptoms
Rates of Psychological Disorders

- In 2001, 1 in 7 Americans were estimated to suffer from a clinically significant psychological disorder.
- In 2003, the US reported the highest rate of mental disorders.