Abnormal Psychology: Mental Disorders Essay, Research Paper

Abnormal Psychology: Mental Disorders

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Schizophrenia

http://www.mentalhealth.com/book/p40-sc02.html#Head\_1

Schizophrenia is a disorder that can effect anyone. It is the greatest

the greatest disorder that effects teenagers. When someone is effected by the

disorder it is not just that one person that has to learn to deal with it, the

families of the patients must also learn to deal with it.

There are many possible causes for the disorder with many doctors

believing that there is more than one cause. What has been thought as the main

cause for many years is a chemical imbalance in the brain. This could be an

imbalance in the number of neurotransmitters and/or an imbalance in the amount

of dopamine. Stress is not thought of as directly causing Schizophrenia, but

often makes already present symptoms worse. some doctors feel that

Schizophrenia might be the result of a slow acting virus since the symptoms can

be delayed many years after the first infection. Another possible cause for the

disorder is a genetic disposition. This has yet to be proven but it is thought

of as a likely cause since children who have a parent with the disorder have a

ten times greater chance of developing the illness than children who have

abnormal parents. If both parents have the disorder the chance of their off

spring having the disorder jumps to forty times that of of an off spring with

normal parents. Some times as equally as important as finding what causes

a disease is finding what does not cause a disease. It is said that

Schizophrenia is: not caused by a domineering mother and/or a passive father,

not caused by childhood experiences, poverty, or not caused by the feeling of

guilt or failure.

People who have schizophrenia can be divided up into three equal groups:

those who only have one episode in their entire life, those who have continual

episodes but live normal lives between them, and a third group who have never

ending symptoms. The symptoms that define an episode of schizophrenia can

generally be described as deterioration from a previous level of functioning.

The number one symptom of schizophrenia is the inability to separate the

real form the unreal. As stress starts to build and the symptoms get worse

there is often a decline in work achievements along with declining of relations

with others. Because the these symptoms might start off very minor, it is

mostly the families that notice them first. Thus it is up to the family to

insist on a professional assessment of the person in question. Families also

must play a key role in watching over the patient while there are undergoing

treatment which usually consist taking medication in different amount until the

proper amount is found.

The constant research going on leads to putting more pieces of the

puzzle together all the time. Using EEG?s it was found that the impulses sent

by the brain to other parts of the body are not normal in people with

schizophrenia. It has also been found that there are definitely abnormalities

in the proteins of those suffering from the disease.

Bipolar Disorder

http://pages.prodigy.com/bipolarcyclone/facefear.htm

http://www.mhsource.com/expert/exp1042296a.html

http://www.healthguide.com:80/Bipolar/common.stm

Bipolar disorder is a mood disorder in which the effects who a person

feels about the world around and even themselves. It makes them feel depressed

and if left untreated suicide is often the result. Around 1.5% of the

population is effect by some type of the disorder. Unlike many other disorders,

bipolar effects a higher percent of those with a higher social status.

Bipolar disorder usually comes on while the person is in their early

twenties. It is thought that the disorder is ?polygenetic? meaning dependent

upon several genes. This conclusion was reached because child who have parents

with the disorder are up to twenty times more likely to suffer from it. Though

the disorder can cause serious problems, many famous and successful people have

suffered from it including Ernest Hemingway and Vincent Van Gogh.

One of the major steps in treating some one with bipolar disorder is

diagnosing it. People often say they of symptoms similar to those of the

disorder as a result of a different disorder. These symptoms include hearing

voices, being possessed by something, and having a sleeping disorder. In order

to determine if a patient suffers from the disorder or not, family members are

often questioned to see if the patient acts the way they claims they do. They

are often asked about the patients sleeping since it is hard to fake a sleeping

disorder. A family history is often obtained to help decide if bipolar is a

lily candidate.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

http://www.ocdresource.com/helpingocd.html

http://www.psyc.memphis.edu/students/abramowitz/ocd.htm

http://www.social.com/health/cic/mental\_health/obsess.html

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is a anxiety disorder that about one

million people in the United States suffer from. Those suffering from the

disorder have repetitive thought, images, or ideas that they can not get out of

their head. These repetitive thoughts lead to anxiety which causes the suffer

to resort to a competitive behavior.Then in order to try to deal with these

thoughts sufferers often have rituals they preform to try to satisfy their

thoughts.

One of the more common repetitive thoughts that those with obsessive

compulsive disorder have is that they contaminated by dirty objects. This leads

to them often washing their hands constantly often taking off layers of skin.

Similar to the Glen in the movie who would go through more than a bar of soap a

day.

Obsessive compulsive disorder was once thought to be rare but now is

thought to effect around two percent of the population. Many cases go

unreported making to hard to get an exact number of those who suffer. It

effects people of all ethnic backgrounds and social classes the same. It is

thought to be a neurobiological based problem because patients respond well to

medication.

There are two major treatments for suffers of obsessive compulsive

disorder. One treatment is medication, either clomipramine, which is usually

used to fight depression, and fluvoxamine and fluoxetine which have also been

found to work. The second type of treatment is behavior therapy. Here patients

are exposed to what they fear and are encourage not to carry out their usual

compulsive response.

Unlike many mental disorders, suffers from obsessive compulsive disorder

often know they have a problem. However, this knowledge is not enough to get

them to stop what they know is a senseless activity. Therefore, many try to

hide their problem from others with a rather high success rate. The only

problem with this is that they often don?t get treatment until they have been

dealing with it for a long time.

Depression

http://www.save.org/student.html

Depression is often used to describe someone who is feeling low about

themselves at the moment, when in reality it is a whole lot more than that. It

is a total body illness that no mater how hard a person try to talk them selves

out of it they still feel bad. It can effect a person in every aspect of their

life from home to work to their social life.

Depression is thought to be caused by a combination of factors

including genetic, psychological, and environmental ones. It can be caused by

living a stressful life or just living a bad life, but it doesn?t have to be.

It also occurs in all economic classes with about the same consistency. There

are often times now clues as to what triggered the onset of the depression.

About fifteen million Americans a year are faced with the illness.

Depression effects the thinking of the person who has it so they are

often not aware that they are suffering from it. Thus the family is often

forced to acted upon it before they sufferer even knows they have a problem. It

is important that the family does act one in because the number one cause of

suicide is depression that went untreated.

The signs of depression that one should be on the look out for in a

suspected sufferer include: hopelessness, sadness, inability to make decisions,

inability to concentrate, sudden weight changes, constant complaining, and many

others. The treatment for such sufferers often include ?talk therapy? and a

prescription for antidepressants.

The most important think that can be done for some one facing a

depression is for their friends and family to be there for them. 80- 90% of

those faced with depression can be helped but they can?t beat it alone.

Multiple Personality Disorder

http://wchat.on.ca/web/asarc/mpd.html

Multiple personality disorder is the existence of more than one dominate

personality within an individual. Each personality having its own behavior and

social relationships. The disorder is most commonly associated with physical

and/or sexual abuse of the sufferer at a young age. The abuse they go through

is often prolonged and done by a family member.

Diagnosing someone with multiple personality disorder is often hard for

many reasons. Patients often withhold important information that would be used

to diagnose the disorder because they do not want to be labeled crazy. Doctors?

ignorance about the disorder is another reason it is often misdiagnosed.

Multiple personality disorder was originally thought of as being extremely rare,

so must professionals thought they would never see a case. It was not even in

he DSM until 1980.

In treating someone with multiple personality disorder their trust must

first be gained so they then are willing to participate in the treatment. The

patient must then be told what their problem is, which needs to be done very

gentle in adults so that they do not get offended. The third stage in treatment

is to learn all the personalities, their names, origins, problems, and

relationships to the other personalities. The original personality must then be

taught to deal with all the impulses that the other personalities would deal

with such as anger, sexuality, and depression. The final stage is fusing all

the personalities back into one. The patient must then practice dealing with

all kinds of emotions to prevent a renewed dissociation.

Electroconvulsive Therapy http://www.i1.net:80/~juli/ect/brain/brain.html

Electroconvulsive therapy is the process of passing an electrical

current through the brain causing unconsciousness and convulsions. In this

procedure electrodes are placed on both temples, or just one temple in

unilateral treatment, and electricity is passed between them. This proceeder is

usually used for patients suffering from severe depression after all other

treatments have failed. The treatment is very controversial because many

believe that there are side effects from passing electricity through the brain.

Five major areas are looked at to see if there are side effects: the brains of

epileptics, animal brains, psychological test findings with history of many ECTs,

spontaneous seizures, and human brain reports.

In study brains of epileptics it was concluded that ECT cause lasting

effects, much in the same way that grand mal seizures did. When studying animal

brain both reversible and irreversible damage was found to brain cells after

multiple ECTs. The results from studying psychological test were inconclusive

because of the experimenters inability to set up a controlled experiment. There

were always too many variables that could not be accounted for. Patients who

have received ECTs have been known to have post-ECT spontaneous seizures.

Though some had them prior to the numerous had not who afterwards did. It is

unsure if the seizures last forever because often the patient i s put on

medication to prevent them. However the studies have concluded that in at least

some cases after people received ECT they started to have seizures. In studying

human autopsies it was found that some patients of ECT had irreversible damage

done to their brain while others damage was reversible. The explanation for the

different was that if the patient was in good health prior to the ECTs they had

a much better chance of not receiving irreversible damage. The

conclusion from looking at all the different areas mentioned is that there are

many factors that at least partially determine whether or not the patient of

ECts will receive permanent damage from them or not.

Eating Disorders

http://www.vicnet.net.au:80/vicnet/community/anorexia/abnc\_tot.htm#1c

Eating disorders occur when a person becomes preoccupied with their body

weight and food. The two major kinds of eating disorders anorexia and bulimia.

Bulimics feel as though they can not control the amount of food they eat leading

to binging and then either purging or self-induced vomiting. Anorexics keep

their body weight low by usually either self-induced vomiting or by eating very

small amounts of food and exercising heavily. It is not uncommon for a person

to switch back in forth between the two types.

The typical anorexic or bulimic person if a female,in their teenage

years, from the middle class, all though people from all backgrounds can suffer

from it. Males make up about 5% of all reported cases. The cause of the

disorders is not clearly, but many experts blame the media for emphasizing the

ideal shape. The relationship that the child has with their parents is

considered a major factor as well.

The side effects of the disorders can range from malnutrition to death.

Girls often menstrual cycles often become irregular or even stop. If self-

induced vomiting is occurring, that can cause a sore throat and gullet and even

destroy dental enamel. These disorders but a great emotional strain on those

with it, having many side effects of it?s own.

The first thing that must be done to help a person wit a eating disorder

is to talk to them about it. It is not uncommon for them to get mad at first

because their secret is out, but they must be forced to seek professional help.

Though there are many different mental disorders and illnesses it seems

as though they all have a few things in common. The uncertainty of the cause

seems to be the case with many disorders. Some doctors feel strongly one way

while others think that there is a totally different cause. Over time what is

thought to be the causes of a disorders often change because of new research

that is being done everyday.

Until the causes of disorders are found it will always be a guess on how

to best treat patients suffering from any certain disorder. It even varies as

far as one doctor saying a certain kind of treatment helps and another doctor

saying that the exact same treatment is useless or even harmful, as the case is

with ECT. Until researchers better understand the brain the treatment for

disorders that are found in it will always be up for discussion.