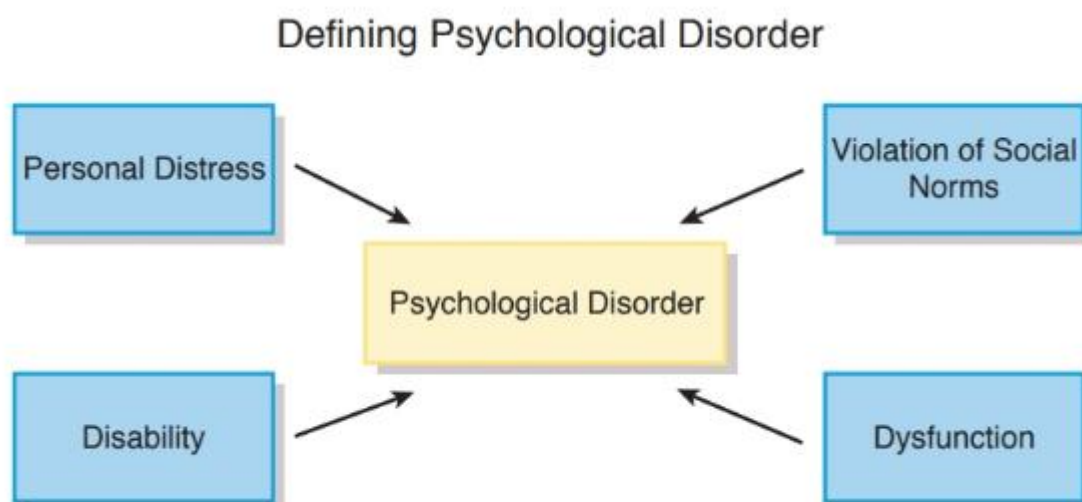


Defining psychological disorder

In the DSM-5 *mental disorder* includes the following concepts:

1. The disorder occurs within the individual
2. It involves clinically significant difficulties in thinking, feeling or behaving
3. It usually involves personal distress of some sort, such as in social relationships or occupational functioning
4. It involves dysfunction in psychological, developmental, and/or neurobiological processes that support mental functioning
5. It is not a culturally specific reaction to an event
6. It is not primarily the result of social deviance or conflict with society

The four key characteristics below should be included in a comprehensive definition of *psychological disorder*. No single characteristic can fully define the concept.



1. **Personal distress:** behaviour may be classified as disordered if it causes him or her great distress. Not all psychological disorders cause distress (e.g. antisocial personality disorder) and not all distress indicates a disorder (e.g. pain of childbirth)
2. **Disability:** refers to impairment in some important area of life (e.g. work, personal relationships etc.). Some problems that involve disability are not psychopathology (e.g. blindness) and some psychological disorders do not involve disability (e.g. bulimia nervosa).
3. **Violation of social norms:** behaviour that violates social norms (widely held beliefs) might be classified as disorders (e.g. the rituals of OCD). It is too broad in the sense that many people violate social norms (e.g. criminals) but are not necessarily studied within psychopathology and it is too narrow in that highly anxious people do not usually violate social norms. Social norms also vary across cultures and ethnic groups.

Mood Disorders

Mood disorders: involve disabling disturbances in emotions. There are two broad types of mood disorders, those that involve only depressive symptoms and those that involve manic episodes (bipolar).

The major DSM-5 mood disorders:

<i>DSM-5 Diagnoses</i>	<i>Major features</i>
Major depressive disorder	Five or more depressive symptoms including sad mood or loss of pleasure for two weeks
Persistent depressive disorder	Low mood and at least two other symptoms of depression at least half the time for 2 years
Premenstrual dysphoric disorder	Mood symptoms in the week before menses
Disruptive mood dysregulation disorder	Severe recurrent temper outbursts and persistent negative mood for at least one year beginning at age 10
Bipolar I disorder	At least 1 lifetime manic episode
Bipolar II disorder	At least 1 lifetime hypomanic episode and 1 major depressive episode
Cyclothymia	Recurrent mood changes from high to low for at least 2 years without hypomanic or depressive episodes

Depressive disorders: cardinal symptoms = sadness and/or inability to experience pleasure

Symptoms vary for each individual and can include cognitive and physical aspects.

The DSM-5 Criteria for Major Depressive Disorder (MDD):

Sad mood or loss of pleasure in usual activities. At least five symptoms (including sad mood and loss of pleasure)

- Sleeping too much or too little
- Psychomotor retardation or agitation
- Weight loss or change in appetite
- Loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- Difficulty concentrating, thinking or making decisions
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

Symptoms are present nearly every day, most of the day, for at least 2 weeks. Symptoms are distinct and more severe than a normative response to significant loss.

MDD is an episodic disorder in that symptoms can be present for a time and then clear. An untreated episode can be 5 months or longer. Approximately two thirds of people who experience one episode of depression will experience another in their lifetime. The average number is 4, with each episode the chance of another increases by 16%.