

Health Psych summaries

Lecture 1: Health Psychology

What is health psychology?

- Sub-field
- Applies psychological principles/research to enhancement of health

What does it mean to be healthy?

- WHO definition: state of physical, mental and social wellbeing
- **Antonovsky**: continuum

Domains of health

- Physical
- Psychological
- Social

Historical developments in health

Prehistoric medicine

- Evil spirits
 - Sorcery, exorcism, Trephination
- Hygiene discovered

Greek and Roman Medicine/roots of western medicine

- Introduction of sanitation in Greece and Rome ie water systems and public bathrooms
- Emerging importance of emotions
- **Hippocrates**:
 - Father of modern medicine
 - Performed first health survey and focused on psychological health
 - **Humoral theory**: health depends on equilibrium
 - Sanguine/blood:
 - **Inbalance**: prone to epilepsy, angina and dysentery
 - **Cures**: enemas, blood letting by leeches
 - Black bile/melancholy:
 - **Inbalance**: prone to sadness
 - **Cures**: diets, hot baths
 - Yellow bile/choleric:
 - **Inbalance**: irritation, unclers
 - **Cure**: **diets**, enemas
 - Phlegmatic/phlegm:
 - **Inbalance**: Headaches, dullness, listlessness
 - **Cures**: hot baths, douches
- **Galen**:
 - Introduced medicine
 - Supported humoral theory and mind/body split
 - **Major contribution**: illness can be localised and different diseases have different effects

Non-western medicine

- **Ayurveda:** key to health is maintaining balance between three bodily humours:
 - **Dochas:**
 - Vata
 - Pitta
 - kapha
 - oldest known medical system with origins in India 6 centuries B.C
- **Traditional oriental medicine:** internal harmony essential for good health
 - **Qi:** vital energy/life source:
 - Susceptible to blockages
 - **Cures:** Acupuncture, herb therapy, meditation which release blockages

Middle Ages

- Church had powerful influence
- Sickness seen as Gods punishment
- Treatment = exorcism

Renaissance

- Rebirthing
- Human centred
- Revival of scientific enquiry and medical study
- **Descartes:**
 - Mind-body dualism
 - Innovations:
 - 1. Body =machine and action and sensation occur through a pain pathway
 - 2. Mind and body communicate through pineal gland
 - 3. Animals don't have souls, soul leaves human body after death
- **Vesal:**
 - First human dissection
 - Introduced new medicine based on anatomy

Post-renaissance rationality

- Focus shifted from mysticism to biological causes
- Invention of microscope
- **Leeuwenhoek:**
 - First to observe blood cells and structure of skeletal muscles
- Humoral theory discarded for anatomical theory
- **Morgagni**
 - **Anatomical theory of disease:** theory that the origin of disease can be found in internal organs, muscular and skeletal systems of the body

Discoveries of the 19th century

- Aseptic, germ free medical procedures introduced
- Gas and x-rays introduced
- **Germ theory:** germs (pathogens) cause body to malfunction
- **Virchow**
 - **Cellular theory:** disease is the result of abnormalities in the body cells
- **Pasteur**
 - Devised experiments isolating bacteria
 - Life can only come from life
 - Dispelled idea of spontaneous generation
 - Developed rabies vaccine
 - Investigated silk worm disease

20th century and dawn of new era

- **biomedical model:** illness always has a biological cause
 - three distinguishing features:
 - pathogen
 - mind-body dualism
 - health absence of disease
- **Psychosomatic medicine:**
 - Developed by Alexander who further developed Freud's theories
 - Focuses on diagnosis and treatment of physical illness caused by faulty mental processes
 - Started trend towards holistic view of health
 - **Nuclear conflict model:** each physical disease is the outcome of mental conflict
- **Behavioural medicine**
 - Integrates behavioural and biomedical science in promoting health and treating disease
 - Miller:
 - **Biofeedback:** you can control things if you are aware of them

20th century trends

- Increased life expectancy
- Rise of lifestyle disorders
- Rising health care costs
- More emphasis on prevention and primary health care
- Rethinking the biomedical model

Four Aims of Health Psychology

- study etiology
- promote health
- prevent and treat illness
- promote public health policy and improve health care system