

Week One - Classification, Diagnosis and an Integrative approach to Psychopathology

Psychopathology

- Refers to the scientific study of psychological disorders
- Defined by various patterns of psychological dysfunction and impairment

Abnormal behaviour

1. Any behaviour that deviates from social expectations
 - ➔ Social relativism
2. Any behaviour that is maladaptive or interferes with a persons' survival, growth or self-actualisation
 - ➔ Involves some sort of impairment and is associated with distress

DSM-5 definition of abnormality

- Behavioural, psychological or biological dysfunction that are unexpected in their cultural content. Associated with:
 - present distress
 - impairment in functioning
 - increased risk of suffering, death, pain or impairment

Diathesis-stress model

- ➔ argues that if an individual has a diathesis or a genetically determined pre-disposition to develop a disorder, if exposed to certain environmental stressor, the disorder will develop
- Eg. depression may occur in person with both inherited tendencies to experience abnormal functioning in the serotonin neurotransmitter and who experiences the loss of a loved one

Reciprocal-gene-environmental model

- ➔ argued that inherited traits may increase likelihood at some stage where people may experience an environmental stressor, contributing to the development of the disorder
- Eg. a man inherits a genetic tendency to be timid and awkward. Because of this, the individual may accept unpleasant partners in his life more readily than other people, thus increasing his chances of experiencing stressful relationships. Driving him towards depression

Classification and diagnosis - DSM-5

1. provides clinicians with specific criteria to aid in the process of diagnosing mental disorders
2. the provisions of this criteria facilitate research and communication among clinicians and researchers