How are Psychological Disorders Diagnosed?

Chapter 3 - Classifying Abnormality: Diagnosis, Assessment, and Research

Class Objectives

- Historical Perspectives
- What is Clinical Assessment and why is it used?
- What assessment methods do professionals use?
- How are psychological disorders diagnosed?

“In Order to Understand the Future it is necessary to know and understand the past”

Psychopathology in a historical Context
Abnormal behavior and psychological disorders have been documented for thousands of years.

Although many early “treatments” are now recognized as cruel and ineffective, they were considered state-of-the-art for their times.

Treatment was influenced by the social perception of mental illness

Very early in history (500-700 A.D) the problem was based on the medical model
- disorders may have natural causes and should be treated as a disease

Later in history (500-1700 A.D) due to the influence of the church witchcraft and demonic possession were common explanations for mental illness.
People with psychological disorders or ‘madmen’ were seen as dangerous animals who

________________________________________________________________________________________

These are some of the “treatments” that were used to _________________________________.

Since mental illness was not seen at this time as a medical condition, the treatments did nothing to

________________________________________________________________________________________
Mental Health Reform

The unfortunate results of the Mental Hygiene Movement:
- ______________________________________________
- ______________________________________________
- ______________________________________________


Until the 1970's, most people with mental illness were warehoused in psychiatric institutions. The conditions in most psychiatric hospitals were terrible and often inhumane.

These conditions contributed to the
- ______________________________________________
- ______________________________________________
- ______________________________________________

Deinstitutionalization

This federal policy shifted treatment from
- ______________________________________________
- ______________________________________________
- ______________________________________________
Did it work as promised?

- Deinstitutionalization has been criticized for ____________________________.
- Accounting for a very large percentage of the ____________________________
  - 1/3 of homeless adults suffer from severe psychological disorders (NIH, 2003).
- The community mental health movement has had many successes, but continue to remain ____________________________.

Assessment

How are psychological disorders evaluated?

What is Clinical Assessment?

Clinical assessment is a systematic evaluation and measurement that measures:

- Psychological
- ____________________________
- Social factors

in a person who ____________________________.
Clinical Assessment

Only after ___________________________ can a diagnosis be given.

This is the process of determining whether a presenting problem ___________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

The diagnosis of a psychological disorder represents a way of ________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Why is it important to have a process for assessing and diagnosing people?
Classification promotes Universal standards

Classification is the core of scientific study, which allows
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Classification facilitates research on etiology and treatments of disorders, including best practices.

To be diagnosed with a psychological disorder very specific criteria must be met.

There is much debate on the classification of mental disorders

Some feel that diagnosis of psychological disorders do more harm than good, fail to truly address the individual's problem and

What makes an assessment method valuable?

Reliability:
- measurement, or category system
- Is the degree of measurement consistent?

Validity:
- measurement, or category system
- Does the assessment measure what it is designed to measure?
Clinical Interview

Information is gathered by the professional by

- Current and past behavior
- Attitudes and emotions
- Social and interpersonal history
- Presenting problem
- Orientation

Clinical Description

A presenting problem typically refers to the specific problem that brought the person in for help.

What’s the Presenting Problem?

Patricia was referred to the crisis center for suicidal thoughts and suicide attempt which followed an argument with her boyfriend. Patricia ingested a bottle of prescription pain medication and drank small amounts of a household cleaning product. Patricia was once hospitalized for major depression and suicidal statements.
What was the presenting problem?

Clinicians are interested in:
- Pattern of the disorder in time: Described as either chronic, episodic, or time-limited
- **Prevalence**: The number of people with a disorder in the population
- **Incidence**: The number of new cases of a disorder in a certain time period, usually per year
- Future development
- **Etiology**: The cause of the disorder

Mental Status Exam
- A systematic observation of a person’s behavior
- Used by clinicians to determine whether or not a psychological disorder may be present
- Most people do this everyday...including you 😊
What are some things you observe when you meet someone for the first time?

Mental status exams cover five general areas:

1. **Appearance and behavior**
   - Overt physical behaviors, appearance, body language, facial expression

2. **Thought processes**
   - Are thoughts linear and organized?
   - Are there delusions/hallucinations present?

Assessing Thought Processes

- Looseness of association (irrelevance)
- Flight of ideas (rapid change of topics)
- Word salad (nonsensical responses)
- Clanging (rhyming words)
- Poverty (limited content)
3. **Mood and affect:**

   Mood is the __________.
   - Depressed, “anxious,” “good,” and “tired”
   - Does the person appear “down” or elated?

   __________ refers to the feelings or outward show of emotions.
   - Is it “appropriate”? You feel sad…you look sad.
   - Euthymic (normal), blunted (minimal variation), and flat affect (no variation).

4. **Intellectual functioning:**

   Vocabulary and memory testing are used to help determine level of intellectual functioning.
   - Repeat these 3 words: ‘pen,’ ‘chair,’ ‘flag’
   - The ‘serial 7s’
   - Abstracts and metaphors
   - Proverbs

5. __________ refers to our general awareness to our surroundings.

   Clinicians assess a person’s **orientation** to time, place and person.

   “Is the person oriented times 3?”
   - __________
   - __________
Other Forms of Assessment

- Cognitive Tests
- Biological Tests
- Projective Tests

Standardized Tests

- There are literally hundreds of standardized tests clinicians can use for assessment purposes.

  1. Symptom and personality questionnaires
  2. Projective Tests
  3. Cognitive Tests
  4. Biological Tests

Symptom and Personality Questionnaires

- Tests
  - or personality traits based on clients’ responses to structured questions

- Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II)
- Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2)
Advantages:

Limitations:
- Standardized tools sacrifice flexibility in the collection of information

Projective Tests

Individual's response can reveal information about emotional and mental functioning.
Advantages:
- These assess client's deeper, and less easily observable emotion and personality patterns by providing a psychological understanding of clients.

Limitations:
- ________________________________
  ________________________________
  ________________________________
  ________________________________

Biological Tests
- Tests that are used to ________
  few are currently useful in assessing mental disorders

Brain imaging and scanning:
- Computerized axial tomography (CAT)
- Positron Emission Tomography (PET)
- Functional MRI (FMRI)
- Brain Dissection/Autopsy
- Physiological Tests

Diagnosing Psychological Disorders
How are disorders diagnosed?

The _____________ (APA, 2000) is the most widely used classification system currently used to make a diagnosis.

This is a manual that contains a listing of psychiatric disorders and diagnostic codes.

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DSM IV

Each disorder is defined by a set of diagnostic criteria and text containing information about the disorder.

- prevalence
- familial patterns
- age
- culture
- differential diagnosis

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No information about treatment or etiology is included.
History of the DSM

The first edition of the DSM was published in 1952 and contained about 60 disorders.

The DSM –I and II were very influenced by the ____________________________

There was no sharp distinction between “normal and abnormal” ____________________________.

DSM III

In 1980, the Psychodynamic view was abandoned and ____________________________.

- Changes were made to the diagnostic system based on scientific data, not consensus of experts.

This DSM examined the reliability and validity of definitions and criteria, as well as creating new diagnoses (Wildiger et al., 1998).

DSM IV

The current standard

New disorders were introduced and other deleted in the DSM IV.

Example: in the DSM-II, homosexuality was listed as a psychological disorder, but was removed by the APA in 1973.

The DSM-V is in progress (2010-2012)
DSM V is a “multi-axial” system of classification.

- **Axis 1** - Mental disorders, Schizophrenia, Anxiety disorders etc...
- **Axis 2** - Personality Disorders/Mental Retardation
- **Axis 3** - Medical conditions and disorders
- **Axis 4** - Psychosocial Stress
- **Axis 5** - (GAF) Global Assessment of Functioning

Is this system perfect?

One criticism of the DSM IV is the notion of the presence of two or more disorders in an individual at the same time.

Some criticize this categorical system because it...

Next class...

Anxiety Disorders