

Understanding psychological disorders: Causes, types, and treatment

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INTRODUCTION

Psychological disorders, also known as mental illnesses or mental health disorders are a diverse group of conditions that affect an individual's thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and overall well-being. These disorders can range from mild and manageable conditions to severe and debilitating illnesses. In this article, we will delve into the world of psychological disorders, exploring their causes, various types, and available treatment options (Antony MM, 2020).

CAUSES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS:

Psychological disorders have complex and multifaceted causes, often involving a combination of biological, psychological, and environmental factors. Some of the key contributors to the development of these disorders include. A family history of mental illness can increase an individual's susceptibility to developing a psychological disorder. Certain genes may predispose individuals to conditions such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder. Imbalances in neurotransmitters (chemical messengers in the brain) can lead to conditions like depression and anxiety. Neurotransmitters like serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine play crucial roles in regulating mood and emotions (Claridge G, 2013).

Traumatic experiences, such as physical or emotional abuse, neglect, or a major life event (e.g., loss of a loved one or divorce), can trigger the onset of psychological disorders. Chronic stress can also contribute to the development of these conditions. Socioeconomic status, access to healthcare, exposure to toxins, and cultural factors can all influence an individual's risk of developing a psychological disorder. Childhood experiences, including early attachment patterns and the quality of parenting, can shape an individual's emotional and psychological development, impacting their susceptibility to mental health issues later in life (Leavy RL, 1983).

Types of Psychological Disorders: Psychological disorders encompass a wide range of conditions, each with its own unique set of symptoms and characteristics. Some common types of psychological disorders include.

These disorders involve disturbances in a person's mood or emotional state. Examples include major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, and cyclothymic disorder. Anxiety disorders are characterized by excessive fear, worry, or nervousness. They include conditions such as generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and social anxiety disorder (Salim S, 2014).

Psychotic disorders, like schizophrenia, involve a disconnection from reality, with symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions. Personality disorders are characterized by long-standing patterns of behavior, cognition, and inner experience that deviate from cultural expectations. Examples include borderline personality disorder and narcissistic personality disorder.

Conditions like anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge-eating disorder involve abnormal eating habits and distorted body image. Conditions like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) result from exposure to traumatic events and are marked by symptoms such as flashbacks and hyper vigilance. These disorders typically manifest early in life and include conditions like Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

TREATMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS:

Treatment for psychological disorders often involves a combination of psychotherapy, medication, lifestyle modifications, and support systems. Here are some common approaches. Talk therapy, including Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical-Behavior Therapy (DBT), and psychoanalytic therapy, can help individuals understand and manage their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. In some cases, medication can be prescribed to alleviate symptoms of certain psychological disorders. Antidepressants, antipsychotics, mood stabilizers, and anti-anxiety medications are examples (Templin JL, 2006).

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise, a balanced diet, adequate sleep, and stress management techniques can significantly improve mental health. Support from peers who have experienced similar struggles can be invaluable in the recovery process. Support groups offer

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a sense of community and understanding. In severe cases where an individual poses a risk to themselves or others, hospitalization may be necessary to provide intensive treatment and ensure safety.

CONCLUSION

Psychological disorders are complex conditions that affect millions of people worldwide. Understanding their causes, types, and available treatments is essential in promoting mental health and reducing the stigma associated with these disorders. With early intervention, appropriate treatment, and ongoing support, many individuals with psychological disorders can lead fulfilling and productive lives. It is crucial to remember that seeking help is a sign of strength, and no one should suffer in silence when facing a mental health challenge.

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