



Psych 1105

1 point

CHAPTER 13 – Psychological Disorders

1. In order for a behavior to be labeled a disorder, it must be *atypical, disturbing, maladaptive, and unjustifiable*. A behavior is atypical when it is not exhibited by others in the same situation. A behavior is disturbing when it results in negative feelings in the individual and/or others. Behavior is maladaptive when it results harm either psychologically or physically (e.g., depression that leads to alcoholism and then cirrhosis of the liver). Behavior is unjustifiable when no specific object or event can be linked to the behavior.
2. The DSM-IV allows psychologists to discuss disorders using universal terms to describe symptoms and behaviors. Although this has been very helpful in allowing psychologists to share a common understanding of disorders, the DSM-IV has identified/created 400 distinct disorders. These labels provide psychologists an easier way of identifying and treating mental diseases. However, patients with these identified diseases are often discriminated against because of the label their disorder has been given. It is not unusual for people to change how they see themselves after being diagnosed with a disorder. This change is often self-defeating and can create an invisible barrier or excuse for one's actions. In addition, people who have been diagnosed with a disorder are often shunned by their family and peers which can further complicate and interfere with the individual's treatment and recovery.
3. Research has found mixed results regarding the validity of *dissociative disorder*. Some researchers have found handedness switches and shifting visual acuity when an individual appears to change personalities. Other researchers, however, contend that these individuals do not *switch* personalities but rather exhibit a more extreme side of their personality (e.g., much like when someone acts goofy in the presence of their friends or family). It is also concerning that the number of people diagnosed with dissociative personality disorder has soared from just 2 cases from 1930 to 1960, to more than 20,000 cases from 1960 to the 1980's. The average number of personalities discovered per patient has jumped from 3 to 12. The validity of *dissociative disorder* is questioned also by the fact that it is virtually non-existent in other regions of the world such as India and Japan. In general, whether *dissociative disorder* is real or not may be a cultural phenomenon rather than a psychological disorder.