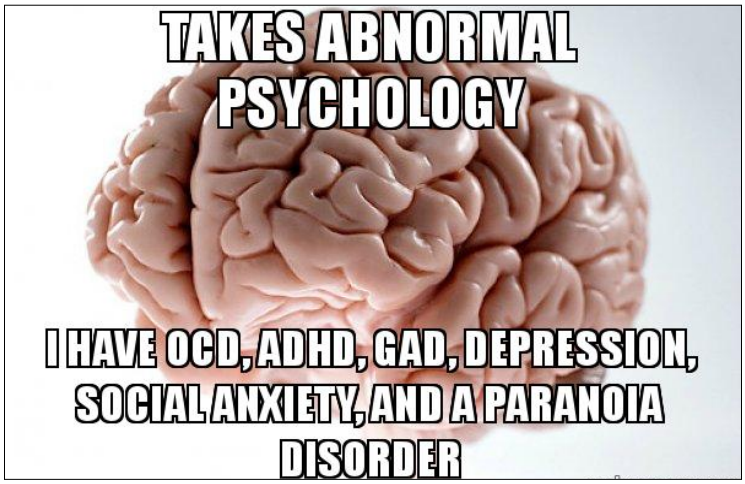
AP Psychology



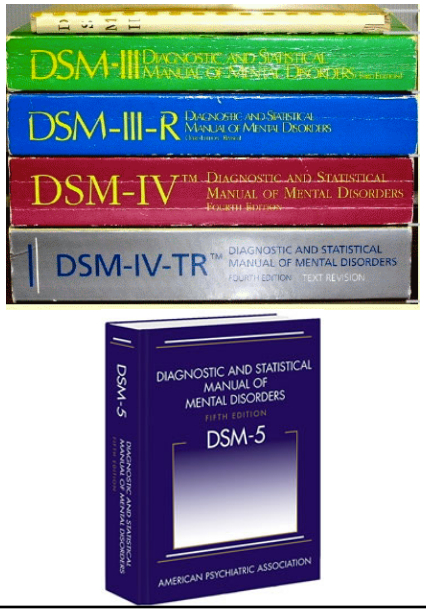
10.1 – Intro, Anxiety, & Dissociative Disorders

Abnormal Psychology

- **Identifying Abnormal Behavior**
  - Abnormal Behavior is:
    - Unusual
      - Occurs infrequently in a given population
    - Maladaptive
      - Interferes with a person's ability to function normally in one or more important areas of life
    - Disturbing to Others
      - Represents a serious departure from social and cultural norms of behavior
    - Distressful
      - Prevents a person from thinking clearly and making rational decisions

Abnormal Psychology

- **The DSM-V**
  - The "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders"
  - Clinicians and researchers from a wide range of specialized areas collaborate to create the manual
  - Provides a set of diagnostic categories for classifying over 300 specific psychological disorders
  - Lists the criteria and specific symptoms for each mental disorder, and is designed to generate reliable and valid diagnoses



Abnormal Psychology

- **Theories of Abnormal Behavior**

Psychological Perspective	Cause of Disorder(s)
Psychoanalytic/Psychodynamic	Internal, unconscious drives
Humanistic	Failure to strive to one's potential or being out of touch with one's feelings
Behavioral	Reinforcement history, the environment
Cognitive	Irrational, dysfunctional thoughts or ways of thinking
Sociocultural	Dysfunctional Society
Biomedical/Neuroscience	Organic problems, biochemical imbalances, genetic predispositions

Abnormal Psychology

- **Anxiety Disorders**
  - Involve extreme levels of fear and anxiety which negatively impact behavior and cognitive processes
  - While anxiety is a normal human response to stress, psychological anxiety is:
    - Irrational – It is provoked by nonexistent or exaggerated threats
    - Uncontrollable – The person cannot control or stop anxiety attacks
    - Disruptive – It impairs relationships and everyday activities

Abnormal Psychology

- **Anxiety Disorders**
  - **Generalized Anxiety Disorder**
    - Characterized by persistent, uncontrollable, and ongoing apprehension about a wide range of life situations
    - Free-floating anxiety can lead to chronic fatigue and irritability
    - GAD affects twice as many women as men and can be difficult to treat effectively

Abnormal Psychology

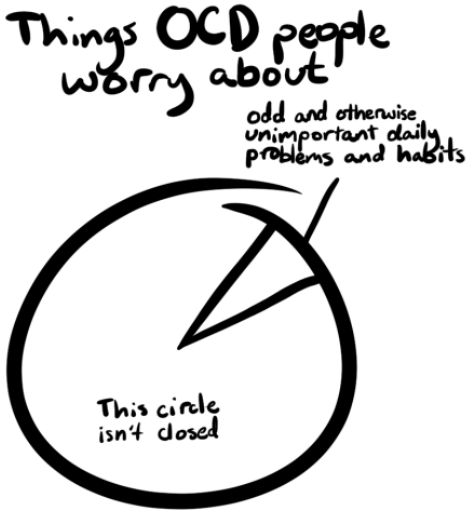
- **Anxiety Disorders**
  - **Panic Disorder**
    - Characterized by sudden episodes of extreme anxiety in the form of panic attacks and the persistent concern about having future attacks
    - Panic attacks are accompanied by a pounding heart, rapid breathing, sudden dizziness, and a feeling of lightheadedness

Abnormal Psychology

- **Anxiety Disorders**
  - **Phobic Disorder**
    - Characterized by an irrational fear of specific objects or situations that are normally considered harmless
    - Example: Agoraphobia
      - Characterized by an irrational fear of public places due to the concern that the individual will not be able to escape or receive help if needed

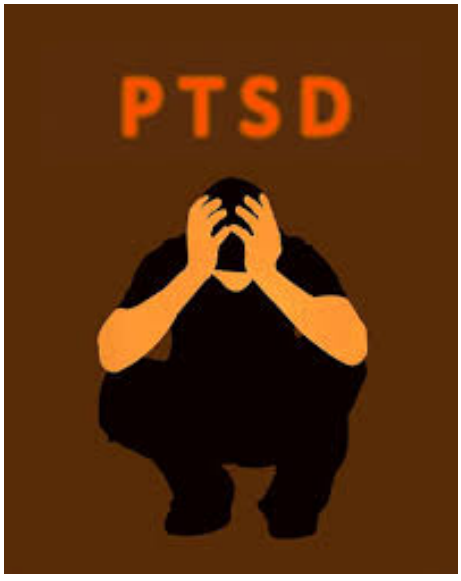
Abnormal Psychology

- **Anxiety Disorders**
  - **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**
    - Characterized by persistent unwanted thoughts (obsessions), which often cause distress or anxiety and/or repetitive behaviors (compulsions) the individuals feel the must perform in order to reduce anxiety
    - Time consuming and cause significant distress



Abnormal Psychology

- **Anxiety Disorders**
  - **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder**
    - Characterized by the exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or violence resulting in feelings of horror and helplessness
    - People who suffer from PTSD experience intrusive symptoms including involuntary, and distressing memories of the event
    - Can lead to depression, anxiety, uncontrollable crying, edginess, and the inability to concentrate



Abnormal Psychology

- **Dissociative Disorders**
  - Involve a splitting apart of significant aspects of a person's awareness, memory, or identity
  - Individuals who experience dissociative disorders have a compelling need to escape from anxiety and stress

Abnormal Psychology

- **Dissociative Disorders**
  - **Dissociate Identity Disorder (DID)**
    - Characterized by the presence of two or more distinct personality systems in the same individual
      - Each personality has its own name, unique memories, and self-image
    - Despite the revisions in the DSM-V, many researchers and mental health professionals continue to question if DID is a genuine psychological disorder

Abnormal Psychology

- **Dissociative Disorders**
  - **Dissociative Amnesia**
    - Characterized by a partial or total inability to recall past experiences, autobiographical information, and important information that is different from normal forgetting
    - Individuals may have amnesia for specific events or an overall amnesia for their personal identity and life history
    - Typically a response to traumatic events or extremely stressful situations such as abuse or military combat
    - Can be accompanied by "Fugue," or a sudden and inexplicable travel associated with amnesia