

## LESSON 20

### PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS

#### SUMMARY

Feeling happy, or crying when one is hurt, are some common actions which we all engage in some time or the other. Most of the time we act as the situation demands us to, that is, we control our emotions and behaviours according to the norm prevalent in the society.

#### Psychological disorders

Any disorder, which presents a person to function ineffectively in the social domain, is termed as a psychological disorder – it can be defined as a pattern of behavioural or psychological symptoms that causes significant distress, impairs the ability to function in one or more areas of life or both. The important feature is that the symptoms must represent a serious departure from the prevalent social and cultural norms. Some actions which may form an essential part of one culture may be a serious disturbance in others. To determine any behaviour as away from normal, seven considerations are used as the distinguishing criteria. They are:

Observer discomfort – acting in ways which others find embarrassing.

Violation of moral and ideal standards – habitual breaking of norms.

Suffering – experiencing distress and discomfort in one's own life.

Maladaptiveness – engaging in behaviour or thought pattern which makes it more difficult to lead one's life.

Irrationality – unable to communicate in a reasonable manner with others.

Unpredictability – acting in ways which are entirely unexpected.

Vividness and intensity – experience sensations which are far more vivid and intense than those of other people.

It can be said that abnormality is a matter of the degree to which a set of behaviours of an individual are considered inappropriate as against accepted norms of the society, and which are problematic for the person in his/her social functioning and adjustment.

#### Causes of Abnormal behaviour

Factors that may contribute to abnormal behaviours are -

##### Biological factors

- It may involve - genetic factors, chromosomal dysfunctions, brain or endocrine dysfunctions that may cause the development of abnormal behaviour.

##### Psychological factors

- these factors are difficult to identify and measure as they work indirectly. The effect is not very predictable but if one tries to analyze the various processes adopted during childhood like over-protection or over-indulgence, inconsistent rewards and punishments, these factors significantly contribute in the development of maladaptive behaviour.

## Types of disorders

### Anxiety disorders

Anxiety disorders are disorders which decrease the performance or social functioning of an individual due to hyper-anxiety. It can be of many types. Some of the anxiety disorders

#### Generalised Anxiety disorder

- The various symptoms of GAD are unrealistic or excessive worry, nervousness, dizziness, sweating, trembling, tension, difficulty in concentration etc.

#### Panic disorder

- Intense anxiety along with marked physiological symptoms such as increased palpitation, breathing difficulty, and a sense of helplessness.

#### Phobia

- irrational fear of some object or situation which disrupts normal functioning. E.g., Social phobia (person is afraid of speaking on stage, or talking to strangers and there are some specific phobias, like fear of rats or cats.)

#### Obsessive-compulsive disorder

- Persistent thoughts or wishes that intrude into one's consciousness and cannot be stopped are obsessions. Compulsion is an act which a person feels compelled to carry out despite knowing that it is unnecessary. Obsessive thinking often leads to compulsive acts.

#### Somatoform disorder

- These are physical problems which have no organic basis, for example, fatigue, headaches, vague body pains etc. The persons suffering from this disease remain preoccupied with symptoms

### Mood disorders

Mood disorders are disorders of emotion. Heightened intensity and duration of emotion require immediate psychological and medical attention. The individuals suffering from this type of disorder are termed as emotionally disturbed.

The three types of mood disorders have been characterized

as - depressive disorders, bipolar disorders, and other disorders. Mood disorders include severe symptoms such as dissatisfaction and anxiety, changes in appetite, disturbances of sleep and psychomotor functions, sudden weight loss, inability to think clearly, and thought of death and suicide.

### Substance related disorders

Drugs, like alcohol, influence our thoughts, actions and activities negatively. These drugs, if used for a long time, cause deterioration in attention, motivation, and motor co-ordination.

This disorder involves alcohol, pan-masala, tobacco, opium, marijuana etc. To help a person suffering from this disorder, the following steps are important:

#### Important steps to help in case of substance-abuse disorder

- Detoxification
- Administration of drugs for easing withdrawal symptoms.
- Aversive conditioning
- Social support
- Psychotherapy
- Rehabilitation
- Prevention and follow up

### Schizophrenia

It is a cluster of disorders characterized by fragmentation of the basic psychological processes such as attention, perception, thoughts, emotions, behaviour. Patients suffering from schizophrenia are not able to perceive things correctly, see or hear things which are not there,

thinking pattern is confused and disorganized and fail to communicate properly.

#### Types of Schizophrenia

- **Catatonic** - Unusual patterns of motor activity, speech disturbances such as repetitive chatter or rigid postures
- **Disorganized** - Verbal asymmetry, poorly developed ideas
- **Paranoid** - Preoccupied with one or more set of ideas
- **Undifferentiated** - Hallucinations, incoherence
- **Residual** - Residual Withdrawal, absence of motivation etc

### Personality disorder

Personality disorder is characterized by a maladaptive style of thinking, feeling and behaving which disturbs the normal functioning of an individual.



#### Types of Personality disorder

- paranoid
- schizoid
- schizotypal
- antisocial
- borderline
- histrionic
- narcissistic
- avoidant
- dependent
- obsessive-compulsive

### Evaluate yourself

1. List the different types of personality disorder.
2. Define mood disorder and write the types of mood disorder.
3. Explain the different anxiety disorders.