



ISD Virtual Learning

Psychology

April 13, 2020



Introduction to Abnormal Psychology

Lesson: 16 April 13, 2020

Objective/Learning Target: The student will be able to define psychologically abnormal behavior.

Warm Up

We are going to be looking at an introduction into Abnormal Psychology. Before you go on into the lesson, answer each of the following questions.

1. What do you think the term “Abnormal Psychology” means? Take 1 minute to write down your own definition of what you think it is.

2. Click on the following link to read a dictionary’s definition:

[Merriam-Webster: Abnormal Psychology](#)

3. After you’ve done steps 1 & 2, compare your definition with the dictionary definition. What things did the definitions have in common? What are some things from the dictionary definition that you need to add to your definition to make it more complete?

Lesson Activity

One simple way to describe Abnormal Psychology is that it is the scientific study of abnormal behavior in order to describe, predict, explain, and change abnormal patterns of functioning.

But what is Abnormal Behavior?



Abnormal behavior is generally defined as “behavior that violates a norm in society, is maladaptive, is rare given the context of the culture and environment, and is causing the person distress in their daily life.” - *Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - 5th Edition (DSM-5)*

The DSM-5 is a handbook used by mental health professionals containing descriptions, symptoms, and other criteria for diagnosing mental disorders.

The current edition was published in 2013.

Lesson Activity

What makes a behavior a mental illness?

- Many definitions have been proposed, yet none are accepted everywhere.
- Most definitions share some common features.

The 4 D's of Mental Disorders:

1. **Deviance** → different, extreme, unusual
2. **Distress** → unpleasant & upsetting to the person with the disorder
3. **Dysfunction** → causes interference with the person's daily life
4. **Danger** → poses risk of harm to themselves or others

Practice

Click on the link to read an article about an eating disorder known as Pica. The article also includes the diagnostic criteria for Pica from the DSM-5. As you are reading everything from the article, try to connect the 4 D's to what you're reading. Does it address all 4 or are there some that it doesn't address?

Article: [Pica \(Theravive.com\)](https://www.theravive.com/pica/)

You may find it helpful to write the following questions related to the 4 D's along with your answers down on a separate piece of paper.

1. How is Pica *deviant*?
2. How does it cause the patient *distress*?
3. How does Pica cause *dysfunction* in the patient's life?
4. Why/how is Pica *dangerous*?

Practice - ANSWER KEY

Use the Answer Key on the right to check your responses.

Article: [Pica \(Theravive.com\)](https://www.theravive.com/pica)

1. How is Pica *deviant*?
 - a. People with Pica eat things that provide no nutritional value like hair, paper, nails, glass, etc. which is unusual or extreme.
2. How does it cause the patient *distress*?
 - a. Patients know what they're doing isn't good for them and would like to stop but feel unable to which can lead to other issues.
3. How does Pica cause *dysfunction* in the patient's life?
 - a. Instead of eating things they should, patients are constantly drawn to eating things they shouldn't making it difficult to go about leading a normal life.
4. Why/how is Pica *dangerous*?
 - a. Eating non-nutritive objects can cause the patient to choke, damage teeth/throat/internal organs/etc., and cause blockages...all of which could lead to serious injury or death.

Practice

If you would like to see how the 4 D's of Mental Disorders relate to other illnesses. Click on the links from Theravive.com to read about them.

[Obsessive Compulsive Disorder \(OCD\)](#)

[Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\)](#)

[Schizophrenia](#)

[Generalized Anxiety Disorder \(GAD\)](#)

The DSM-5 details hundreds of mental disorders, so feel free to choose something not linked above!

Use the same questions from before to guide your research:

1. How is _____ *deviant*?
2. How does _____ cause the patient *distress*?
3. How does _____ cause *dysfunction* in the patient's life?
4. Why/how is _____ *dangerous*?

Reflection

Abnormal Psychology is the branch of psychology that deals with the description, causes, and treatment of abnormal behavior patterns and mental disorders/illness.

Almost all mental disorders have 4 things in common: Deviance, Distress, Dysfunction, Danger.

Additional Resources

If you would like to learn more about Abnormal Psychology, the DSM-5, or the 4 D's of Mental Disorders, check out some of these links!

VIDEO: [Crash Course Psychology: Psychological Disorders](#)

ARTICLE: [American Psychiatric Association DSM-5](#)