

## Psychopathology

- ❖ Views of mental disorders
  - Somatogenic hypothesis = caused by specific injury or infection to body
  - Psychogenic hypothesis = rooted in psychological processes
    - Most widely believed today
- ❖ Modern theories
  - Diathesis-stress model
    - Diathesis = predisposition or vulnerability for a disorder
    - Stress = trigger turns vulnerability into disorder
    - Both must be present
  - Multicausal model
    - Multiple factors give rise to diathesis & stress
  - Biopsychosocial viewpoint
    - Biological factors
    - Psychological factors
    - Social factors
- ❖ Normal vs. abnormal
  - Abnormal characterized by
    - Personal distress
    - Level of impairment which interferes with ability to function
    - Violation of social norms (culturally dependent)
    - Statistical infrequency
- ❖ DSM model
  - Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
  - Contains classifications & criteria
  - Does not address causes of disorders
- ❖ Five dimensions for evaluation
  - Axis I = clinical disorders
  - Axis II = personality & developmental disorders
  - Axis III = general medical conditions
  - Axis IV = psychosocial stressors
  - Axis V = global assessment of functioning (0-100 scale)

### Axis I

- ❖ Anxiety disorders
  - Four components
    - Physical (activation of sympathetic nervous system)
    - Cognitive (unrealistic thoughts)
    - Emotional
    - Behavioral
  - Generalized anxiety disorder
    - Continued, persistent anxiety that is difficult to control
    - Not caused by specific event/situation

- Phobia
  - Intense & irrational fear
  - **Specific phobia** = fear of particular object/situation (e.g. spiders, snakes)
  - **Social phobia** = fear of being watched & judged by others
- Panic attacks
  - Discrete period of intense fear or discomfort
  - Usually around 10 minutes long
  - Both physical (racing heart, sweating, shortness of breath) & psychological symptoms (fear of dying, fear of losing control, depersonalization)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
  - Caused by exposure to traumatic events
  - Re-experiencing the event, hyperarousal, avoidance, sleep disturbances, emotional numbing, etc.
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
  - **Obsessions** = persistent, intrusive thoughts, images & impulses
  - **Compulsions** = repetitive behaviors or mental acts (e.g. washing hands, checking stove)
- Causes
  - Different anxiety disorders have different biological bases
  - Conditioning (disorders strengthened by learning)
- ❖ Depressive disorders
  - Significant change in one's emotional state
  - Clinical major depression
  - Dysthymia
    - Mild depression
    - Still chronic (at least 2 years)
  - Seasonal affective disorder
    - Generally during winter months/when not exposed to sun
    - Treated in a more biological manner
  - Bipolar disorder
    - Shift between depression & mania
    - **Mania** = distinct period of particularly elevated or irritable mood
      - Decrease sleep, talkative, racing thoughts, distractibility, etc.
    - Depression for at least 2 weeks followed by mania for at least 1 week
  - Causes
    - Hereditary components important
    - Disruption of neurotransmission (norepinephrine, dopamine & serotonin systems)
  - Psychological factors
    - Psychoanalytic (childhood issues)
    - Attachment (insecure attachment/trouble with separation)
    - Behavioral/learning (reinforcement, learned helplessness)
    - Cognitive (distortions, misattribution of events)