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## Mental Health and Mental Health Disorders



## 1. Identify seven characteristics of mental health

Define the following term:

### **mental health**

a general term that refers to the normal functioning of emotional and intellectual abilities.

## 1. Identify seven characteristics of mental health

HHAs should understand these characteristics of a person who is mentally healthy:

- Gets along with others
- Adapts to change
- Cares for self and others
- Gives and accepts love
- Deals with situations that cause anxiety, disappointment, and frustration
- Takes responsibility for decisions, feelings, and actions
- Controls and fulfills desires and impulses appropriately

## 2. Identify four causes of mental health disorders

Define the following terms:

### **mental health disorder**

a disorder that affects a person's ability to function at a normal level in the family, home, or community and often causes inappropriate behavior.

### **situation response**

temporary condition that has symptoms like those of a mental health disorder; possible causes include a personal crisis, temporary physical changes in the brain, side effects from medications, interactions among medications, and severe change in the environment.

## 2. Identify four causes of mental health disorders

Situations of chronic stress like these may cause or worsen mental health disorder:

- Physical factors such as illness, disability, aging, substance abuse, or chemical imbalance
- Environmental factors such as weak family relationships or traumatic childhood experiences
- Heredity or family influence
- Stress, including insufficient coping abilities

### 3. Distinguish between fact and fallacy concerning mental health disorders

Define the following term:

**fallacy**

a false belief.

### 3. Distinguish between fact and fallacy concerning mental health disorders

Remember:

Understand that it is a false belief that people who have a mental health disorder can control their illness and choose to be well.

### 3. Distinguish between fact and fallacy concerning mental health disorders

Remember:

Sometimes people confuse the meaning of terms intellectual disability and mental health disorder. They are not the same. Intellectual disability (formerly called mental retardation) is a developmental disability that causes below-average mental functioning.



### 3. Distinguish between fact and fallacy concerning mental health disorders

It is important to understand these differences between intellectual disability and mental health disorder:

- Intellectual disability is a permanent condition; mental health disorders can be temporary
- Intellectual disability is present at birth or emerges in childhood. A mental health disorder may occur any time during a person's life
- Intellectual disability affects mental ability. A mental health disorder may or may not affect mental ability
- There is no cure for an intellectual disability, although people who are intellectually disabled can be helped. Many mental health disorders can be cured with treatment, such as medications and therapy

### 3. Distinguish between fact and fallacy concerning mental health disorders

Remember:

A mental health disorders is a disorder like any physical illness.

#### 4. Explain the connection between mental and physical wellness

Remember:

Mental health is important to physical health. Mental health can reduce stress and prevent some physical diseases.

#### 4. Explain the connection between mental and physical wellness

Think about this question:

How can physical illness or disability cause or worsen mental health disorders?

### ***Critical Thinking: Conversation Starter***

- Are there any stress-reducing techniques you have used? What was the most successful technique you tried?
- Have you tried any of the following to relieve stress: exercise, massage, deep breathing exercises, meditation, reading, or just talking with friends about conflicts and problems?

## 5. List guidelines for communicating with clients who have a mental health disorder

These guidelines can assist in communicating with clients who have a mental health disorder:

- Do not talk to adults as if they were children
- Use simple, clear statements and a normal tone of voice
- Show respect and concern
- Sit or stand at a normal distance. Be aware of body language
- Be honest and direct
- Avoid arguments
- Maintain eye contact and listen carefully

## 6. Identify and define common defense mechanisms

Define the following term:

### **defense mechanisms**

unconscious behaviors used to release tension or cope with stress.

## 6. Identify and define common defense mechanisms

HHAs should understand these defense mechanisms:

- Denial
- Projection
- Displacement
- Rationalization
- Repression
- Regression



## 7. Describe types of mental health disorders

Define the following terms:

### **anxiety**

an uneasiness, worry, or fear, often about a situation or condition.

### **generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)**

an anxiety disorder characterized by chronic anxiety and worry, even when there is no cause for these feelings.

### **panic disorder**

a disorder in which a person has regular panic attacks or lives with chronic anxiety about having another attack.

### **social anxiety disorder**

a disorder in which a person has excessive anxiety about social situations.

### **phobia**

an intense, irrational fear of or anxiety about an object, place, or situation.

## 7. Describe types of mental health disorders

Define the following terms:

### **obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)**

a disorder characterized by recurring intrusive behavior or thoughts that cause anxiety or stress.

### **posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**

a disorder caused by experiencing or witnessing a traumatic experience.

### **major depressive disorder or depression**

a type of depression that causes withdrawal, lack of energy, and loss of interest in activities, as well as other symptoms; also called *clinical depression*.

### **apathy**

a lack of interest in activities.

## 7. Describe types of mental health disorders

Define the following terms:

### **bipolar disorder**

a type of mental health disorder that causes a person to swing from periods of deep depression (a depressive episode) to periods of extreme activity (a manic episode).

### **schizophrenia**

a mental health disorder that affects a person's ability to think, communicate, make decisions, and understand reality.

### **hallucinations**

false or distorted sensory perceptions.

### **delusions**

persistent false beliefs.

## 8. Explain common treatments for mental health disorders

Define the following term:

### **psychotherapy**

a method of treating mental health disorders that involves talking about one's problems with a mental health professional.

### **cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)**

a type of psychotherapy that is usually short-term and focuses on skills and solutions that a person can use to modify negative thinking and behavior patterns; often used to treat anxiety disorders and depression.

## 8. Explain common treatments for mental health disorders

Remember:

Mental health disorders can be treated. Medication and psychotherapy, and cognitive behavioral therapy are common treatment methods. It will be important to monitor possible side effects if clients take medications to treat mental health disorders.

## 9. Explain the home health aide's role in caring for clients who have a mental health disorder

Remember:

Personal care of clients with mental health disorders is similar to care for any client. The care plan will tell you what care to perform. You will also have some special responsibilities.

## Key Material 18-1: HHA's Role in Caring for Clients Who Have a Mental Health Disorder

- Observe clients for changes. Document and report observations.
- Support the client and his family.
- Encourage clients to do as much as possible for themselves.
- Help preserve the client's role and authority in the family.

## 9. Explain the home health aide's role in caring for clients who have a mental health disorder

HHAs may perform these home management tasks for clients who have a mental health disorder:

- Food shopping and meal planning and preparation
- Housekeeping and laundry
- Activities of daily living and personal care
- Child and family care



## 10. Identify important observations that should be made and reported

HHAs should know these observations to observe and report, and understand why it is important to do so:

- Changes in ability
- Positive or negative mood changes (withdrawal)
- Behavior changes
- Comments about hurting self or others
- Medication errors
- Real or imagined physical symptoms
- Events, situations, or people that provoke certain reactions

## 11. List the signs of substance abuse

Define the following term:

### **substance abuse**

the use of legal or illegal drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol in a way that harms oneself or others.

## 11. List the signs of substance abuse

Discuss facts about opioids and opioid abuse:

- Opioids are used to relieve severe pain and are sometimes used to treat chronic pain.
- They boost feelings of relaxation and happiness, which causes people to continue to want to take them and even seek out illegal drugs once they no longer have prescriptions.
- Opioid abuse has become widespread in the US over the last few decades.
- Some opioids are legally prescribed (oxycodone, morphine, codeine, hydrocodone, and fentanyl).
- Others are illegal (heroin and illegally made fentanyl).
- Once a person's tolerance increases, higher doses are required and high doses can cause breathing to slow and even stop. Death may result.
- When a person overdoses on opioids, he must be given an antidote called naloxone during a certain time frame for it to reverse the potentially fatal effects.

## Key Material 18-2: Signs of Substance Abuse

- Changes in physical appearance (red eyes, dilated pupils, weight loss)
- Changes in personality (moodiness, strange behavior, disruption of routines, lying)
- Irritability
- Smell of alcohol, cigarettes, or other substances
- Diminished sense of smell
- Changes in vital signs

## Key Material 18-2: Signs of Substance Abuse (cont'd)

- Loss of appetite
- Inability to function normally
- Need for money or missing money
- Confusion or forgetfulness
- Blackouts or memory loss
- Alcohol or cigarettes missing from home
- Frequent accidents
- Problems with family or friends

## 11. List the signs of substance abuse

Remember:

Illegal drugs are not the only substances that are abused. Even over-the-counter medications can be abused if too many are taken.

## 11. List the signs of substance abuse

Think about this question:

Can you think of substances commonly found in the home that could be abused?

## ***Critical Thinking: Case Study***

Mrs. D is suffering from major depressive disorder. She was hospitalized for four weeks and placed on a new antidepressant medication. She has three small children to care for and a husband. She is not able to care completely for herself or her children at this time.

- What do you know about this diagnosis? Is this a permanent situation?
- What home management tasks would you be expected to do when assisting her in the home?
- Are her new medications likely to cause any problems?
- What observations are very important at this time?
- If she talks about hurting herself, what may this be a sign of and what action should you take?



