



Disorders of Body Preoccupation

Psychology 311
Abnormal Psychology

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1

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Overview

- Generally are body complaints that appear to be related to psychological makeup and stress
- Have no specific medical diagnosis
- Note: Just because there is no organic basis for the problem does not mean the person is not suffering

2

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Many Disorders

- Somatoform Disorders
- Pain Disorders
- Somatization Disorders
- Conversion Disorders
- Hypochondriasis Disorders
- Body Dysmorphic Disorders (BDD)
- Factitious Disorders
- Others

3

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Somatoform Disorders

- Physicians are asked to treat a physical condition but no physical cause is found.

4

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Pain

- Acute pain
 - Up to 6 months duration
- Chronic pain
 - Greater than 6 months duration
- Can be difficult to assess
 - Generalized pain very difficult
 - Especially back pain

5

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Patient Coping Strategies

- Ignore the pain
- Distract person from the pain
- Increase positive self-statements
- Catastrophizing one's pain
- Hoping for relief
- Praying for relief

6

Other Self Strategies

- Drugs
 - Alcohol
 - Drink wine to help dull the pain
 - I cannot sleep without my ___ glasses of Scotch
 - Marijuana
 - Oxycotin

7

Problem

- Is temporary
- Causes other problems
- Develop Tolerance

8

Other Treatments

- Medical
 - Surgery
 - Drugs
 - Same issues
 - What happens when you stop
 - Patients do not follow other directions
 - Stretching
 - Rest
 - Non use

9

Exercise

- Helps to decrease inflammation associated with pain
- Strengthens opposing muscles and ligaments
 - Takes pressure off pain pressure points
- Strengthens muscle groups associated with pain
 - Reduces the pain
- Sometimes does not work to decrease pain

10

Psychological Treatments

- Operant Models
 - Identify the triggers that cause the pain
 - Then reinforce alternative behaviors
 - Extinguish (ignore) pain associated behaviors
- Cognitive/Behavioral Models
 - Identify learned responses
 - Educate the person in pain
 - Adjust attitudes toward pain
 - Alter the environment

11

Biofeedback

- Providing feedback about the area in pain can result in pain reduction
- Use some monitoring device that provides some signal (sound).
- When pain is reduced, the signal decreases
- Patient tries to decrease the signal as much as they can
- Result, get reductions in pain.

12

Environment

- Can provide many triggers about pain
- Alter the environment, can reduce pain
- Example
 - Altering the patient environment in a hospital
 - Developed a room where there were lots of plants, waterfall, soothing music
 - Result, patients reported less pain during their stay
 - Can be done at home as well

13

Conclusions

- Many options
- May need to try several options to find ones that work
- Sometimes, nothing works
 - If not trauma caused, may need to look at other psychological issues

14

Somatization Disorders

- Marked by multiple somatic complaints that reoccur
- Are chronic

15

Briquet's Syndrome

- Symptoms may include
 - Headaches, fatigue, heart pains, vomiting, bowel problems, menstrual problems, sexual problems, fainting, allergies, others
- Are mostly women
- Person goes from Physician to Physician
 - May undergo unneeded surgeries
 - Take large quantities of medications
- Issue: Person actually believes they are sick.

16

Other Symptoms

- Are self-centered
- May experience anxiety or depression
 - May attempt suicide
- Generally are preoccupied with their symptoms.

17

Conversion Disorders

- Experience the loss of function for some body part
- May include
 - Deafness,
 - Paralysis
 - Blindness
 - Difficulty walking
 - Stomach Pain and spasms

18

Associated Issues

- Usually has a sudden onset and is associated with a stressor.
- Allow you to escape from life challenges by incapacitation
 - Is a negative reinforcement paradigm

19

Hypochondriasis

- Individuals believe they have a medical problem lasting for 6 months with no medical reassurance
- Individuals have an obsessive concern with body organs
- Fear disease
- Often exaggerate symptoms
- Monitor body symptoms closely

20

Treatment of Hypochondriasis

- Rapport
- Education about symptoms and diseases
- Carefully challenge

21

Bodily Dysmorphic Disorders (BDD)

- Is an imagined defect or morbid concern about a minor unwanted physical feature.
- Individuals experience marked distress
- Treatment
 - Cognitive/Behavioral
 - Pinpoint dysfunction perceptions

22

Factitious Disorders

- It a total fabrication or exaggeration of a disorder
- Individuals often have a history of uncontrollable lying
- Individuals seek attention any way they can get it.
- Example
 - Munchausen Syndrome

23

Symptoms

- Simulate disease for getting medical attention.
- May travel far to a new hospital
- Have incredible tales of medical history
- May fake symptoms
 - Blood in urine
- May self inflict real injuries

24

Factitious Disorder by Proxy

- Here a parent self inflicts injury to their child so they can get attention.
- May occur with pets as well.

25

Malingering

- Here seek hospitalization for a reason
 - Monetary or non-monetary compensation
 - Avoid police or prison
 - Disability pensions
 - Others
- Sometimes is difficult to diagnose

26

Conclusions

- Many disorders
- Have a multitude of symptoms
- May begin with a physical cause, then move into a psychological disorder.
- Some are hard to treat.

27