Psychological Disorders
Psychological Disorders

- More than 100 million Americans have a close family member that suffers from a major mental illness
- There are around 1.5 million people presently hospitalized in the United States for mental disturbances
Normal or Not?

A man living in the Ozark Mountains has a vision in which God speaks to him. He begins preaching to his relatives and neighbors, and soon he has the whole town in a state of religious fervor. People say he has a “calling.” His reputation as a prophet and healer spreads, and soon he is drawing large audiences everywhere he goes. However, when he ventures to St. Louis and attempts to hold a prayer meetings, blocking traffic on a main street at rush hour, he is arrested. He tells the policemen about his conversations with God, and they hurry him off to the nearest mental hospital.
Deviation from Normality

- Abnormality is deviation from average or from the majority
  - Different cultural norms must be taken into perspective
- Abnormal people are those who fail to adjust
- What are some dangers of defining abnormality?
Insanity

- John Hinckley, tried for shooting President Ronald Reagan in 1981
- Found not guilty “by reason of insanity”
  - He could not tell right from wrong, and couldn’t control his behavior because of a psychological disorder
Causes

- Most of the time a specific cause cannot be determined
- Psychological (nurture)
  - Stress
- Sociocultural Background
  - Eating disorders are rarely found outside the US
- Physiological / Biological (nature)
  - Hereditary / Genetic
- Physiological – Sociocultural - Psychological
Disorders of Childhood

- **Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder**
  - Cause is unknown
  - Relationship problems, delinquent behavior, substance abuse, marriage / occupation problems
  - Treatment:
    - Prescription drugs
    - Restructuring of the environment

- **Autism**
  - Failure to develop normal communication patterns, social interactions, and emotional responses
  - Attachment to objects, do not like change, trouble forming attachments to people
  - Treatment
    - No cure, treatments vary greatly with widely varying success rates
Anxiety Disorders
Anxiety – feeling of apprehension and dread

- Panic Disorder
  - Frequent overwhelming attacks of anxiety
- Phobias
  - Disabled and overwhelmed by exposure to certain objects or events
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
  - Endless preoccupation with some urge or thought
Somatoform Disorders
- Psychological issues are expressed in dramatic bodily symptoms

- **Conversion Disorder**
  - A serious psychological trauma is unconsciously change or converted to a symbolic physical dysfunction. (blindness or deafness)

- **Hypochondriasis**
  - Overly concerned about your health
  - A minor symptom is seen as a horrible illness
Dissociative Disorders
- disconnect or disassociate certain events or behaviors from one another

- Amnesia
  - Head trauma, electrical shock, high fever
  - Selective forgetting of nightmarish events

- Fugue
  - Amnesia where a person moves away and starts all over due to serious unresolved conflict. When they “snap out of it” they do not remember what had happened during the fugue event

- Dissociative Identity Disorder
  - Multiple personality disorder- instead of “forgetting” a different personality emerges that the event happened to instead of the person.
Mood Disorders

- **Dysthymic Disorder**
  - “low spirits” moderate depression

- **Major Depression**
  - hopelessness, worthlessness, suicidal thoughts

- **Mania**
  - Extreme up moods, so excited you cannot function

- **Bipolar Disorders**
  - Wild moods swings – mania to major depression

- **Causes of Mood Disorders**
  - Stress, personal loss, dramatic swings in serotonin levels

- **Suicide**
  - Desire to end their life
  - Can be a side effect of some medication
Psychotic Disorders

- Psychosis has four major symptoms
  - Serious distortion of mental processes
  - Hallucinations
  - Delusional behavior “I’m the king of France!”
  - Inappropriate emotional responses
Schizophrenic Disorders

- The most serious of all psychosis
  - Catatonic
    - Sit or stand unmoving, not speaking for hours.
  - Paranoid
    - Feelings of persecution, suspiciousness, grandiose beliefs. “The aliens are coming for me again tonight”
  - Undifferentiated
    - Everything that does not fit into the other two
Schizophrenic Disorders

- Psychotic Episode
  - The psychotic behavior comes in cycles, in between which they are OK.

- Hereditary and environmental factors
  - Genetically passed on
  - A family that is disturbed can push someone over the edge

- Chemical factors
  - Abnormally high levels of dopamine
Personality Disorders

- Antisocial personality disorder
  - Peculiar unpleasant personality patterns
  - Lack of conscience, guilt, no concern for others
  - Psychopaths, Sociopaths

- Borderline personality disorder
  - 1980 – first diagnosis
  - Clingy or emotionally needy
  - Can become very angry when things do not go their way
  - Use of self destructive behavior to manipulate others