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Psychology 1100

8 August 2020

### Reflective Writing Signature Assignment

#### **Signature Assignment Piece - Concept Identified:**

A concept that I have found interesting from this course of lifespan of human development is psychological disorders. It can be tricky to define the exact meaning of the term, but an overall, simple definition is known as; a condition characterized by abnormal thoughts, feelings and behaviors. These behaviors, thoughts, and inner experiences are considered atypical, distressful, dysfunctional, and sometimes dangerous. It is important for mental health professionals to agree on what kind of thoughts, feelings and behaviors are truly abnormal in the sense that is genuinely indicating the presence of psychopathology (Learning).

There are many psychological disorders that individuals are currently experiencing, sometimes, more than one. Psychological disorders that were mentioned in lecture were; depression, mania, anxiety disorders (panic disorder, phobias, generalized anxiety disorder, post traumatic stress disorder), and schizophrenia. However, only a few will be discussed.

One of the many psychological disorders is depression. To be considered depressed, an individual needs to be experiencing five or more of the following symptoms; depressed or sad, diminished interest or pleasure, weight loss/weight gain, difficulties sleeping, fatigue, inability to think/concentrate, recurrent thoughts of death or suicide, etc. (Flynt).

Mania is known as an elevated, expansive or irritable mood, that lasts for at least one week. An individual needs to be experiencing at least four of the following; inflated self esteem or grandiosity, decreased need for sleep, more talkative than usual, racing thoughts, distractibility, increased goal directed activity, etc. (Flynt).

A common anxiety disorder is panic attacks, they consist of four or more physiological, behavioral and/or cognitive symptoms. This includes; chest pains, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness, nausea, paresthesias, derealization/depersonalization, avoidance and escape behaviors, etc. (Flynt).

Another big concept that goes along with psychological disorders is stigma. Stigma is a mark of disgrace that sets an individual or group apart from others, it is associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person. There are two forms of stigma, which are public stigma and self stigma. Three factors that are required for self stigmatization are; the individual must be aware of the stereotype of mental illness, they must agree with others, application--the individual must apply the stereotype to oneself (Flynt).

### **Reflective Writing Piece - Concept Analyzed/Lesson Learned:**

There are many of the disorders that I have known to exist but I didn't have a complete understanding of how in depth it can affect an individual's life. I believe it's important for all individuals to understand that everyone is different and is fighting their own battles.

Psychological disorders are common for many individuals to experience, it's not something that people should be put down for or to be stigmatized.

I personally feel like the biggest thing an individual can do to help reduce stigma that is revolving around mental health is to get educated and to be open minded about the topic. There

is no reason to involve prejudice, discrimination, or stigmas, because in the long run, how does that help anything or anyone? The more an individual is willing to learn and make positive changes, the more likely that there can be a healthier outlook on mental health.

It's important for other individuals to become educated on psychological disorders and stigmatization revolving around it. There are ways for individuals to help reduce the stigma with mental health is to start openly talking about mental health ("9 Ways to Fight Mental Health Stigma."). I feel like in society, it's viewed as a dirty secret that needs to be swept under the rug. But why? According to my previous psychology 1010 course, one in five adults will experience symptoms that are consistent with a mental illness in their lifetime. While one in ten children experience such symptoms.

A helpful idea to keep in mind is to not label individuals who have psychological disorders or use disrespectful terms. Don't say "He's bipolar" or "She's schizophrenic", people are people, not diagnoses (Susman). Keep in mind to be careful about casually using diagnostic terms to describe everyday behavior (Susman). It is common and damaging when individuals use mental health terms in our common language.

E-PORTFOLIO: <https://ashleycavender.jimdofree.com/coursework/psychology-1100/>

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