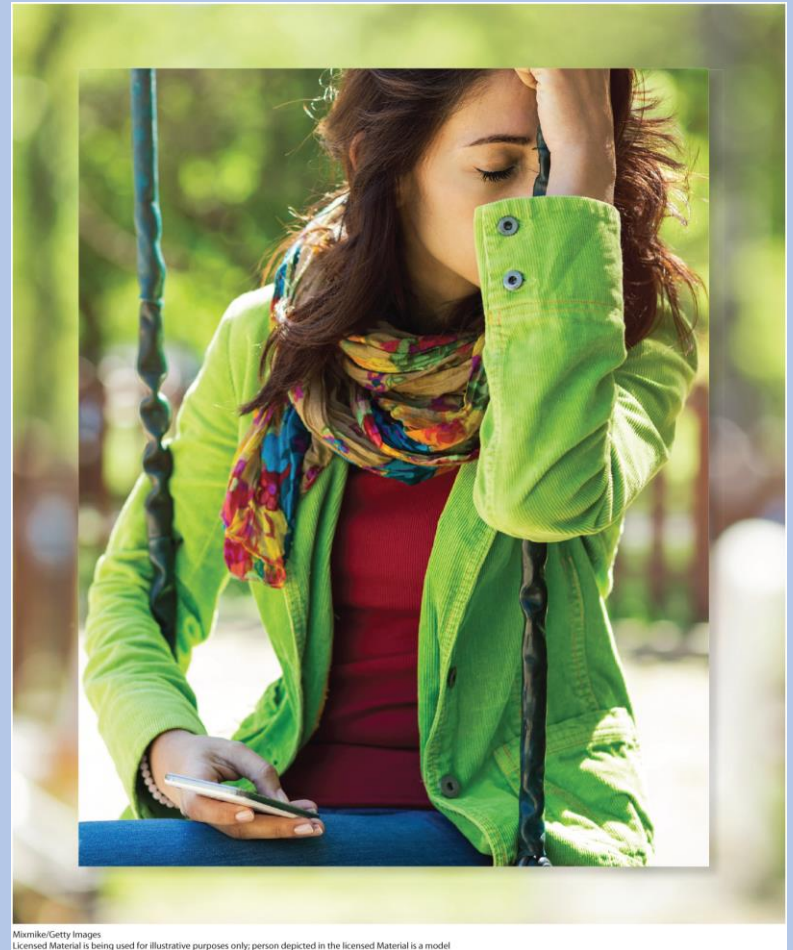


# Psychological Disorders

# Problems in Identifying Psychological Disorders (part 1)

- **Psychological disorder:** a syndrome characterized by clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behavior that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning. Psychological disorders are usually associated with significant distress in social, occupational, or other important activities.



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# Problems in Identifying Psychological Disorders (part 2)

- Deviance

- The degree to which the behaviors a person engages in or their ideas are considered unacceptable or uncommon in society

- Distress

- The negative feelings a person has because of his or her disorder

- Dysfunction

- The maladaptive behavior that interferes with a person being able to successfully carry out everyday functions

- Danger

- Dangerous or violent behavior directed at other people or oneself

# Categorizing and Diagnosing Psychological Disorders (part 1)

- *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychological Disorders (DSM-5)*
- Reliability
  - The extent to which different diagnosticians, all trained in the use of the system, reach the same conclusion when they independently diagnose the same individuals
- Validity
  - An index of the extent to which the categories it identifies are clinically meaningful

# Categorizing and Diagnosing Psychological Disorders (part 2)

- Possible dangers in labeling
  - Labeling a person can have negative consequences (such as lowering self-esteem or the esteem of others)
  - Labels should be applied only to the disorder, not to the person
- Medical students' disease
  - Characterized by a strong tendency to relate personally to, and to find in oneself, the symptoms of any disease or disorder described in a textbook

# Cultural Variations in Disorders and Diagnoses

- Culture-bound syndromes
  - Expressions of mental distress that are almost completely limited to specific cultural groups
- Cultural views on what is or is not a disorder
  - Culture affects the types of behaviors or characteristics thought to warrant a diagnosis of psychological disorder
    - Until 1973, homosexuality was officially classed as a psychological disorder in the United States

# Cultural Values and the Diagnosis of ADHD

- Large increase in diagnosis of ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder) in the U.S. may have several factors
  - Increased understanding of ADHD
  - Increased emphasis on school performance
  - Reduced opportunities for vigorous play



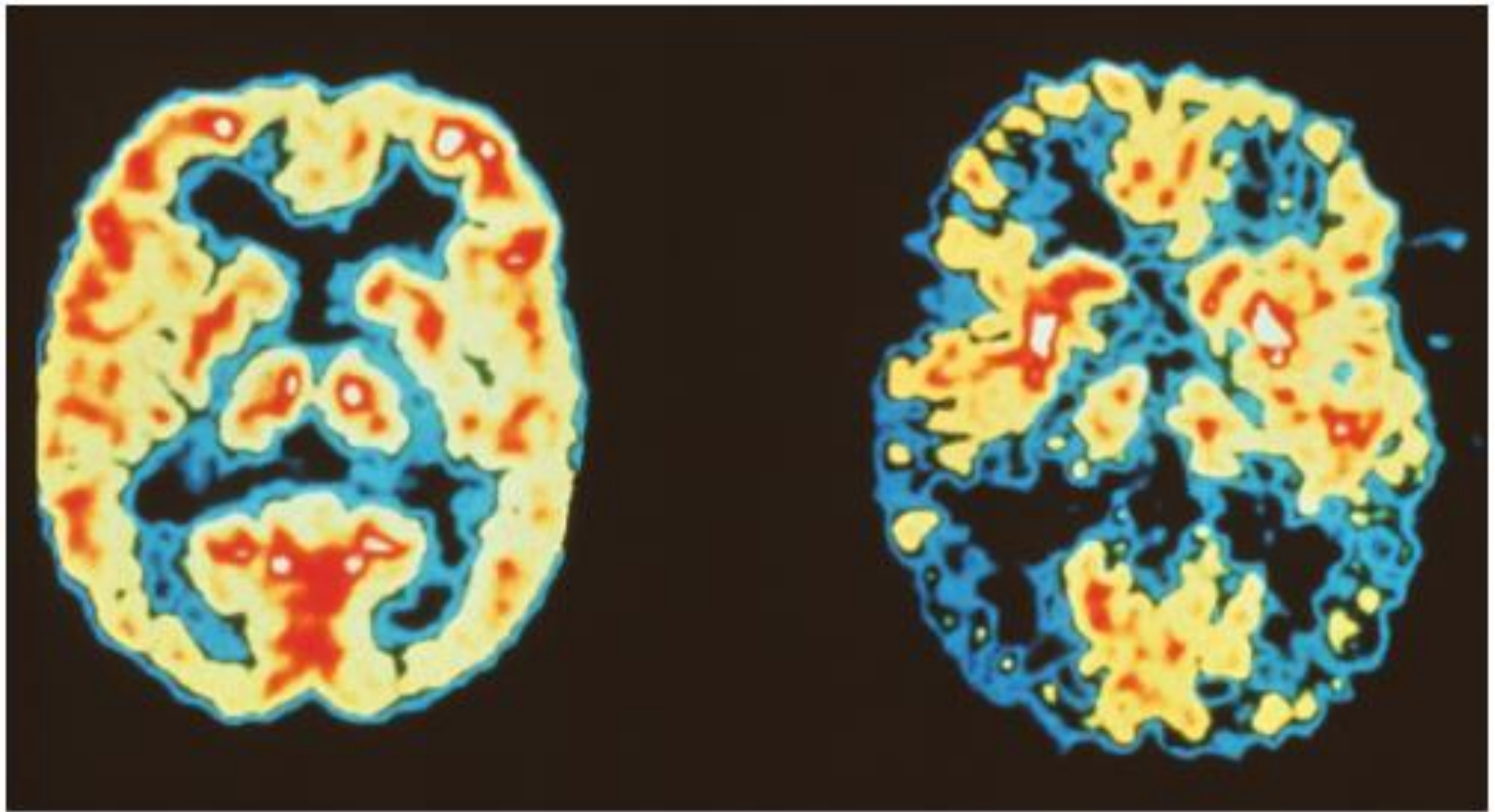
Anthony Strack/Gallo Images/Getty Images

# Causes of Psychological Disorders

- The brain's role in irreversible psychological disorders
  - Autism spectrum disorder
  - **Down syndrome:** congenital disorder caused by an error in meiosis, which results in an extra chromosome 21
  - **Alzheimer's disease:** found primarily in older adults, characterized by certain physical disruptions in the brain, including the presence of amyloid plaques



# Alzheimer's Disease and Brain Activity



Dr. Robert Friedland/Science Source