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Abnormal Psychology: Perspectives and Definitions**

What is Abnormal Psychology?

Abnormal psychology is the scientific study of psychological disorders, their diagnosis, and their treatment. It examines the nature of mental illness, the factors that contribute to its development, and the most effective ways to alleviate symptoms.

What is Abnormality According to Psychology?

In psychology, abnormality is defined by three criteria:

- **Deviance:** Behavior that significantly departs from societal norms and expectations.
- **Dysfunction:** Behavior that impairs an individual's ability to function effectively in daily life.
- **Distress:** Behavior that causes significant emotional discomfort or suffering.

Difference Between Social Psychology and Abnormal Psychology

Social psychology focuses on the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals in social settings. Abnormal psychology, on the other hand, examines psychological disorders, their causes, and their treatment.

7 Perspectives of Abnormal Psychology

Abnormal psychology draws on seven primary perspectives to understand mental disorders:

- **Biological:** Focuses on genetic, neurological, and biochemical factors that contribute to abnormal behavior.
- **Psychodynamic:** Explores unconscious drives, conflicts, and experiences from childhood that shape personality and behavior.
- **Behavioral:** Emphasizes environmental factors, such as learning and conditioning, in the development of abnormal behavior.
- **Humanistic:** Views individuals as fundamentally good and capable of growth, and focuses on their potential for self-actualization.
- **Cognitive:** Examines how thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions influence abnormal behavior.
- **Social:** Considers the role of social factors, such as culture, relationships, and stress, in the development and maintenance of mental disorders.
- **Integrative:** Combines elements from multiple perspectives to provide a comprehensive understanding of abnormality.

4 Elements of Abnormal Psychology

Abnormal psychology studies four key elements:

- **Classification:** Categorizing mental disorders using diagnostic criteria (e.g., DSM-5).
- **Causes:** Exploring the genetic, environmental, and social factors that contribute to abnormal behavior.
- **Assessment:** Evaluating individuals to diagnose mental disorders and develop treatment plans.
- **Treatment:** Applying evidence-based interventions to reduce symptoms and improve functioning.

3 Ds of Psychological Abnormality

The "3 Ds" of psychological abnormality are:

- **Deviance:** Behavior that violates societal norms.
- **Disturbance:** Behavior that disrupts one's ability to function effectively.

- **Danger:** Behavior that poses a threat to oneself or others.

4 D's of Abnormal Behavior

The "4 D's" of abnormal behavior are:

- **Deviance:** Behavior that significantly differs from societal norms.
- **Dysfunction:** Behavior that impairs an individual's ability to function in daily life.
- **Distress:** Behavior that causes significant emotional discomfort or suffering.
- **Disability:** Behavior that significantly limits an individual's ability to participate fully in life.

DSM-5 in Psychology

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), is the primary reference used by mental health professionals to diagnose mental disorders. It provides diagnostic criteria and descriptions for over 300 mental disorders.

Abnormal Psychology: Current Terminology

The term "abnormal psychology" is increasingly being replaced by "psychopathology" or "clinical psychology." This reflects a shift in focus towards a more inclusive and evidence-based approach to understanding and treating mental disorders.

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