Categories of Mental Illness

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Outline
- What is mental illness?
- Substance Abuse
- Personality Disorders
- Mood Disorders
- Psychotic Disorders
- Anxiety Disorders
- ADHD
- Sex Offenders

What is mental illness?
- The official definition:
  - "clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or pattern that occurs in an individual and that is associated with present distress or disability or with a significantly increased risk of suffering death, pain, disability or an important loss of freedom."
  - (DSM-IV-TR, page xxxi)

What is mental illness?
- The translation:
  - psychological symptoms that cause distress or disability and occur in a recognizable pattern

Mental illness in prison
- What’s the big deal?
- Where are the largest psychiatric institutions in the U.S.?
- L.A. County Jail
- Cook County Jail (Chicago)
- Riker’s Island Jail (NYC)

Mental illness in prison
- Prison U.S.
  - Substance abuse 70-90% 5-10%
  - Antisocial personality 15-50% 1-3%
  - Mood disorders 15-35% ~10%
  - Psychotic disorders 10-20% 1-2%
  - Each disorder is much more common in prison!
Substance abuse

- **What is it?**
- Continued use of a drug despite significant drug-related problems:
  - at home, work and/or school,
  - because of intoxication.

Substance dependence

- Same problems as substance abuse, plus:
- Tolerance:
  - More drug needed to get the same high.
- Withdrawal:
  - Physical and psychological symptoms after stopping drug use.
- Compulsive drug-taking behavior:
  - Life is all about the drug.

Alcohol dependence

- 5% of the population at any time.
- Runs in families.
- Alcohol withdrawal (the DT's) can be deadly.

Stimulant dependence

- Cocaine and amphetamines.
- People who are high can be psychotic and violent.
- Stopping quickly can cause sudden, severe depression (the ‘crash’) and suicide.

Opiate dependence

- Heroin, methadone, codeine, morphine, oxycontin, etc.
- Overdose can be fatal.
- Withdrawal is unpleasant but not deadly.

Treatment of drug dependence

- Medication may be useful, especially during acute withdrawal, but also in preventing relapse.
- Main treatment is groups, especially 12-step programs.
- More details in Part 3 of this series!
Personality Disorder
- A dysfunctional way of dealing with people and situations.
- Present for a long time, and consistent.
- Disorders most likely to cause problems in jail or prison:
  - Antisocial personality
  - Borderline personality

Antisocial personality
- Have no problems breaking rules or laws to get what they want.
- Will hurt people, lie and cheat, without feeling guilty.
- Also known as sociopaths or psychopaths.
- Begins in childhood:
  - Conduct disorder.

Antisocial personality
- More common in men than in women.
- Common in correctional settings.
- Runs in families.
- Some evidence of different brain chemistry and brain structure.

Treatment of antisocial personality
- Mental health interventions are generally of limited value.
- Psychiatric hospitalization may cause harm to other patients.
- ‘Social control’ may be the most effective intervention.

Treatment of antisocial personality
- Treatment of other psychiatric disorders may be useful.
- Substance abusers can look like antisocial personality.
- Prison can teach people antisocial traits!

Borderline personality disorder
- Unstable relationships, unstable emotions impulsive behavior and unstable self-image.
- Often self-destructive, especially by cutting.
- More common in women than in men.
- A history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse is common
**Treatment of borderline personality**

- Psychiatric medications may be useful in managing associated symptoms:
  - Depression
  - Unstable mood
  - Anxiety
  - Psychotherapy is more effective at addressing the main problem.

**Major depression**

- Common in the U.S. and common in jails and prisons.
- Two weeks of depressed mood and/or no enjoyment of activities.
- Change in appetite and sleep patterns, decreased energy and concentration.
- Thoughts of suicide.

**Major depression**

- Dramatic increase in risk of suicide.
- Increases death rate in other illnesses.
- Runs in families.
- Tends to come back.

**Treatment of depression**

- Antidepressant medications are the main tool.
- Psychotherapy is effective, too.

**Bipolar disorder**

- Characterized by mania.
- A chronic, cycling disorder.
- Mania and depression typically alternate.
- High risk of suicide.
- Strong evidence that bipolar disorder is genetic.

**Treatment of bipolar disorder**

- Mood-stabilizing medications are the mainstay of treatment.
Schizophrenia

- A chronic psychotic disorder.
- Hallucinations: false sensory signals.
  - Auditory hallucinations are common in schizophrenia.
- Delusions: fixed false beliefs.
  - Paranoid delusions are common.
- Disorganized thoughts or behavior.
- Negative symptoms.
- Not ‘split personality’!

Schizophrenia

- About 1% of all adults.
- Brain chemistry and structure are different compared to healthy adults.
- Runs in families.
- Up to 10% of people with schizophrenia commit suicide.

Schizophrenia treatment

- Antipsychotic medications are the main treatment, but counseling and social supports can be very important.

Anxiety disorders

- Panic disorder
- Panic attack:
  - Brief, but very scary.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

- A psychological response to a traumatic event.
- Hard to predict who will show PTSD after a trauma.
- Re-experiencing the trauma.
- Avoiding reminders of the trauma.
- Always on edge.

Treatment of anxiety disorders

- Medications can be very helpful:
  - Anti-depressants and anti-anxiety agents.
- Counseling can be very helpful:
  - The benefits continue after the counseling has ended.
**ADHD**
- Almost always starts in childhood, usually in boys.
- Usually improves as child gets older, but many still have problems as adults.
- May be common in jails and prisons.

**ADHD Symptoms**
- There are two groups of symptoms:
  - Inattention:
    - Poor concentration, careless mistakes, forgetful, can't stay organized.
  - Hyperactivity:
    - Can't sit still, restless, talkative, no patience.

**ADHD Treatment**
- Stimulants have been used for many years, with good effect.
- Non-stimulant medications are now available.
- Behavioral strategies can be very helpful.

**Sex Offenders**
- A high profile population, in corrections and in the community.
- There are several disorders, called paraphilias, that are grounds for arrest:
  - Exhibitionism
  - Sexual sadism
  - Pedophilia

**Treatment of Sex Offenders**
- There aren't many good treatments for sex offenders.
- Offenders find their behavior very enjoyable.
- Offenders have little awareness of damage they cause and/or little remorse for their victims.

**Conclusion**
- Psychiatric disorders are common in jail and prison.
Scenes from Correctional Mental Health: A Role Play

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