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What is Psychology?

Abnormal Psychology

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Introduction

This PowerPoint® presentation is designed to offer your students an overview of key events, personalities, and concepts. Created by a classroom teacher, the slide show places a premium on ease of use and succinctness. We developed this title to:

- Engage students with visual elements
- Outline key historical issues
- Make learning clear and relevant
- Provide a customizable template for differentiated instruction

On the slides themselves, bullet points highlight central elements, and numerous images help to provide a visual context for the presentation. Extensive notes for each slide offer detailed information to help elaborate bullet points. Handouts provide a convenient way for students to make connections between the ideas presented, and the culminating quiz provides a convenient way to assess student comprehension.

It is not necessary to cover every bullet point on every slide. One of the real benefits of this medium is the flexibility it affords you. We realize that each class and each student has different needs that require different approaches to teaching. Use this presentation to help customize your teaching. Use the “View” menu in PowerPoint® to sort through the slides visually, to view the presentation as a table of contents, or to see the larger groupings of sections and chapters.

If you want to focus on certain images or make a more detailed exploration of a particular area, you can easily add or delete slides. Simply copy the presentation to your own computer and modify it to create the exact messages that you want to convey. You may also wish to search the Web for additional images, sounds, graphs, timelines, or even video clips to incorporate into the presentation.

We are dedicated to continually improving our products and working with teachers to develop exciting and effective tools for the classroom. We can offer advice on how to maximize the use of the product and share others’ experiences. We would also be happy to work with you on ideas for customizing the presentation.

We value your feedback, so please let us know more about the ways in which you use this product to supplement your lessons; we’re also eager to hear any recommendations you might have for ways in which we can expand the functionality of this product in future editions. We look forward to hearing from you.

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ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY



Slide # 1

What does it really mean to be “normal” and “abnormal”? The whole idea of normality is incredibly subjective and fluid. Definitions of “normal” can differ depending on factors such as culture, group identity, individual beliefs, and life experiences. As a society changes, so do its concepts of normality and abnormality. Things many people considered abnormal 50 years ago are no longer looked at that way today. In this unit, we will explore various definitions of abnormal behavior and how these definitions have changed over time.

A Statistical Approach

- Norm = average, median
- In statistics, normal = things characteristic of the majority of the group
- The statistical approach doesn't differentiate between "desirable" and "undesirable" behavior

Slide # 2

Bullets #1–2 The word "normal" is based on the word "norm," a statistical measure roughly equivalent to an average or median. The norm identifies dominant patterns that occur most frequently within the group being measured. Thus, "normal" in a statistical sense refers to things characteristic of the majority of the group.

Psychologists and society in general, however, don't base concepts of normality and abnormality solely on statistics.

Bullet # 3 A purely statistical approach to defining abnormality doesn't take into account the focus of psychology: behavior. Most of us use the terms "normal" and "abnormal" to distinguish between "acceptable" or "desirable" behavior and "unacceptable" or "undesirable" behavior. For example, a statistical model assessing intelligence would view both geniuses and mentally retarded people as "abnormal" because they're not characteristic of the majority of society. In actuality, society does not refer to geniuses as "abnormal" because we see intelligence as a desirable trait. Thus, statistics can only provide us with a limited understanding of what society considers "normal" and "abnormal" behavior.

An Adequacy Approach

- If an individual's behavior impairs their performance of everyday activities, they would likely be labeled "abnormal"
- Some social roles place greater demands on us than others

Slide # 3

Bullet # 1 If psychologists only used "adequacy" or "sufficiency" as the standard by which they defined abnormality, an individual would be labeled as abnormal every time they couldn't fulfill their daily social roles and tasks.

Bullet # 2 Part of the problem with an adequacy approach stems from the fact that some people's social roles place greater demands on them than others' social roles. For example, a student could get B's in high school (perfectly adequate grades) but might end up getting D's and F's in college (seen by many as inadequate).

Personal Discomfort



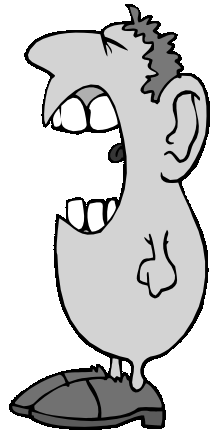
- Feeling distressed and unhappy
- Others may not see the distress

Slide # 4

Bullet # 1 If a person feels distressed or unhappy, some might label them “disturbed.”

Bullet # 2 Others many not always notice another person’s stress or distress. People also may hide or conceal their feelings in order to appear “normal.”

Bizarre Behavior



- Eccentric or bizarre behavior is an indication of abnormality
- Hallucinations, memory loss, phobias, or compulsive behavior

Slide # 5

Extremely eccentric or bizarre behavior usually gets labeled as “abnormal.” Examples of such behavior include hallucinations, intense phobias, severe memory loss, and compulsive behavior.

The Cultural Model



- Normality and abnormality are culturally relative
- Definitions change over time

Slide # 6

Bullet # 1 The cultural model assumes that normality and abnormality are standards set by a given society. For example, our society finds the idea of sexual relations with children totally unacceptable; however in parts of India, this idea is viewed as acceptable.

Bullet # 2 A culture's definitions of normality and abnormality change over a period of time. For example, the American Psychological Association once viewed homosexuality as an illness. Today, most psychologists no longer consider homosexuality to be an abnormal or deviant condition. Another example: the "beatniks" of the late 1950s and early 1960s were considered abnormal; so were hippies in the late 1960s and punk rockers in the late 1970s. Today, we don't view these types of people as abnormal because they've become accepted subcultures in our society.