

John Saldanha – Essay – General Psychology – Chapters 15 and 16

Chapter 15

1. A dissociative disorder is a psychological disorder when an individual breaks off from his or her personality and sense of self. They get separated from their identity and forget who they are. Depersonalization/derealization disorder is a type of dissociative disorder. In depersonalization, the person is separated from self in his /her thinking and feelings. They understand that the thoughts they think and the feelings they feel are not their own and that what they think, and feel is somebody else's control over them. They may also have a kind of out-of-body experience where they start to see themselves from someone else point of view.

Derealization is a psychological state where the person is not in tune with the reality around him or her. They feel detached from the environment, culture, people, and everything else that is needed for their survival. Those suffering from this disorder feel that the world that they live in is a fantasy world and unreal. They feel they are looking at their environment as in a dream. The common thread in both depersonalization and derealization is that both feel that they might be crazy.

8. As normal human beings, there are hundreds of thoughts that go through our minds. And there are many thoughts that we do act upon. Some thoughts are justifiable, and some are not. Some thoughts are worth acting upon and some are not, but the obsessive-compulsive disorder is a kind of disorder where people are barraged with a constant and repetitive flow of unpleasant thoughts, and the disorder makes them act upon every one of those thoughts. They cannot control their

thoughts and feel compelled to act upon them. Not only that these thoughts and subsequent actions to satisfy those thoughts disrupt their normal day to day living and activity. It can disrupt inter-personal relationships. The thoughts acted upon are not for pleasure but to satisfy the constant thoughts that plague the mind of the person.

They are worried about a host of activities that range from cleaning to keeping things in a certain way, from checking to washing things in a certain way. These are repetitive, disruptive, and ritualistic. The rituals are a means to lessening the distress and satisfying the thoughts caused by the constant barrage of thoughts, reciting a prayer, or talking to oneself. Some of the thoughts, for example, might be whether lights are turned off, whether the gas burner is turned off, or whether the door is locked. Some thoughts may be the thoughts of constant cleaning or constant washing of hands, constantly talking to oneself, and the constant thoughts make them come back to check, whether everything is all right. Some thoughts may be aggressive or lustful, Some thoughts may be aggressive or lustful,

Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder – People with this disorder are perfectionists to a fault and are so preoccupied with the smallest of details that it inhibits them from completing their task. They can become obsessed with how it is done and whether all rules are obeyed, all orders followed, and all schedules maintained. They can be so obsessed with getting their work done that they do not mind missing leisure time and friendship. They can be stubborn and inflexible and rigid about how things should get done. They can also be very stingy with how they spend their money.

10. Schizophrenia is caused by various factors like genetic transmission and environmental causes. Genetic transmission causes biological abnormalities which leads to a high level of Dopamine Neurotransmitters or enlarged ventricles within the brain. Schizophrenia, due to

environmental stress is caused by influenza or emotional stress to the mother or intake of marijuana by the mother during her pregnancy. Further substance abuse by the person can lead to schizophrenia. Since research has shown that the above causes could lead to schizophrenia, early detection of the genes and the environmental factors could lead to early detection and thereby treatment for Schizophrenia.

Prodromal symptoms are mild symptoms of schizophrenia disorder, which if identified early on can help slow the onset of the disorder with preemptive action. Mild symptoms of incoherent thought content, incoherent words, delusions, paranoia, that result in disruption of studies at school or disruption at work or disruption in social functioning and relationships, are termed as prodromal symptoms—and if left untreated over time can develop into a full-orbed psychotic disorder.

11. Schizophrenia is a psychological disorder where a person's thoughts become incoherent, their perception of the reality around them becomes disturbed, their behavior becomes erratic, and they become emotionally unstable. It impacts their thinking, their emotions, their behavior, and their perception, to the point that they become disconnected from the reality around them. They can also hear voices inside their head.

Schizophrenia can be defined as having three characteristics namely illusions, hallucinations, and delusions. Because of the above, performing day to day, normal activities can become difficult, disruptive, and challenging. Even with regular medical care, the patient will continue to have trouble with social and relational connections, normal intellectual conversations, and any

profitable profession. People suffering from schizophrenia are disconnected from the reality around them and therefore cannot function normally in life.

But schizophrenia is fundamentally different from dissociative identity disorder (better known as multiple personality disorder), in that the patient will reveal two or more personalities, which are different from one another. It is the same person but with completely different personalities.

They will not remember anything, about the times when a different personality was in charge.

That is one of the reasons why dissociative identity disorder is infamous because people can fake different personality disorders and blame their crime on another personality that overtook them.

But with schizophrenia, the person does not lose his personality but rather loses his state of mind i.e his or her thinking or hearing becomes incoherent.

15. People suffering from schizophrenia exhibit symptoms like hallucinations, delusions, incoherent thinking, hearing voices inside their heads, and abnormal muscle and body movements.

Two of the common symptoms are hallucinations and delusion.

The dictionary defines hallucination as perceiving something that is not present. People suffering from schizophrenia suffer from three types of hallucinations. Auditory, visual, and olfactory.

Auditory hallucinations are those that a person suffers from when he or she hears voices inside their head and may have a conversation with that voice and even listen and act upon the

instruction of the voice inside the head. The person may also hear noises like someone walking around the house, tapping or clicking. This is the most common form of hallucination. Visual

hallucinations are about seeing things that are not present. Likewise, olfactory hallucinations are

smelling odors that do not exist in the immediate reality of the person suffering from schizophrenia.

Unlike hallucinations that are temporary i.e the person perceives things temporarily, delusions are long-term, beliefs held which defy reality. The person suffering from delusion holds to his view even in the face of contrary reality and beliefs. An example of delusion can be where the person constantly thinks that someone is wanting to harm them. It could their parents or loved ones or a neighbor. This is called paranoid delusions, where the person believes that there are people who are out to get them.

Another form of delusion is called grandiose delusions where the person thinks of himself or herself as someone important or holding high positions in the government, or a religious figure with much power.

Also, there is a delusion whereby the patient feels that his or her thoughts have been put inside their minds and are not their own.

Another type of delusion is the belief that someone or something is doing something to one's body parts. This is called somatic delusion.

Chapter 16

50. Mental illness was considered demonic possession in the olden days and that is why people with mental illnesses were treated inhumanely. Those considered as possessed by demons were treated with exorcism, wherein prayers were said over the person possessed and also made to drink ritualistic drinks to drive the demon out of the body.

Another treatment was trephining wherein a hole was drilled into the brain of the possessed person so that the demon could escape from the body. Still, many were imprisoned, and some were executed. Many were called witches and were hanged in public or burned to death. By the 18th century, although asylums were built for a person with mental illness, the focus was not so much on treating their illness but rather to keep them away from society. Asylums were a place where they were chained to their beds, completely cut off from their relative or caregivers, and beaten. In effect, their situation in these asylums was worse than anyone could imagine.

Philippe Pinel, a French physician, advocated for the humane treatment of these people locked up and chained in asylums. He wanted them to be unchained and given freedom to move around. In 1795 he walked the talk and unchained and interacted with his patients at La Salpêtrière in Paris in the year 1795. Because of his humane treatment many patients were able to be discharged to their families.

51. Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) formerly known as electroshock therapy is a treatment used on patients suffering from severe depression. Under this treatment plan, anesthesia is given to the

patient first and then electric currents are passed through wires attached to the brain which in turn triggers seizures. These seizures triggered by ECT are said to cause changes in the brain that help patients with severe depression reverse symptoms. However, this treatment method is used infrequently and as a last resort. It is used in patients who could become a threat to themselves and in cases where drugs are not impacting the patient as it should. Also, patients are known to lose their memory because of this kind of treatment.

52. Dorothea Dix's advocacy for the mentally ill in the United States began when she began teaching Sunday school at a women's prison. The way the women prisoners were treated appalled her particularly the mentally ill among the prisoners. The mentally ill prisoners had no heat in their quarters. She got an order from the court to provide heat for the mentally ill prisoners. That spurred in her the desire to check for herself the conditions in other prisons and homes that housed the mentally ill. She toured the country to document the condition and treatment of the mentally ill patients and therefore advocating humane asylums and hospitals for the mentally ill.

What she discovered was that the mentally ill were poorly cared for, abused and the government funding was woefully inadequate to care effectively for those mental health issues. She also discovered that there was no government oversight of these institutions which thereby perpetuated abuse of the mentally ill in these institutions. Shocked by what she found she began advocating with the Congress and the state legislatures for change in laws for oversight and more adequate funding and for more facilities to house the mentally ill. Her hard work of advocacy led to the building of the first mental asylum in the United States.

54. Sigmund Freud invented the Psychoanalysis method of therapy. This therapy was the first of its kind.

Freud believed that much of our psychological and mental and emotional issues arise from the fact that human beings experience a lot of trauma in their childhood days. This trauma and the resulting emotional hurt and pain remain repressed. The repressed feeling and emotions are what forms us as we grow, and we act out of our subconscious rather than the conscious. Freud believed that his method of psychoanalysis would help bring out the suppressed emotions and memories caused by the trauma, if not dealt with, causes the mental disorder.

The way this would be done is by making the patient lie down on a couch and the patient is asked to talk about whatever they want to talk about or what thoughts are dominating the patient's mind. This is called free association. Further, the patient would be asked to talk about the dreams and Freud would then analyze the dreams to lead him to analyze the patient's problems.

55. In psychoanalysis therapy, the use of free association and dream analysis is used by the therapist to uncover the suppressed trauma and the consequent emotional upheavals that a child suffers during childhood. This approach of therapy requires a great deal of conversation and could typically take years of therapy. During this time, the therapist and the patient become close by the virtue of the fact, that the patient has revealed a lot about himself or herself to the therapist. The therapist, therefore, begins to know the patient at a deeper level, thereby leading the patient to develop strong feelings for the therapist. These feelings however that the patient feels towards the therapist is transferred to the therapist are the same feelings that the patient had

for his or her other relationships. This developing of strong relationships transferred from the patient's current relationships to the therapist, both positive and negative, is called the transference.