



## **MOOD DISORDERS ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA INC.**

PROVINCIAL OFFICE: 100-4 FORT STREET WINNIPEG MANITOBA R3C 1C4  
PHONE: (204) 786-0987 TOLL FREE (OUTSIDE OF WINNIPEG) 1 (800) 263-1460 FAX: (204) 775-3497  
WEB: depression.mb.ca E-MAIL: sdmdm@depression.mb.ca

### **Mental Health Dictionary**

Based on *The Depression Dictionary* from About.com

#### **A**

**Abnormal Behaviour:** To understand what "abnormal" means, first consider "normal". Normal simply means average. People who behave normally are those who act and behave in an average, typical way. Statistically speaking, normal behaviour is that which we would expect from the majority of people. Abnormal, therefore, refers to any behaviour that is not typical. In the practice of psychology it has further come to mean mental illness.

**Abreaction:** An automatic, unconscious reaction that a person has in response to a stimulus that reminds the person of a situation they experienced before. As an example, consider a person who has been physically abused who responds to a raised hand by cringing even though the other person's intent was to brush away a stray thread. Abreaction can also be used to describe the process a therapist uses to desensitize, or help the patient to stop having these automatic reactions. Within the safety of a therapy session, the patient can learn to replace the inappropriate reaction with one that is more suited to the situation.

**Acupuncture:** An ancient Chinese method of healing. It aims to prevent and cure specific diseases and conditions by sticking very fine, solid needles into specific points on the body.

**Acute:** Abrupt onset of a disorder or symptom; runs a short course

**Addiction:** An addiction occurs when you cannot permanently stop yourself from doing something even though it is harmful to you. Usually the things we become addicted to act directly upon the brain and body to produce a desirable alteration in how we think or feel. Common addictions are to tobacco products, drugs, alcohol, gambling, pornography. When we speak of addiction, we often use terms like "tolerance" and "withdrawal". Tolerance occurs when it takes more and more of the substance to get the same amount of pleasure. Withdrawal occurs when you experience painful, and sometimes dangerous, symptoms when you go for any period without that substance. An addiction can be psychological, physical, or both.

**Adjustment Disorder:** Adjustment disorder occurs when a person experiences depression and/or anxiety that is clearly in response to an identifiable stressor or stressors (changes in employment, marital status, deaths, divorce, etc.).

**Affect:** Affect refers to the patient's display of emotion, especially their facial expressions. It contrasts with the term "mood" in that mood is a person's subjective opinion of how they feel. Affect is what is seen by the outside observer.

**Affective Disorder:** Another name for mood disorder

**Affective Spectrum:** A grouping of other possible medical problems such as attention deficit disorder, migraines, panic and anxiety disorders, alcoholism, etc. which have an increased probability of diagnosis for those with an affective disorder.

**Agoraphobia:** Literally, "fear of the marketplace". Agoraphobia is an often paralyzing fear of being in any public place in which people feel it will be difficult to escape from or receive the help in case they have a panic attack. Persons with agoraphobia almost always have panic attacks that preceded and contributed to their agoraphobia. In severe cases, persons with agoraphobia are unable to leave their homes without the aid of a 'safe' person.

**Agranulocytosis:** Loss of white blood cells

**Akathisia:** Akathisia is a common side effect associated with the use of anti-psychotic medications (neuroleptics). It is characterized by excessive, usually repetitive, movements such as pacing, foot tapping, and rocking. It is often described as a "feeling that you are going to come out of your own skin" if you don't move.

**Akinesia:** Listlessness

**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):** An organization of alcoholics formed in 1935 that uses certain group methods, such as inspirational-supportive techniques, to help rehabilitate chronic alcoholics.

**Alcoholism:** Excessive dependence on or addiction to alcohol, usually to the point that the person's physical and mental health is threatened or harmed

**Alcohol Withdrawal Syndrome:** Symptom complex resulting from the cessation or reduction in alcohol intake in a person who has been drinking heavily and has developed a physical dependence. Includes tremulousness, seizures, hallucinations, and autonomic hyperactivity (delirium tremens or DT's).

**Alogia:** Absence of thought or speech

**Alopecia:** Hair loss, especially from the head

**Alternative Medicine:** Alternative medicine is a comprehensive approach to healing that uses natural methods to bring physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harmony. It does not rely on drugs, surgery, and other conventional medical procedures.

**Amenorrhea:** Absence of menstruation

**Amnesia:** Partial or total loss of memory

**Analgesic:** Medication that reduces pain

**Analytic Psychology:** Jung's system of psychology, characterized by a belief in the collective unconscious, the archetype, and the complex

**Andropause:** By the time men are between the ages of 40 and 55, they can experience a phenomenon similar to the female menopause, called andropause. Unlike women, men do not have a clear-cut signpost such as the cessation of menstruation to mark this transition. Both, however, are distinguished by a drop in hormone levels: estrogen in the female and testosterone in the male. The bodily changes occur very gradually in men and may be accompanied by changes in attitudes and moods, fatigue, a loss of energy, sex drive, and physical agility.

**Angioedema:** Swelling of the skin

**Anhedonia:** State of being unable to experience pleasure from what would normally be pleasurable. An integral feature of major depression.

**Anhidrosis:** Dry skin and eyes

**Anorexia Nervosa:** An eating disorder in which people starve themselves on purpose, despite their hunger, in order to lose weight. According to the DSM-IV, a person with Anorexia Nervosa must have the following symptoms: refusal to maintain body weight at or above a minimally normal weight for age and height; intense fear of gaining weight or becoming fat, even though underweight; disturbance in the way in which one's body weight or shape is experienced, undue influence of body weight or shape on self-evaluation, or denial of the seriousness of the current low body weight; and amenorrhea (in postmenarcheal females). The diagnosis requires that a person weight at least 15% less than his or her normal body weight. Anorexia nervosa can be fatal because of the extreme stresses that it places on the body.

**Anorgasmia:** Inability to achieve orgasm

**Anticholinergic:** A drug which inhibits the action of the neurotransmitter, acetylcholine

**Anticonvulsant:** A drug used to control or prevent seizures; a number of these drugs are also used to alleviate the mania of Bipolar Disorder

**Antidepressant Drug:** Any of a class of psychotherapeutic drugs used in the treatment of depression. Antidepressants are not addictive. They do not make you "high", have a tranquilizing effect, or produce cravings for more.

**Antiparkinsonism Drug:** Drug that relieves the symptoms of Parkinsonism and is effective in countering the extrapyramidal side effects often induced by antipsychotic drugs by acting on the central nervous system to diminish skeletal muscle tone and involuntary movements

**Antipsychotic:** Any of a class of psychotherapeutic drugs used to treat psychosis, particularly schizophrenia. Also called neuroleptic, major tranquilizer, or ataractic drug.

**Antisocial Personality Disorder:** This disorder is characterized by a long-standing disregard of other people's rights, often crossing the line and violating those rights.

**Anxiety:** An uncomfortable emotional state associated with a perceived danger, feelings of powerlessness, and prolonged tension in preparation for the expected danger. Physical symptoms include increased heart rate, disturbed breathing, trembling, sweating, and vasomotor changes.

**Anxiolytic:** A medicine that relieves anxiety

**Aphasia:** An impairment of the ability to speak or to comprehend words, usually acquired as a result of a stroke or other brain injury

**Arrhythmia:** Irregular heartbeat

**Assessment:** Assessment refers to the process of measurement. In mental health, assessment refers to the process of having your personality, intelligence, or brain functioning tested.

**Assimilation:** Assimilation refers to a process by which something becomes more and more similar to something else until it becomes totally absorbed and loses its own identity. In psychology, the term Assimilation is used in two contexts. First, in the context of cultural assimilation in which someone from one culture assimilates into another so that they can no longer be told apart from the new culture. Assimilation is also a process described by the famous psychologist Jean Piaget who identified two cognitive processes (Assimilation and Accommodation) at work in the normal learning process of children. According to Piaget, when a child becomes aware of something new that it has never seen before, it has two choices for making sense out of that thing. It can interpret that thing in terms of what it already knows (Assimilation), or it can learn a new way for making sense of that thing (Accommodation). Taken together, these two processes make up adaptation, or the child's ability to adapt to his or her environment.

**Ataxia:** Lack of body coordination

**Attention:** Concentration. The aspect of consciousness that relates to the amount of effort exerted in focusing on certain aspects of an experience, activity, or task.

**Attention Deficit Disorder:** Beginning to be called "ADD/WO" meaning "without" hyperactivity. In comparison to ADHD, this condition is characterized by fewer serious conduct problems, less impulsivity, greater sluggishness, greater anxiety, and greater depressed mood. Children suffering from this condition exhibit inattention, disorganization, and difficulty completing tasks.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder:** A neurobiological disorder, abbreviated as ADHD, AD/HD and recently, ADD/H. Typically children with ADHD have developmentally inappropriate behaviour, including poor attention skills, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. These characteristics arise in early childhood, typically before age 7, are chronic, and last at least 6 months. Children with ADHD may also experience problems in the areas of social skills and self esteem.

**Atypical Depression:** In the DSM-IV, a diagnosing clinician may specify that a person's depression is "atypical" when that person's mood lifts in response to positive events, and when that person also shows at least two of the following: weight gain or increased appetite, sleeping longer than normal, a heavy feeling in the body, or a history of sensitivity to social rejection.

**Avoidant Personality Disorder:** Individuals with this personality disorder are socially inhibited, usually feel inadequate, and are overly sensitive to criticism.

## **B**

**Beck Depression Inventory:** The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) is a 21-item test presented in multiple-choice format which purports to measure presence and degree of depression in adolescents and adults. Each of the 21-items of the BDI attempts to assess a specific symptom or attitude "which appear(s) to be specific to depressed patients, and which are consistent with descriptions of the depression contained in the psychiatric literature." Although the author, Aaron T. Beck, is associated with the development of the cognitive theory of depression, the Beck Depression Inventory was designed to assess depression independent of any particular theoretical bias.

**Behavioral Medicine:** Application of principles of behaviour therapy to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of medical disorders. Applications include such things as wellness programs for healthy people and helping patients with treatment compliance.

**Behavioral Therapy:** Behaviour therapy is an approach to psychotherapy that analyzes problems of human functioning in mechanistic terms as inputs and outputs of a system. A behaviour therapist will analyze a person's problematic behaviour in terms of what reinforces or punishes that behaviour. The behavioral therapist will then systematically alter the re-enforcers or punishers to get the person to change their behaviours.

**Benzodiazepines:** A classification of drugs that are used as minor tranquilizers or hypnotics

**Binge Eating:** Binge eating disorder is characterized by frequent episodes of eating abnormally large amounts of food -- ten times or more what is considered average: a half gallon of ice cream or several whole pans of brownies at one sitting. People with this illness are unable to control what they eat or how much they eat. They feel driven to eat and are unable to stop once they start until they feel uncomfortably full – even gorging to the point of being in pain.

Binge eating disorder resembles bulimia nervosa except that sufferers do not purge their bodies of excess food through vomiting or laxatives. Because of the amounts of food they eat, people with this eating disorder are usually obese and have a history of extreme weight fluctuations. They have more difficulty losing weight and keeping it off than people with other weight problems.

**Bipolar Illness:** Bipolar illness is a condition wherein a person swings between states of depression (low mood and energy) and mania (heightened, elevated, ecstatic mood and energy). Different types of Bipolar illness are distinguished based on how just how low or high people get. Also called Bipolar Disorder or Manic Depression. Commonly abbreviated as BP.

- **Bipolar I:** Bipolar disorder in which a patient meets the criteria for a full manic episode, usually sufficiently severe to require hospitalization. May also have features of psychosis such as delusions and hallucinations.
- **Bipolar II:** A classification of Bipolar Disorder characterized by episodes of hypomania and major depression, without the presence of psychotic features.

- **Bipolar III:** A classification of Bipolar Disorder called cyclothymia that is characterized by minor episodes of hypomania and depression.
- **Bipolar IV:** A classification of Bipolar Disorder characterized by antidepressant induced mania or hypomania.
- **Bipolar V:** A classification of Bipolar Disorder characterized by major depression and a family history of Bipolar Disorder.
- **Bipolar VI:** A classification of Bipolar Disorder characterized by unipolar mania; very rare.

**Body Dysmorphic Disorder:** Excessive concern with imagined or exaggerated problems in one's appearance

**Bonding:** Refers to the process of how people form more emotionally intimate relationships with each other

**Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD):** Persons with BPD have difficulty understanding themselves, other people, and the nature of the relationships they have with other people. They tend to see themselves as fairly worthless and empty inside. They also tend to see themselves and others in a very black or white, good or bad sort of way. They are typically emotionally unstable, and frequently will have outbursts of anger or depression alternating rapidly with good feelings about themselves. They tend to have intense, but short-lived relationships with people. BPD persons are also very impulsive and frequently cannot stop themselves from acting out in self-destructive ways. They are often prone to feelings of suicidality or desires to self-injure. They may engage in self-injury in order to have a sense of control over their internal chaos or to overcome feelings of emptiness or numbness.

**Boundaries:** In human relationships, we set boundaries between ourselves and other persons. We let some people become close to us and expose our vulnerabilities; we keep others at a distance to avoid being hurt. Sometimes we don't set up proper sorts of boundaries in our relationships. We might let someone who wants to hurt us in too close or we push away those who genuinely care for us. Setting up proper boundaries is important to our mental health.

**Bradycardia:** Slow heartbeat

**Bradykinesia:** Very slow movement

**Bulimia Nervosa:** Bulimia is an eating disorder characterized by repeated bouts of binge eating followed by purging (usually by vomiting or laxative use) in order to avoid weight gain. In order to be diagnosed with bulimia, this behaviour must occur at least twice a week for three months in a row. Repeated bingeing and purging may cause disturbances of body electrolytes, erosion of the teeth, and other serious health problems.

## C

**Catharsis:** Release of ideas, thoughts, and repressed materials from the unconscious, accompanied by an affective emotional response and relief

**Catatonic:** Condition of being apparently awake but unresponsive

**Cerebral Atrophy:** The Cerebral Cortex is the outer layer of the brain that is responsible for doing the different jobs that help a person to be conscious. Cerebral Atrophy means that the Cortex part of the brain is shrunken in size. This decrease in brain mass affects your ability to think and reason. This condition occurs in a variety of illnesses and addictions.

**Cerebral Electrotherapy (CET):** Treatment employing low-intensity pulses of direct electrical current, used primarily in the treatment of depression, anxiety, and insomnia

**Chemical Dependency Counsellors:** Healthcare professionals trained especially to help people with alcohol and drug addiction through the process of recovery.

**Chorea:** A sudden, graceful but involuntary movement of arms or legs

**Chronic:** A disease or condition that is long-lasting

**Civil Commitment:** In statutes governing hospitalization of the mentally ill, a legal term meaning a warrant for imprisonment. At the recommendation of the American Psychiatric Association and the American Bar Association, the term "commitment" had been replaced by "hospitalization".

**Clinical Depression:** Refers to depression that is severe enough to require treatment, as opposed to sub-clinical depression, which is not severe enough to require treatment. Symptoms of depression usually consist of feelings of sadness, guilt, or unworthiness; crying spells; disturbance in appetite and weight changes; and disturbance in sleep.

**Clinical Psychology:** The branch of Psychology having to do with the applied use of psychological knowledge to improve human functioning

**Clinical Social Workers:** Trained healthcare employees who provide case management and a variety of supportive assistance to help patient's transition from a hospital or medical institution to home.

**Clusters A, B, and C:** The DSM-IV divides the personality disorder diagnoses into three groupings or clusters based on their having characteristics in common.

- **Cluster A** includes Paranoid, Schizoid, and Schizotypal personality disorders which are linked together based on their shared mild-psychosis symptom presentations.
- **Cluster B** includes Antisocial, Borderline, Histrionic, and Narcissistic personality disorders, grouped together based on their shared 'dramatic and erratic' characteristics.
- **Cluster C** includes Avoidant, Dependent, and Obsessive-Compulsive personality disorders, grouped together based on their shared anxious-avoidant qualities.

At this time, these clusterings are based on superficial symptom similarities only and not on any genetic basis.

**CMHA :** The acronym for the Community Mental Health Associations around Canada. For many communities, these institutions form the backbone of publicly funded mental health services.

**Co-dependence:** There is no official DSM-IV definition and criteria list for Co-Dependency. Instead, Co-Dependency tends to be a loosely defined condition that has the following symptoms: difficulty with open direct expression of feelings or discussion of interpersonal problems, and willingness to enable others' dysfunctional behaviour (such as alcoholism, drug use, physical or emotional abuse or sexual abuse).

**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** CBT is a school of psychotherapy that is used to treat depression by understanding the importance of thoughts upon emotion. A core CBT understanding of depressive emotions is that subliminal, often irrational, thoughts precede and cause troubling feelings. To change the troubling feelings to more positive ones, it is necessary to help persons identify their thoughts, analyze them with respect to their rationality, and challenge those that are ill-formed and exaggerated. The CBT therapist helps his or her patient by teaching the patient to view his or her thinking as a type of behaviour that he or she can bring under conscious control and thus control their emotions.

**Co-Morbid:** In healthcare the term "co-morbid" refers to two or more things that are occurring at the same time. Co-existing illnesses or disorders may be described as being co-morbid.

**Co-Occurrence: See Co-Morbid**

**Complementary Medicine:** Complementary Medicine (CM) includes many different techniques of treating a patient. These are based on systems practised thousands of years ago and can in fact be considered to be of the original forms of medicine. They all have one aspect in common which is that they treat the patient as a whole person rather than treating a specific symptom or symptoms. It does this by treating the life force of the patient at their physical, mental, and emotional levels.

Some people used to refer to CM as "Fringe" or "Alternative" because they consider it to be alternative to the "Allopathic Medicine" that is practised by the General Medical Practitioners (G.P's). But CM *complements* the needs of the patient and is a more accurate description as this term describes the methods of healing that treat the complete or whole person. Hence, "Complementary Medicine" is the most appropriate title.

**Compulsion:** Uncontrollable, repetitive, and unwanted urge to perform an act. Failure to perform the act leads to feelings of anxiety.

**Conduct Disorder:** Disruptive behaviour in children marked by repetitive and persistent violation of the rights of others or of age appropriate social norms or rules. For example, children with conduct disorder are more likely to bully others, disregard parent curfews, and use alcohol and other substances.

**Coping Mechanism:** Unconscious or conscious way of dealing with stress

**Co-therapy:** Psychotherapy in which more than one therapist treats the individual patient or the group. Also called cooperative, dual, multiple, or three-cornered therapy.

**Counselling:** Form of guidance in which a trained person offers advice or education about specific problems in living

**Crisis:** In psychiatry, a distressing sense of psychological distress that has an acute onset and that causes impaired functioning in a variety of areas

**Crisis Intervention:** Brief therapeutic approach used in emergency rooms of general or psychiatric hospitals that is intended to reduce symptoms rather than to cure

**Critical Incident Stress:** Critical incidents, such as those in which emergency personnel are involved, may produce a wide range of stress symptoms, which may appear immediately at the scene, a few hours later, or within days of the incident. Stress symptoms usually occur in four different categories: Cognitive (thinking), Physical (body), Emotional (feelings), and Behavioral (actions). The more symptoms experienced, the more powerful the stress reaction. The longer the symptoms persist, the more potential there is for lasting harm.

**Critical Period:** Specific period of early development during which an organism acquires certain patterns of behaviour as a result of internal or external clues

**Counsellor:** Usually a generic term for someone who provides advice and support to another person or persons.

**Counter-Transference:** This concept must be considered in tandem with the term "transference", which refers to the patient's transfer of emotional energy from an older relationship to a newer one (such as a therapist). Counter-Transference occurs when a therapist transfers his or her emotional energy from an older relationship to a patient. More commonly, the term counter-transference is used to describe situations where a therapist fails to keep appropriate emotional distance from the patient. It might be used to describe a therapist who feels unable to cope emotionally with a patient's problems or a therapist who falls in love with a patient. Counter-Transference is undesirable in the therapeutic relationship and therapists have an ethical responsibility to be aware of these issues and to see seek help for them. See also **Transference**.

**Cyclothymia:** A mild form of Bipolar Disorder, Cyclothymia is diagnosable when a person experiences alternating moods that swing on a regular (often monthly-quarterly basis) between mild mania (hypomania) and mild depression. For at least a two-year period there must be no evidence that the mild hypomania ever turned into a true Mania, or that the mild depression turned into a true diagnosable Major Depression. The disorder must be present and documentable for at least two years before it can be formally diagnosed.

## **D**

**Decompensation:** To "decompensate" means to fall apart mentally and emotionally. Decompensation occurs during the onset of a psychotic process. Non-psychotic persons may decompensate when the stressors they are faced with are greater than they can cope with.

**Defense mechanisms:** Refer to negative adaptations to problems and stress

**Delirium:** Mental confusion which is usually temporary. Disordered speech and hallucinations are often present.

**Delusions:** A delusion is a persistent belief that something is true when there is no evidence suggesting that this is the case. The delusional person cannot be dissuaded from the delusional belief by force of logical argument.

**Dementia:** Mental deterioration due to organic causes

**Dependent Personality Disorder:** A pervasive and excessive need to be taken care of that leads to submissive and clinging behaviour and fears of separation, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of everyday life contexts

**Depersonalization:** Depersonalization is a mild but often frightening form of dissociation. Persons who have depersonalized are still aware of what is going on around them, but feel that they don't recognize themselves or feel alien to themselves.

**Depression:** Mental state characterized by feelings of sadness, loneliness, despair, low self-esteem, and self-reproach; accompanying signs include psychomotor retardation or at times agitation, withdrawal from interpersonal contact, and vegetative symptoms such as insomnia and anorexia. The term refers either to a mood that is so characterized or to a mood disorder.

**Descriptive Psychiatry:** System of psychiatry focusing primarily on the study of observable symptoms and behavioral phenomena, rather than underlying psychodynamic processes

**Diagnosis:** Identification of a disease or disorder

**Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders:** The DSM-IV is the official manual listing psychiatric and psychological disorders. This document, published by the American Psychiatric Association, takes its coding scheme from the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) which is a diagnostic manual for all medical diseases. See also **DSM-IV Diagnostic Axial System**.

**Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT):** DBT is a form of Cognitive Behavioral psychotherapy that works well for Borderline Personality Disordered patients. Such patients frequently alternate between very different mental and emotional states. The dialectical approach handles the alternations by working with periodically switching between issues to work on.

**Diplopia:** Double vision

**Disorientation:** Confusion; impairment of awareness of time, place, and person (the position of the self in relation to other persons)

**Disruptive Behaviour Disorders:** Disorders characterized by inattention, over-aggressiveness, delinquency, destructiveness, hostility, feelings of rejection, negativism, or impulsiveness. They include attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, and oppositional defiant disorder.

**Dissociation:** Dissociation is a psychological process involving alterations in identity or sense of self. These alterations in sense of self can include: a relatively mild and transient sense that the world or the self is "unreal" (de-realization and de-personalization); more permanent states such as amnesia (loss of memory) or fugue states (where a person forgets who they are and assumes a new identity); and the most severe form known as Dissociative Identity Disorder

(formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder) wherein identity is fragmented into more than one unique personality. The act of dissociation itself is probably most often triggered by trauma or other severe stress.

**Drug Dependence:** Habituation or addiction to the use of a drug or chemical substance, with or without physical dependence. Physical dependence is characterized by a withdrawal syndrome.

**DSM-IV:** See **Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders**

**DSM-IV Diagnostic Axial System:** Mental Disorders are diagnosed according to the DSM-IV or Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, published by the American Psychiatric Association (1994). A DSM-IV diagnosis has five parts. Each part is called an Axis. Each Axis gives information on a different sort of information.

- **Axis I (1)** provides information on clinical disorders such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, drug addiction, etc.
- **Axis II (2)** provides information on developmental disorders -- ones that occurred in childhood and are still present (eg., autism, or personality disorders).
- **Axis III (3)** provides information on a persons' physical condition. Information on any significant medical disorders that could be contributing to the diagnosed individuals' stress or symptoms is noted here.
- **Axis IV (4)** is a place to describe the individuals' social and economic situation (eg., their living and working situations, important relationships or the lack thereof, finances, etc.).
- Finally, **Axis V (5)** is a simple rating scale called the Global Assessment of Functioning. The GAF goes from 0 to 100 and provides a way to summarize in a single number just how messed up a person is by their diagnoses.

**Dual Diagnosis:** Term used to describe a condition where a single person has more than one Axis I major clinical psychological/psychiatric diagnosis. Often, this phrase is also used to describe people who have a severe mental illness such as Major Depression, Bipolar Disorder, or Schizophrenia as well as a co-existing substance abuse problem.

**Dysarthria:** Unclear speech

**Dyspepia:** Indigestion, or pain in the stomach

**Dysphagia:** Difficulty swallowing

**Dysphoric Mood:** Low mood that may include dissatisfaction, restlessness, or depression

**Dyspnea:** Difficult or laboured breathing

**Dysthymia:** Also sometimes referred to as Chronic Depression. Dysthymia is a type of low-level depression that has lasted for at least two years in adults and one year in children and adolescents without any substantial remission. It is characterized by less severe, lingering symptoms of depression that may last for years.

**Dystonia:** Muscle spasms

**Dysuria:** Difficulty urinating

## E

**Early-Onset Bipolar Disorder:** Bipolar Disorder that is present since infancy or early childhood

**Eating Disorder:** Eating disorders are illnesses that cause a person to adopt harmful eating habits. They are most common among teenage girls and women, and frequently occur along with other psychiatric disorders such as depression and anxiety disorders. The poor nutrition associated with eating disorders can harm organs in the body, and, in severe cases, lead to death. The two most common types of eating disorders are anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa.

**Eclectic Therapy:** There are several well-defined schools of psychotherapy, each with its own organizing philosophy, procedures, techniques, and methods. Some therapists use only the teachings of one particular school of therapy. Other therapists mix and match techniques, which is called Eclectic Therapy.

**EKG or ECG:** Electrocardiogram. A recording of the electrical activity of the heart.

**Electro-Convulsive Therapy:** Electro-Convulsive Therapy (ECT) is a psychiatric treatment for persons with very severe mental disorders that have proven unresponsive to other forms of treatment. ECT involves briefly sending an electric current through the patient's brain to produce a seizure while they are under anesthesia. Patients may experience mild memory loss for events around the time of the procedure. Although this form of treatment is very controversial, it can bring about rapid relief from severe depression. It is generally only used as a last resort treatment.

**Empty Chair:** Gestalt Therapy technique for working with blocked emotions. The therapist puts an empty chair in front of a patient and asks them to speak from the heart to the imaginary person sitting in the chair. This imaginary person is someone they are unable to speak to in their real life, such as a deceased parent. This technique can bring about a powerful catharsis.

**EMDR:** Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing is a form of psychotherapy developed by Clinical Psychologist Francine Shapiro, Ph.D. Only clinicians who have completed Dr. Shapiro's courses are able to legitimately offer this therapy. It is helpful to patients suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or phobias.

**EMG:** Electromyogram

**Emotional Disturbance:** Emotional disorder or illness

**Empirically Supported Therapy:** Referring to a therapy that has been extensively studied using rigorous scientific methods and that has been found to work well

**Enmeshment:** The term "Enmeshment" comes from the family systems theory tradition. Enmeshment refers to a condition where two or more people weave their lives and identities around one another so tightly that it is difficult for any one of them to function independently.

**Episode:** A specific period of mania or depression

**EST:** Electroshock therapy

**Etiology:** The causes of something, such as disease

**Euphoria:** Feeling of well being or elation

**Euthymia:** Indicates a normal, non-depressed, positive mood. The opposite of dysthymia.

**Exhaustion State:** Final stage of the body's response to major stress, as in the general adaptation syndrome

**Existential Therapy:** Existential Therapy refers to therapies that pay attention to themes most clearly delineated in existential philosophy: Death, The Meaning of life, Freedom and Responsibility, Identity/Boundaries, etc.

**Extinction:** A term from psychological Learning Theory. Extinction refers to the process of losing a behaviour. When the behaviour no longer occurs, it is said to have been extinguished. Usually, behaviours become extinct when they are not reinforced for a while and thus don't do anything for the person.

**Extrapyramidal Syndrome:** Abnormalities of movement related to injury of motor pathways other than the pyramidal tract; e.g., parkinsonism, akathisia, dystonia, tardive dyskinesia.

## **F**

**Factitious Disorder:** See **Munchausen's Syndrome (and Munchausen's By Proxy)**

**Family Systems:** Family Systems refers to a school of psychotherapy founded in the Cybernetic theories that became popular in the 1960s. Dr. Gregory Bateson was a key theorist. Most therapies before Family Systems took as their object the individual patient. Family systems theorists rejected this approach and focused instead on how an individual patient existed within the social group that they associated with -- usually their family.

**Fear:** Fear is the name given to the emotion you feel when you perceive yourself to be in acute danger. In contrast to anxiety, it is based up a real, rather than imaginary threat.

**Flight of Ideas:** A symptom of mania; used to describe the rapid changing, grandiose plans often experienced by those in a manic episode.

**Frigidity:** Colloquial term referring, in the female, to lack of sexual response or feeling ranging from complete lack of arousal to incomplete climax

**Functional Disorder:** Disorder that is not caused by an anatomical defect or any other identifiable or demonstrable cause.

## **G**

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder:** Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is a type of anxiety disorder characterized by some combination of at least three of the following: edgy feelings, easy fatigue, difficulty in concentrating, irritability, muscular tension, or sleep disturbances. There is no spike of panic in GAD, but rather a constant low-level worry.

**Gestalt Therapy:** Gestalt Therapy refers to a specific school of psychotherapy founded by the Psychiatrist Fredrick Perls. The approach proceeds from the idea that people are born to be spontaneous and whole in their beings but lose this awareness over time as they interact with others. The result of this loss of wholeness is a perception of the self as split (into mind and body, self and other, thinking and feeling, etc.). The Gestalt therapist works with the to get back to a more holistic state of being. To do this, the therapist frequently bypasses rational thinking processes and makes direct emotional appeals to the client who otherwise would be cut off from those emotions.

**Grandiosity:** A symptom of mania; used to describe the larger-than-life feelings of superiority often experienced by those in a manic episode.

**Group Dynamics:** Phenomena that occur in groups based upon their interactions and interrelations

**Group Pressure:** Demand by group members that individual members submit and conform to group standards, values, and behaviour

**Group Process:** Group Dynamics

**Group Psychotherapy:** Application of psychotherapeutic techniques to a group of patients, using interpatient interactions to effect changes in the maladaptive behaviour of the individual members

**Group Therapy:** A form of psychotherapy involving at least two patients and a therapist in which participants are encouraged to analyze their own and each others' problems

**Guardianship:** Person appointed by the courts for the care for and management the property of another, such as a minor or a person incapable of managing his or her own affairs

**Guided Imagery:** A form of focused relaxation used to create harmony between the mind and body

## H

**Habeas Corpus:** Legal term for the right to petition a court to decide whether confinement has been undertaken with due process of law

**Habituation:** Whenever a new stimulus is put in front of a person, their natural tendency is to orient towards the stimulus. New things to hear or see capture the person's attention. After the person becomes accustomed to this stimulus, their attention wanes. This is called "habituation" within the framework of learning theory.

**Hallucinations:** Hallucinations occur when you sense things that are not actually occurring. Hallucinations may be auditory, visual, olfactory, or even tactile. Hallucinations may be a sign of mental illness, such as schizophrenia, or drug use.

**Hamilton Depression Scale:** Scale of depression based upon a clinical interview with the patient in that the examiner asks about guilt, suicide, sleep habits, weight change, and other symptoms of depression.

**Health Psychology:** See **Behavioral Medicine**.

**Histrionic:** A term used to describe a personality style in which a person's behaviour or speech is overly dramatic or theatrical in quality

**Hyperactive:** Excessively active

**Hypernatremia:** High sodium level in the blood

**Hyperphagia:** Tendency to eat too much

**Hypersomnia:** Extended periods of sleep

**Hypochondria:** Fear of imagined illnesses or disorders

**Hypomania:** A mild degree of mania; often a precursor to a full manic episode

**Hyponatremia:** Low sodium level in the blood

**Hypnosis:** Artificially induced alteration of consciousness characterized by increased suggestibility and receptivity to direction

**Hypnotherapy:** Therapy that makes use of hypnosis

**Hypnotic:** Drug used for the express purpose of producing sleep

## **I**

**Ideas of Reference:** Ideas of Reference are a symptom of psychosis of the Paranoid Schizophrenic type. An Idea of Reference occurs when someone is watching TV or listening to the radio and they come to believe that there is a special message in the radio directed specifically at themselves.

**Identification with the Aggressor:** Victims of abuse may respond in two ways. In the first scenario, the victim learns to see themselves as though through the eyes of the powerful aggressor and comes to believe that they are a deserving victim. In effect, they forget how to see through their own eyes and identify with the aggressor's view. In the second scenario, the victim goes looking for other persons to victimize. It is as if the victim needs to hurt someone else in order to regain their feelings of personal power.

**Identity:** The perception of the sense of self

**Immediate Memory:** Recall of perceived material within seconds after presentation

**Impressionistic Speech Style:** A term used to describe a person's speech when it consistently lacks in detail and emphasizes emotions. For example, if you asked someone what they thought of something, and they said it was "just wonderful", yet could not elaborate upon why they felt this way.

**Impotence:** Inability to achieve penile erection

**Individualized Educational Program (IEP):** In order to ensure that children with disabilities and special needs receive a meaningful educational program, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997) was implemented stating that parents have the right to be an integral part in designing an educational plan for their child. An IEP contains specific objectives and goals based upon the student's current level of educational performance in a variety of areas and details the services that are to be provided for a comprehensive educational program.

**Individual Therapy:** Traditional dyadic therapeutic technique in which a psychotherapist treats only one patient during a given therapeutic session

**Insane:** Of or pertaining to one who is of unsound mind. A legal rather than a psychiatric term.

**Insanity:** Legal concept denoting a mental disturbance, due to which a person lacks criminal responsibility for an alleged crime and hence cannot be convicted of the crime.

**Insanity Defense:** Criminal law defense plea that a person lacks criminal responsibility by reason of insanity

**Insomnia:** Inability to sleep

**Intensive Outpatient Therapy:** Intensive Outpatient Therapy (IOP) is a form of partial psychiatric hospitalization that is more intense than regular once-per-week outpatient therapy and less intense than 24/7 inpatient hospitalization. See also **Partial Hospital Program**.

**Involuntary Commitment:** To be consigned to a mental institution against ones' will

## **J**

**Journalogy:** Using a journal. Journalogy is a simple, effective, and powerful tool that can be used as a source of guidance, inspiration, and healing.

## **K**

**Kindling Effect:** The 'Kindling Effect' refers to how epileptic seizures are thought to occur. The idea of seizure kindling is that large-scale seizures can be triggered by small but repeated stimulation events, just as a large-scale fire can grow out of a small ignited pile of wood.

**Kleptomania:** Pathological compulsion to steal

**Korsakoff's Psychosis:** Organic mental disorder seen in long-term alcoholics. Its major characteristic feature is profound memory impairment, particularly for recent events, for which the individual attempts to compensate by replacing the lost memory with a fabrication.

## **L**

**Libido:** The desire for sexual activity. In psychoanalysis, the psychic energy associated with the life instinct.

**Labile:** When a person's feelings or mood fluctuates often

**Licensure:** A practice with certain professional groups of legally regulating by state and provincial boards who can be a member of that profession in order to insure that all persons within that profession have met at least minimal certifications and training experiences.

**Licensed Professional Counsellor (LPC):** A type of counselling license that a therapist can apply for. Educational and experiential standards to achieve the LPC license are lower than the requirements for Psychologist or Psychiatrist licensure. Typically held by Masters level professionals.

**Light Therapy:** A treatment for Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) in which the patient is exposed to periods of bright light to alleviate depression.

**Learning Theory:** Approach to the understanding of human behaviour that emphasizes the way in which learning comes about

**Localized Amnesia:** Partial loss of memory; amnesia restricted to specific or isolated experiences

## M

**Major Depression:** Major depressive disorder consists of one or more major depressive episodes each of which lasts at least 2 weeks. The most prominent symptoms of major depressive disorder are depressed mood and loss of interest or pleasure. Patients also tend to have other symptoms, but these vary from person-to-person. Insomnia and weight loss often accompany major depression, but depressed patients may also gain weight and sleep excessively.

**Maladaptive:** Referring to any mental activity or behaviour that is dysfunctional or counterproductive with regard to a person's ability to cope effectively with the problems and stresses of life

**Mania:** An excited mood characterized by mental and physical hyperactivity, disorganization of thoughts and behaviour

**Manic Depression:** Another name for Bipolar Disorder

**Manic-Depressive Illness:** Mood disorder characterized by severe alterations in mood that are usually episodic and recurrent. See also **Bipolar Illness**.

**Manuals (Therapy):** Step by step (session by session) guide books for conducting a particular type of therapy for a particular type of problem

**MAOI:** See **Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitor**

**Masturbation:** Self-stimulation of the genitals for sexual pleasure

**Melancholia:** Melancholia is an old word that describes a deep brooding form of depression.

**Menopause:** Menopause is a stage in life when a woman stops having her monthly period. By definition, a woman is menopausal after her periods have stopped for one year. Menopause typically occurs in a woman's late forties to early fifties. It is a normal part of aging, marking the end of a woman's reproductive years. Women who have their ovaries and uterus surgically removed undergo "sudden" menopause.

**Mental Hygiene:** An outdated term that means the same thing as Mental Health

**Mental Status:** General functional condition of mental and behavioral processes as determined by psychiatric assessment of a variety of areas of functioning, such as state of consciousness, mood and affect, thinking and speech, motor behaviour, general knowledge, memory, calculation, judgment, abstraction, and insight.

**Mindfulness:** A self-help technique. The practice of mindfulness is the repetitive act of directing attention to only one thing in this one moment. It is awareness without judgement of what is, via direct and immediate experience.

You're being mindful when in a restaurant, you eat dessert and notice every flavour you are tasting, instead of eating the dessert while having a conversation and looking around to see if you know anyone. If you're being mindful, you're not thinking about "is it good or bad to have dessert?", you're just really having dessert.

**Mixed States:** An episode in which symptoms of both mania and depression are present

**Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors (MAOI):** A group of medicines sometimes prescribed to treat severe depression. They increase the concentration of chemicals, the monoamine oxidase enzymes, responsible for transmitting information between nerves in particular regions of the brain. This may lead to increased mental functioning. Monoamine Oxidase enzymes include epinephrine, norepinephrine, and serotonin. MAOIs include isocarboxazid (*Marplan*), phenelzine (*Nardil*), and tranylcypromine (*Parnate*).

**Mood:** The patient's subjective experience of how they are feeling emotionally. Distinguished from affect, the external expression of emotional feeling which is observed by others..

**Mood Congruent:** Feelings are consistent with circumstances; for example, a person feels sad when someone dies

**Mood Disorder:** The term Mood Disorder refers to the family of depressive disorders, including Major Depression, Bipolar Affective Disorder (manic depression) and related diagnoses.

**Mood Disorders Society of Canada:** A national, not-for-profit, volunteer-driven organization that is committed to improving quality of life for people affected by depression, bipolar disorder, and other related disorders.

**Mood Incongruent:** Feelings are not consistent with circumstances; for example, a person feels sad for no reason

**Munchausen's Syndrome (and Munchausen's By Proxy):** Munchausen's Syndrome is the popular name for what the DSM-IV calls Factitious Disorder. Factitious Disorder is characterized by a person intentionally harming or making themselves ill in order to gain attention and care. In Factitious Disorder By Proxy, a person intentionally harms another person, also presumably to gain access to the sick role and the attention that sickness brings. A new twist on this disorder is the person who enters Internet chat rooms and forums and pretends to be ill in order to gain sympathy and attention.

**Myasthenia:** Muscle weakness

## N

**Narcissistic Personality Disorder:** The narcissistic personality exhibits, "...a pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or behaviour), need for admiration, and lack of empathy, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts.

**National Alliance for the Mentally III (NAMI):** Self-help group and influential national advocacy network comprised of and supported by the family members and parents of schizophrenic patients.

**National Depressive Manic-Depressive Association (NDMDA – now Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA):** An American not-for-profit organization established to: educate patients, families, mental health professionals, and the general public concerning the nature and management of depressive and manic-depressive illness as treatable medical diseases; foster self-help for patients and families; eliminate discrimination and stigma; improve access to care; advocate for research toward the elimination of these illnesses.

**National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH):** American association working to improve mental health through biomedical research on mind, brain, and behaviour

**Negative Psychotic Symptoms:** Symptoms that are absent, as opposed to those that are present. Negative symptoms occur less than normal. Positive symptoms occur more than normal. An example of negative psychotic symptoms would be catatonia (holding a rigid position for a long period of time) and flat affect (showing no emotion). See also **Positive Psychotic Symptoms**.

**Nervous Breakdown:** The term Nervous Breakdown is not an official clinical diagnosis. It is a term commonly used to refer to when a person becomes overwhelmed by anxiety or depression.

**Neuroleptic:** The term Neuroleptic refers to a class of psychiatric medicines that are used to treat psychosis and a variety of other conditions.

**Neurologic Disorders:** Disorders involving the organization and function of nervous tissue, including diseases of the peripheral nerves, the spinal cord, and the brain, which are based on organic pathology.

**Neurologist:** Physician who specializes in diseases of the nervous system

**Neuropsychology:** Neuropsychology is a joint field of clinical psychology and neuroscience. Neuropsychologists study the relationships between the brain and behaviour. Many of them are experts in psychological testing, particularly in intellectual and cognitive tests of intelligence, memory and attention.

**Neurosis:** Mental or psychiatric disorder characterized primarily by anxiety. Although neuroses are not accompanied by gross distortion of reality or severe personality disorganization, normal functioning is impaired by the person's symptoms; they have no organic basis, are relatively persistent, and are treatable.

**Neurotic:** Freud distinguished two levels of mental illness severity: Neurosis and Psychosis. In Neurosis, a person has many internal psychological conflicts and shows mild to moderate impairments in their ability to function properly in their day-to-day life. Neurotics, however, maintain contact with shared social reality, in contrast to psychotics, who have lost touch with reality.

**Neurotransmitters:** Neurotransmitters is the name given to a group of chemicals in the brain that facilitate communication between the cells of the brain called neurons. The neurons do not touch each other. At the end of one neuron and the beginning of another is a space called a synapse. When a message gets to the end of the first neuron, it triggers the release of neurotransmitter chemicals into the synapse. These neurotransmitters travel across the synapse and touch the beginning part of the next neuron in the chain, triggering this next neuron to continue the message on down the chain of cells. Psychiatric drugs act on the brain at the level of the neurotransmitters. The presence of a given drug in the brain changes how many neurotransmitters are available to make the journey from one neuron to the next. By changing the levels of a drug in your brain, your doctor can make adjustments to how well different kinds of messages get transmitted through your brain - with the effect of changing how you feel and think. Examples of neurotransmitters that affect mood are serotonin, dopamine, and noradrenaline.

**NOS:** "Not Otherwise Specified". NOS is used as a broad based diagnostic category, for instance Depression NOS. The choice of the NOS diagnosis means that the diagnosing doctor is pretty sure that the patient's problems fall into a particular family of disorders (e.g., depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, etc.) but that there is not enough information present at the time of diagnosis to better specify the type of disorder that is present.

## **O**

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD):** Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is a disorder characterized by the presence of obsessions and compulsions, leading to repetitive, unwanted thoughts and rituals that are beyond the person's control. There is a sense of urgency and tension that rises until the person feels compelled to act on the obsessive thought. An action based on an obsessive thought is called a compulsion. Compulsions range from mild checking behaviour (is the stove off?) to severe cases where the person is unable to function based on their compulsions having taken over their life.

**Occupational Therapists:** Healthcare professionals that teach people how to return to normal activities after injury of illness using therapy and rehabilitation.

**Organic Disorders:** The term "Organic" as used in medicine and mental health refers to disorders that are based in physical or neurological (usually brain) injury or damage.

**Organic Mood Syndrome:** Disorder characterized by either a depressive or a manic mood attributed to a clearly defined organic factor

**Orgasm:** Sexual climax, the peak psychophysiological reaction to sexual stimulation

**Orgasmic Dysfunction:** Failure to achieve orgasm through physical stimulation

**Orientation:** State of awareness of oneself and one's surroundings in terms of time, place, and person

**Orthopsychiatry:** Interdisciplinary approach to the study and practice of maintaining or restoring mental health, involving principles derived from psychiatry, psychology, sociology, social work, medicine, and other fields. Particular emphasis is placed on preventive techniques to promote healthy emotional development.

## P

**Pain-Pleasure Principle:** Psychoanalytic concept which states that a person tends to seek pleasure and avoid pain

**Panic:** Acute, intense attack of anxiety associated with personality disorganization; the anxiety is overwhelming and accompanied by feelings of impending doom

**Panic Attack:** Episode of acute intense anxiety occurring in panic disorder, schizophrenia, major depression, and somatization disorder

**Panic Disorder:** Classification of anxiety disorder characterized by attacks of acute intense anxiety, with or without agoraphobia

**Paranoia:** A psychosis characterized by a system of delusions which often include the belief of persecution or grandeur without hallucinations

**Paranoid:** Describing an individual affected with paranoia and presents such personality traits as extreme sensitivity to rejection, suspiciousness, hostility and self-importance

**Paresthesia:** Tingling skin

**Parkinsonian:** Symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease such as tremors, rigid muscles, difficulty moving and unresponsive expression

**Partial Hospital Program:** Partial Hospital Programs (PHPs) are very much like Intensive Outpatient Therapy Programs (IOPs), except they last longer (usually all day as opposed to IOPs that last for several hours). See also **Intensive Outpatient Therapy**.

**Passive-Aggressive Behaviour:** Passive aggressive behaviour can occur when someone is angry with another person, but is restrained for some reason from openly expressing that anger. The anger is expressed in some hidden way, such as sabotaging the other person's work.

**Pastoral Counsellor:** A Pastoral Counsellor is a clergy person who counsels people. There are academic and theological programs for this, some of which terminate in the M.Div. degree, but not all Pastoral Counsellors have been to these programs.

**Personality Disorder:** Most people have a fairly flexible personality that allows them to adapt to a variety of circumstances, people and events. Persons with Personality Disorders instead, get stuck in fairly rigid ways of relating to people and events. It may affect how they think about themselves and the world around them, how they experience emotion, how they function socially, and how well they can control their impulses. There are ten recognized personality disorders, typically arranged into three clusters:

- **Cluster "A"** - Paranoid, Schizoid, and Schizotypal Personality Disorders.
- **Cluster "B"** - Antisocial, Histrionic, Narcissistic and Borderline Personality disorders.
- **Cluster "C"** - Avoidant, Dependent and Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorders.

It is possible for people to have traits or symptoms of more than one personality disorder at the same time, while not meeting criteria for any one of them. In this case of "mixed personality disorder" the diagnosis of Personality Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (NOS) is made, and the traits are listed out.

**Petechia:** Tiny red spots on the skin

**Ph.D.:** Ph.D. stands for "Doctor of Philosophy". This is a doctoral level degree generally requiring extended graduate level university training (4-6 years after completing regular college BA/BS programs). Clinical Psychologists will often have this degree, although the Ph.D. can be issued in many different fields and is not limited to psychology.

**Phobic Disorder:** Disorder characterized by a specific fear

**Phototherapy:** Also called light therapy, phototherapy is sometimes used to treat seasonal depression or seasonal affective disorder (SAD). It involves exposure to light from specialized white fluorescent light tubes. Light therapy is safe and generally well tolerated. The reported side effects are minor: eyestrain, headaches, insomnia.

**Phototoxicity:** Sensitivity to the sun

**Polydipsia:** Excessive thirst

**Polyuria:** Frequent urination

**Positive Psychotic Symptoms:** Symptoms that are present, as opposed to those which are absent. Positive symptoms are present more than normal. Negative symptoms are less than normal. An example of positive psychotic symptoms would be hallucination and delusions, which you would not expect in a normal person. See also **Negative Psychotic Symptoms**.

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** PTSD is an anxiety disorder that occurs in the aftermath of a traumatic event. Examples are combat, rape and natural disasters. PTSD is diagnosed six months after the traumatic event. There are three major types of PTSD symptoms. **First**, the traumatized person generally develops a heightened startle response and easy arousability and irritability. This change in mood and startle is relatively permanent and biological in nature, as if the traumatized person's nervous system has been 'reset'. **Second**, they are vulnerable to having memories of the trauma come flooding back into their minds at

unexpected moments (flashbacks). **Third**, they will go to great lengths to avoid thinking about the trauma. These avoidance measures vary from not going near anything that reminds them of the trauma to dissociation.

**Postpartum Depression:** Postpartum depression is a complex mix of physical, emotional, and behavioural changes that occur in a mother after giving birth. It is a serious condition, affecting about 10% of new mothers. Symptoms range from mild to severe depression and may appear within days of delivery or gradually, perhaps up to a year later. Symptoms may last from a few weeks to a year.

**Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS):** The physical and psychological symptoms that occur in the week before a woman's menstrual period. Symptoms may include bloating, headache, irritability, anxiety or depression, low self-esteem, difficulty sleeping, changes in appetite, fatigue, and breast swelling and tenderness.

**Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder:** PMDD is a **severe** form of premenstrual syndrome (PMS) that affects about 3 to 5% of menstruating women. Emotional symptoms include shifting moods, severe depression, feelings of hopelessness, anger, anxiety or low self-esteem, difficulty concentration, irritability, and tension. Physical symptoms include fatigue, headaches, joint or muscle pain, breast tenderness, changes in appetite, food cravings or bingeing, sleep problems, and bloating.

**Pressured speech:** Rapid, sometimes incoherent talk; a symptom of mania

**Priapism:** Persistent, painful erection. May be a side effect of certain drugs, such as trazodone.

**Prodromal:** The period of time before an outbreak of a serious condition during which subtle symptoms are present

**Projection:** Projection is a type of defense mechanism. In projection, a person experiences an emotion or thought that they aren't able to cope with. So, instead, they perceive the thought or feeling as if it had come from someone else. One example of this mechanism is the person who is angry with a friend, but does not feel comfortable with feelings of anger in himself. He may instead deny these feelings and imagine that his friend is the angry one.

**Psy.D.:** Psy.D. stands for "Doctor of Psychology". This is a doctoral level degree generally requiring extended graduate level university training (3-4 years after completing regular college BA/BS programs). Some Clinical Psychologists have this degree. Programs granting Psy.D. degrees are generally clinically rather than academically focused.

**Psyche:** Mind, as divided into conscious, preconscious, and unconscious in Sigmund Freud's topographic model

**Psychiatric Emergency:** Disturbance in thoughts, feelings, or actions for which immediate treatment is necessary; e.g., suicide intent

**Psychiatrist:** Medical doctor whose specialty is the study and treatment of mental, emotional, or behavioural disorders. After four years of study in an accredited medical school and receiving the MD degree, the physician spends four years of postgraduate training in a certain area of psychiatry. They are doctors who can prescribe medications.

**Psychiatry:** Branch of medicine concerned with the prevention, cause, and treatment of mental disorders

**Psychic Energizer:** Rarely used term for any antidepressant or stimulant drug

**Psychic Trauma:** Psychologically upsetting event that may have lasting consequences on a person's thinking, feeling, or behaviour

**Psychologist:** A Psychologist is an individual who has completed a doctoral level degree (about 5 years of graduate school resulting in the Ph.D, or Psy.D. degrees) in the science of Psychology and receive additional training to work with patients. Some psychologists are scientist-researchers, some are therapists, some become administrators, etc. They are not medical doctors and cannot prescribe medication, but do perform evaluations and use psychotherapy. Those that specialize in therapy are called Clinical Psychologists.

**Psychology:** Study and profession concerned with the mind (mental processes) and behaviour

**Psychometry:** Science of testing and measuring mental and psychological functioning

**Psychomotor:** Relating to combined physical and mental activity

**Psychomotor Agitation:** Physical and mental overactivity associated with a feeling of inner turmoil, as seen in agitated depression

**Psychopathology:** Psychopathology is the study of mental illness.

**Psychopharmacologist:** A psychiatrist who specializes in the study of the effect of drugs on the mind and behaviour

**Psychopharmacology:** The study of the effect of drugs on the mind and behaviour

**Psychosis:** Psychosis is an illness that refers to a state of being completely out of touch with reality. It is generally a state (a temporary condition) rather than a trait (permanent condition). Many medications (called neuroleptics or anti-psychotics) are available to help psychotic persons regain their comprehension of reality. Psychosis is frequently associated with the family of disorders known as Schizophrenia as symptoms include hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't really there), delusions (false beliefs), and irrational thoughts and fears.

**Psychosocial Treatment:** Psychosocial treatments – including certain forms of psychotherapy (often called talk therapy) and social and vocational training – are helpful in providing support, education, and guidance to people with mental illnesses and their families. Studies tell us psychosocial treatments for mental illnesses can help consumers keep their moods more stable, stay out of the hospital, and generally function better. A psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, or counsellor typically provides these psychosocial therapies. The therapist and psychiatrist may work together as the psychiatrist prescribes medications and the therapist monitors the consumer's progress. The number, frequency, and type of psychotherapy sessions a consumer has should be based on his or her individual treatment needs. As with medication, it is important to follow the treatment plan for psychosocial treatments to gain the greatest benefit.

**Psychosurgery:** Neurosurgical intervention to treat a mental disorder that involves destruction or ablation of brain tissue

**Psychotherapist:** Person trained to treat mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders. See also **Therapist**.

**Psychotherapy:** A term used to describe a variety of different talking therapies used to treat depression. Psychotherapy involves talking to a licensed professional during a scheduled series of appointments. It has proven to be effective in treating mild and moderate forms of depression, and can be combined with drug therapy to treat all degrees of depression.

**Psychotherapeutic Drug:** Drug used to alter abnormal thinking, feelings, or behaviour; traditionally divided into classes of antipsychotic, antidepressant, antimanic, and antianxiety (anxiolytic) drugs

**Punishment:** Punishment is a term from Psychological Learning Theory that has a precise meaning; it refers to something that causes behaviour to lessen in intensity. There is nothing that is intrinsically punishing. A thing is called punishing if, when it is applied, it results in the reduction of behaviour that you want to reduce.

## **Q**

**Quadrangular Therapy:** Marital therapy that involves four people, the married pair and each spouse's therapist

## **R**

**Racing Thoughts:** A symptom of mania in which the individual experiences swiftly changing and uncontrollable ideas

**Rapid Cycling:** A serious condition in the cycles of Bipolar Disorder in which the individual quickly alters between symptoms of depression and mania sometimes within minutes

**Rationalization:** An unconscious defense mechanism in which irrational or unacceptable behaviour, motives, or feelings are logically justified or made consciously tolerable by plausible means

**Reaction Formation:** Unconscious defense mechanism in which a person develops a socialized attitude or interest that is the direct antithesis of some infantile wish or impulse that is harboured either consciously or unconsciously. One of the earliest and most unstable defense mechanisms, closely related to repression; both are defences against impulses or urges that are unacceptable to the ego.

**Reality Therapy:** A method of therapy developed by the psychiatrist, William Glasser, MD in the 1960's. The main point of this therapeutic approach is that people can choose behaviours that will help them to better meet their needs in the future. Reality therapy focuses on the responsibility of the patient to develop their own effective strategies for handling life's problems and to make better choices in their lives. Dr. Glasser's therapy is built upon what he calls Choice

Theory. Choice theory basically states that our choices are made from internal factors or basic needs that we all possess and that the only behaviour we can control is our own.

**Reflexology:** A technique in which a therapist applies pressure to acupuncture point on the ears, hands, and feet.

**Registered Nurses:** Healthcare professionals who are registered and licensed to practice nursing. They have completed nursing school and passed an exam administered by a Board of Nurse Examiners.

**Retardation:** Reduction of slowing down of mental and physical activity, as often observed in depression

**Reward:** Reward is a term from Psychological Learning Theory that has a precise meaning. It refers to something that causes behaviour to increase in intensity. There is nothing that is intrinsically rewarding. A thing is called rewarding if, when it is applied, it results in the intensification of behaviour.

**Role Playing:** Psychodrama technique in which persons are trained to function more effectively in their real-life roles. In the therapeutic setting of psychodrama, the patient is free to try and to fail in their roles, and try again until they succeed. Mew approaches feared situations can thus be learned and applied outside the therapeutic setting.

## S

**SAD:** See **Seasonal Affective Disorder**.

**Schizoaffective Disorder:** Schizoaffective Disorder is diagnosed when symptoms of schizophrenia (hallucinations, delusions, catatonia, disorganized speech, flattening of facial affect, etc.) co-occur (happen at the same time) with all necessary symptoms of a manic, depressive or mixed episode sufficient for the diagnosis of Bipolar or Major Depression. It must also be documented that the psychotic symptoms continue in the absence of the mood symptoms for a period of at least two weeks.

**Schizoid Personality Disorder:** A pervasive pattern of detachment from social relationships and a restricted range of expression of emotions in interpersonal settings, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts.

**Schizophrenia:** Schizophrenia is a chronic, severe, and disabling mental illness that affects approximately 1 percent of the population at some point in their lifetime. The disorder often develops earlier in men, usually in the late teens or early twenties, while women typically develop the disorder in their twenties and early thirties. People with schizophrenia often experience distorted thinking, hallucinations (usually hearing voice), delusions (believing that other people are reading their minds, controlling their thoughts, or plotting against them), or a reduced ability to feel normal emotions.

**Schizotypal Personality Disorder:** A pervasive pattern of social and interpersonal deficits marked by acute discomfort with, and reduced capacity for, close relationships as well as by cognitive or perceptual distortions and eccentricities of behaviour, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts.

**School Phobia:** Young child's sudden fear of and refusal to attend school, usually considered a manifestation of separation anxiety but also may be a symptom of depression

**Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):** A mood disorder subtype characterized by depression, psychomotor slowing, hypersomnia, and hyperphagia that develops each year at the same time, usually in autumn or winter and improves in spring and summer.

**Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor (SSRI):** Class of antidepressant drugs that work by preventing the movement of Serotonin into nerve endings thus forcing the Serotonin to remain actively working. SSRIs include fluoxetine (*Prozac*), fluvoxamine (*Luvox*), sertraline (*Zoloft*), paroxetine (*Paxil*), escitalopram (*Lexapro*), and citalopram (*Celexa*).

**Self-Concept:** The self-concept is the collection of ideas you have about who you are.

**Self-Esteem:** Self-esteem is the opinion you have of yourself. It is based on your attitude to the following: your value as a person; the job you do; your achievements; how you think others see you; your purpose in life; your place in the world; your potential for success; your strengths and weaknesses; your social status and how you relate to others; your independence or ability to stand on your own feet.

**Self-Injury (SI):** Also known as self-mutilation; self-induced violence (SIV). A coping method in which one inflicts physical harm upon one's body in order to deal with overwhelming feelings.

**Self-Medicare:** The use of any drug, whether conscious or otherwise, to make oneself feel better. This can include alcohol, nicotine and caffeine; street drugs; or prescription drugs if they are being used as intended.

**Separation Anxiety:** Reaction expressed in a child who is isolated or separated from the mother, such as tearfulness, irritability

**Separation Anxiety Disorder:** An anxiety disorder characterized by an infant's or child's fear and apprehension on being removed from the parent or parent figure.

**Separation-Individuation:** The phase during which the child perceives itself as distinct from the mother, becomes more independent and aware of its physical and psychological autonomy and can endure separation from the mother.

**Serious and Persistent Mental Illness:** A fairly loose term used to refer to any serious and persistent mental illness. Included normally would be Schizophrenia, Bipolar Affective Disorder, recurrent Major Depression, etc. There is no specific list of what this term includes.

**Sexual Abuse:** Abuse of a sexual nature such as rape, incest, and indecent exposure. It can cause various physical and emotional problems including lack of self-esteem, self-destructive behaviour, anxiety, and depression.

**Side Effect:** Any condition caused by a drug other than the effect for which it was prescribed

**Situational Depression:** Situational depression is any depression that results from the inability to cope with a specific stressful situation.

**Sleep Terror Disorder:** Sleep disorder in which there are repeated episodes of abrupt awakenings from sleep, characterized by verbalizations, confusion, autonomic activity, and poor recall of the dream. Also called night terror.

**Social Phobia (Social Anxiety):** Any of a variety of phobic disorders characterized by intense and disabling self-consciousness, resulting in extreme anxiety, in social situations. People with social phobia have an intense and persistent feeling of being watched, judged, and evaluated in a negative manner. Fears of public speaking, blushing, eating in public, using public lavatories are all examples of social phobia. Often referred to as "shyness".

**Social Psychiatry:** Branch of psychiatry concerned with ecological, sociological, and cultural variables that engender, intensify, or complicate maladaptive patterns of behaviour and their treatment.

**Sociopath:** The term "sociopath" refers to people who are antisocial and who commits antisocial or criminal acts without any sense of guilt. In this context, the term "anti-social" refers to criminal or deviant actions that harm other people rather than people who are loners.

**Somnolence:** A state of drowsiness, sleepiness

**Splitting:** There are some individuals who see the world in absolute terms; everything is black or white, with no gray areas. The term splitting is often used to describe how such a black and white thinking adult will characterize others. For instance, a person who uses splitting as a defense mechanism may view one person as being "a saint", and another as "pure evil". They are unable to see that there are good and bad qualities in every person.

**SSRI:** See **Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor**.

**St. John's wort (Hypericum perforatum):** An herbal remedy that may be helpful (although it has not yet been proven useful by scientists) for depression. It has been widely used to treat mild to moderate depression in Europe, especially in Germany.

**Stigma:** A social response of fear, denial, prejudice, and discrimination.

**Stress Reaction:** Disturbed psychologic or physiologic functioning encountered when strong, involuntary, often unconscious internal impulses press for action that conflicts with one's conscious, reality-oriented behaviour.

**Suicidal Ideation:** Having fantasies about taking one's own life.

**Suicide:** Taking one's own life.

**Sympathy:** Compassion for or sharing of another person's feelings, ideas, and experiences

## **T**

**Taboo:** Restrictions or prohibitions on behaviour imposed by a culture, usually involving a dangerous, forbidden, or unclean entity

**Tachycardia:** Rapid heartbeat

**Tardive Dyskinesia:** A central nervous system disorder characterized by involuntary movement and twitching of the face muscles; a serious side effect of prolonged use of antipsychotic drugs

**Teratogen:** A substance with causes birth defects

**Theory:** Plausible or scientifically acceptable general principle or body of principles offered to explain phenomena

**Therapist:** Generally short for "Psychotherapist". A person who professes to be able to help person suffering with problems amenable to psychological treatments. This is a generic term and does not imply any specific credentials or educational background.

**Therapeutic Alliance:** Conscious contractual relationship between therapist and patient in which each implicitly agrees that they need to work together to help the patient with his or her problems

**Timidity:** Being timid; having the quality of being hesitant

**Tinnitus:** Ringing in the ears

**Tolerance:** Tolerance has two meanings. In addictions, tolerance is used to describe the phenomenon that occurs when someone starts needing more and more of a drug in order to get the same high. In a different context, tolerance refers to how well a person can accept things that are different or stressful.

**Tourette's Syndrome:** A neurological disorder characterized by involuntary body movements called tics, and uncontrollable speech.

**Tranquilizer:** Any drug or substance that calms a person

**Transference:** Transference is a term derived from psychoanalytic psychology. The term refers to a "transfer" of emotions that frequently occurs in a psychotherapeutic relationship. Emotions you learned in earlier relationships may colour how you experience new relationships. For example, you come to fear your male psychotherapist because you've transferred your fear of your father onto him. You may fear your psychotherapist in spite of the fact that he has not really done anything to merit this fear. See also **Counter-Transference**.

**Trauma:** A trauma occurs when a person is exposed to an event that threatens their physical or psychological safety. Persons who have been traumatized are at increased risk of developing trauma related psychiatric/psychological disorders which include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), dissociative disorders (amnesia, psychogenic fugue) and possibly, Dissociative Identity Disorder (formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder).

**Trichotillomania:** Psychological disorder that produces an uncontrollable desire to pull out one's hair.

**Tricyclic Antidepressant:** Older antidepressants which inhibit reuptake of serotonin and norepinephrine. In addition, they interfere with the metabolism of other compounds in the central nervous system, the amines. Can be very helpful in restoring sleep and appetite. Examples include amitriptyline (*Elavil*), nortriptyline (*Pamelor*), imipramine (*Tofranil*), and desipramine (*Norpramin*).

**Trigger:** The cause of a psychological episode. It is thought that an episode may be caused by some kind of biological or chemical changes in the body that does not appear to be within the control of the sufferer. In most types of depression it is a **stressful incident** of some kind that causes stress to the person who is vulnerable. Some sufferers will say that their illness was triggered by events or changes in their life, usually involving some kind of loss or personal threat. An episode might also be triggered by certain foods.

## U

**Unconscious:** **1.** One of three divisions of Sigmund Freud's topographic theory of the mind (the others being the conscious and preconscious) in which the psychic material is not readily accessible to conscious awareness by ordinary means. **2.** In popular usage, any mental material not in the immediate field of awareness. **3.** Denoting a state of unawareness, with lack of response to external stimuli, as in a coma.

**Undersocialized:** Characterized by the absence of adequate social bonds to others, as a type of conduct disorder

**Unipolar disorder:** Recurrent major depression

## V

**Vaginismus:** Painful vaginal spasm, usually psychogenic, that occurs during coitus, making penile insertion impossible

**Vertigo:** Sensation that one or the world around one is spinning or revolving; a hallmark symptom of vestibular dysfunction, not to be confused with dizziness.

**Violence:** To injure or abuse another with physical force. Can be a sign of depression in young males, but also a trigger.

**Voluntary Commitment:** Submitting oneself by personal choice to hospitalization

## W

**Withdrawal:** Pathological retreat from interpersonal contact and social involvement; extreme decrease of intellectual and emotional interest in the environment. It may be seen in schizophrenia and depression.

**Withdrawal Syndrome:** A constellation of signs and symptoms that appears when a person stops taking a drug or chemical substance on which he or she has become physically dependent.

**World Health Organization (WHO):** Specialized agency of the United Nations, established in 1948, governed by the World Health Assembly. Technical committees and regional organizations further the purpose of the WHO: “the attainment by all people of the highest level of health.” It publishes the International Classification of Diseases (ICD).

**World Psychiatric Association (WPA):** International association, encompassing psychiatric associations from 75 countries throughout the world, whose objectives are to strengthen and promote international cooperation in psychiatry and among psychiatrists working in different fields and to encourage the exchange of information concerning psychiatric disorders.

## Y

**Yohimbine:** Drug that blocks adrenergic  $\alpha$ -receptors. Because of its parasympathetic effect that causes vasodilatation, it has been used as an agent to help induce penile erection.