Your notes

GCSE Psychology: revision notes

Mental health and depression

Contents

1. Mental health
2. Clinical depression
3. Treatments
4. Key terms
5. Quick questions
6. What to do next

Mental health

- Mental health problems are common: about 1 in 4 people in the UK experience one each year.
- Views of mental health vary between cultures and over time, and have changed as **stigma** has reduced.
- Mental health problems affect individuals (relationships, work, self-care) and society (the cost of care and lost working days).

Clinical depression

- **Unipolar depression** is a mood disorder with persistent low mood, loss of interest or pleasure, tiredness, changes in sleep and appetite, poor concentration and feelings of worthlessness, lasting at least two weeks.
- Biological explanation: an imbalance of neurotransmitters, especially low levels of **serotonin**.
- Psychological explanation: **negative schemas** and faulty thinking, such as a negative attributional style (blaming yourself for bad events).

Treatments

- **Antidepressants**, such as SSRIs, increase the level of **serotonin** available in the brain. They can be effective but may have side effects and don't treat underlying causes.
- Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) helps people challenge negative thoughts and change behaviour. It deals with causes but takes time and effort.
- Wiles and colleagues found that adding CBT to usual care (including **antidepressants**) helped more patients improve than usual care alone.

Key terms

Unipolar depression	A mood disorder with persistent low mood and loss of interest.
Serotonin	A neurotransmitter linked to mood.
Negative schema	A negative mental framework about oneself or the world.
Antidepressants	Drugs that change neurotransmitter levels to lift mood.
CBT	Cognitive behavioural therapy: a talking therapy that challenges negative thoughts.
Stigma	Negative attitudes towards a group, such as people with mental illness.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. About how many people in the UK experience a mental health problem each year?
2. Which neurotransmitter is linked to depression?
3. For how long must symptoms usually last for a diagnosis of depression?
4. What is CBT?
5. How do SSRIs work?
6. What is a weakness of antidepressants?
7. What did Wiles and colleagues find?
8. What is a negative attributional style?

Answers

1. About 1 in 4
2. Serotonin
3. At least two weeks
4. A talking therapy that challenges negative thoughts
5. They increase the serotonin available in the brain
6. They may have side effects and don't treat underlying causes
7. Adding CBT to usual care helped more patients improve
8. Blaming yourself for bad events

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 4 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

Free revision for GCSE and KS3 at lycolearn.co.uk. Some notes are for one exam board only, and say so in brackets.

Your notes