PsychPrep

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Psychopathology at a Glance

A-level Psychology
AQA 7182 Paper 1 · Psychopathology

Sample factfile

IN A NUTSHELL **What is abnormal, and how do psychologists explain and treat phobias, depression and OCD? Psychopathology is Section D of Paper 1. Here are the definitions, explanations and treatments on one page.**

1 Key terms

Statistical infrequency
rare behaviour

Negative reinforcement
avoidance removes anxiety

Negative triad
self, world, future

SSRI
blocks serotonin reuptake

2 Definitions

- Statistical infrequency (IQ below 70: about 2%); deviation from social norms; failure to function adequately (Rosenhan and Seligman, 1989); deviation from ideal mental health (Jahoda, 1958).

3 Phobias: behavioural approach

- Two-process model (Mowrer, 1960): acquired by classical conditioning (Little Albert, 1920), maintained by negative reinforcement.
- Systematic desensitisation: hierarchy, relaxation, reciprocal inhibition. Flooding: immediate exposure, extinction.

4 Depression: cognitive approach

- Beck (1967): faulty processing, negative self-schemas, negative triad. Ellis (1962): ABC model, irrational beliefs.
- CBT: challenge irrational thoughts. March et al. (2007): 81% improved with CBT after 36 weeks.

5 OCD: biological approach

- Genetic: candidate genes (SERT, COMT), polygenic. Neural: low serotonin, worry circuit.
- Drug therapy: SSRIs such as fluoxetine prevent serotonin reuptake.

6 Exam tip

Match each disorder to its approach: behavioural for phobias, cognitive for depression, biological for OCD. Questions follow this pairing.

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