

CHAPTER 13: SOMATIC SYMPTOM SYNDROME KEY TERMS

Behaviour therapy

See *Behaviour Modification*.

Behavioural stress management

Behavioural techniques designed to reduce worrying and increase relaxation.

Catastrophising

An example of magnification, in which the individual takes a single fact to its extreme.

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)

An intervention for changing both thoughts and behaviour. CBT represents an umbrella term for many different therapies that share the common aim of changing both cognitions and behaviour.

Conflict-resolution

Psychodynamic interpretations of somatic symptom disorders in which distressing memories, inner conflict, anxiety and unacceptable thoughts are repressed in consciousness but outwardly expressed as somatic symptoms.

Conversion disorder

The presence of symptoms or deficits affecting voluntary motor or sensory function.

Drug treatments

The use of pharmacological or drug treatments to alleviate some of the symptoms of psychopathologies.

Factitious disorder

A set of physical or psychological symptoms that are intentionally produced in order to assume the sick role.

Factitious disorder imposed by another

The intentional falsification of physical or psychological signs or symptoms, or induction of injury or disease, in another person.

Glove anaesthesia

A conversion disorder symptom in which numbness begins at the wrist and is experienced evenly across the hand and all fingers.

Health anxiety

Another term for hypochondriasis.

Hypnosis

A therapeutic technique in which the patient is placed in a trance.

Hysteria

A common term used in psychodynamic circles to describe conversion disorder (prior to the latter's inclusion in the DSM).

Illness anxiety disorder

A preoccupation with fears of having or contracting a serious illness based on a misinterpretation of bodily signs or symptoms. Formerly known as Hypochondriasis.

Interpretation biases

Cognitive biases in which an individual interprets ambiguous events as threatening and evidence for potential negative outcomes.

La belle indifference

An indifference about real symptoms (especially when the symptoms would be disturbing to most people) sometimes displayed by individuals with somatoform disorders.

Memory bias

Individuals with somatic symptom disorders may also have a bias towards remembering and retrieving illness relevant material.

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)

A direct extension of traditional CBT in which treatments emphasize achieving a mental state characterized by present-moment focus and non-judgmental awareness

Muscle dysmorphia

An obsession with a muscular appearance, often associated with excessive weight training and the use of bodybuilding anabolic steroids.

Psychodynamic therapy

Therapeutic approach which focuses on procedures designed to bring repressed thoughts and memories into consciousness where they can be effectively dealt with.

Reasoning bias

The tendency of individuals with hypochondriasis to reject diagnoses that disagree with their own beliefs about their health and to seek further opinions – presumably in the belief that someone will agree with their view.

Rogue representations

In somatoform disorders, representations which provide inappropriate templates by which information about body shape and health are selected and interpreted.

Sick role

Playing the role of being sick as defined by the society to which the individual belongs.

Somatic symptom disorder

A group of loosely associated disorders all of which can be characterised by psychological problems manifesting as physical symptoms or as psychological distress caused by physical symptoms or physical features.