Mental and Emotional Problems

Guide to Reading

- **Building Vocabulary**
  As you read this lesson, write down each highlighted term and its definition.
  - mental and emotional disorders (p. 159)
  - anxiety disorder (p. 160)
  - mood disorder (p. 161)
  - suicide (p. 161)

- **Focusing on the Main Ideas**
  In this lesson, you will be able to
  - identify several mental and emotional problems.
  - recognize the warning signs of serious mental and emotional problems.
  - list factors that contribute to the development of mental and emotional problems.

- **Reading Strategy**
  **Finding the Main Idea** Review each of the main headings in this lesson. Write one sentence describing what you think the main idea of the section will be.

Quick Write

Some teens find it very hard to ask for help when they have problems. Is it easy for you to ask for help? In a paragraph, explain why or why not.

What Are Mental and Emotional Disorders?

Julie hadn't felt happy for a long time. She also had trouble sleeping and had lost interest in activities that she used to enjoy. Julie might be suffering from a mental and emotional disorder. **Mental and emotional disorders** are illnesses that affect a person's thoughts, feelings, and behavior.

Causes of Mental and Emotional Disorders

There are many causes of mental and emotional disorders. Physical factors include drug use, certain diseases, and accidental injuries to the brain. Heredity can also be a factor when there are problems with the levels of certain chemicals in the brain.

Other mental and emotional disorders do not have physical causes. They may come from repeated emotional stressors. If mental and emotional disorders are identified early, they can be treated so that they don't become lifelong problems.

**Reading Check**

Identify What are two physical causes of mental and emotional disorders?
Types of Mental and Emotional Disorders

There are many types of mental and emotional disorders, including anxiety disorders and mood disorders. All may be mild or severe.

Anxiety Disorders

Everyone feels anxious from time to time. However, someone with an **anxiety disorder** has **extreme fears of real or imaginary situations that get in the way of normal activities**. Below are some descriptions of different anxiety disorders.

**Panic disorder**

In panic disorder, people experience intense feelings of fear for a short time. Sometimes, there seems to be no reason for the feelings. During a panic attack, the body prepares for fight or flight, even during an ordinary situation such as waiting in line.

**Phobias**

A phobia is an exaggerated or unrealistic fear of something specific, such as tunnels, spiders, or public places. People with phobias may go out of the way to avoid an object or situation that they fear. Some phobias can interfere with normal, everyday activities.

**Obsessive-compulsive disorder**

People with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) have unwanted thoughts that may not make sense. A person with OCD may feel that he or she **must** perform a certain activity, such as washing his or her hands several times. Doing these activities can make the anxiety go away for a short while, but it quickly returns.

**Post-traumatic stress disorder**

People experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in reaction to a traumatic event, such as war or natural disaster. People with PTSD have bad memories of the event for a long time.

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Some people have an abnormal fear of heights. **How do you think a person with a phobia of heights would feel in this situation?**

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Mood Disorders

It’s normal for people to feel happy for a while, then later feel sad about something. However, a mood disorder is a mental and emotional problem in which a person undergoes mood swings that seem extreme, inappropriate, or last a long time. The following are some examples of mood disorders.

Depression

Depression is a mood disorder in which a person feels a strong sense of hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness, guilt, and extreme sadness. These feelings can continue for weeks. A person who is depressed may lose interest in activities that used to be fun. If depressed people begin to feel hopeless, they may consider ending their lives.

Bipolar disorder

Also called manic depression, bipolar disorder involves extreme mood swings for no apparent reason. A person with bipolar disorder usually experiences alternating periods of excessive activity, called mania, and depression. During times of mania, the person has an unrealistic belief in his or her abilities. This can lead to poor judgment and even dangerous risk taking.

Reading Check Define What is a mood disorder?

Signs of Mental and Emotional Problems

People suffering from a mental or emotional problem may show certain signs. For example, they may lose their appetite or fail to take care of their personal appearance. Others may have nightmares or have problems falling asleep. Some may hear voices that no one else can or think that others are trying to harm them. People who have long-lasting feelings of sadness may also have a mental or emotional disorder. Teens who experience any of these symptoms should seek help from a trusted adult right away.

What Is Suicide?

Suicide is the act of killing oneself on purpose. Figure 5.3 lists some signs that a person might be thinking about suicide. If you notice any of these signs in someone you know, talk to a trusted adult right away. In the next lesson, you’ll find out more about how and where to get help.
FIGURE 5.3

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE
These signs may indicate that a person is thinking about suicide. What should you do if you suspect that someone is thinking about suicide?

Go Online
Visit glencoe.com and complete the Interactive Study Guide for Lesson 5.

Lesson 5 Review

After You Read
Review this lesson for new terms, major headings, and Reading Checks.

What I Learned
1. Vocabulary What are mental and emotional disorders?
2. Explain What are three warning signs of suicide?
3. Distinguish What is the difference between a panic disorder and a phobia?
4. Identify What is one characteristic of bipolar disorder?
5. List What are two main types of mental and emotional disorders?

Thinking Critically
6. Analyze If you had a phobia about public places, how might this affect your social health?
7. Explain Why is getting treatment early for mental and emotional disorders so important?

Applying Health Skills
8. Accessing Information Use reliable online and print resources to find out more information about treatments for phobias. Write a one-page summary of your findings.