

Chapter 29

Caring for Persons With Mental Health Disorders

The Whole Person

- The whole person has physical, social, psychological, and spiritual parts.
- Mental relates to the mind.
- Mental health and mental illness involve stress.
 - Stress is the response or change in the body caused by any emotional, physical, social, or economic factor.
 - Mental health means that the person copes with and adjusts to everyday stresses in ways accepted by society.
 - Mental illness is a disturbance in the ability to cope with or adjust to stress.

Mental Health

- Mental disorder, emotional illness, and psychiatric disorder also mean mental illness.
- Causes of mental health disorders include:
 - Not being able to cope or adjust to stress
 - Chemical imbalances
 - Genetics
 - Drug or substance abuse
 - Social and cultural factors

Anxiety Disorders

- Anxiety is a vague, uneasy feeling in response to stress.
 - Often anxiety occurs when needs are not met.
 - Some anxiety is normal.
 - Persons with mental health problems have higher levels of anxiety.
 - Signs and symptoms depend on the degree of anxiety.
 - Coping and defense mechanisms are used to relieve anxiety.
 - Defense mechanisms are unconscious reactions that block unpleasant or threatening feelings.
 - With mental health problems, they are used poorly.

Common Anxiety Disorders

- Panic disorder
 - Panic is an intense and sudden feeling of fear, anxiety, terror, or dread.
- Phobias (Phobia means an intense fear.)
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
 - An obsession is a recurrent, unwanted thought, idea, or image.
 - Compulsion is repeating an act over and over again.
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) occurs after a terrifying ordeal.
 - Flashbacks are common.
 - A flashback is reliving the trauma in thoughts during the day and in nightmares during sleep.

Schizophrenia

- Schizophrenia means split mind.
 - It is a severe, chronic, disabling brain disorder that involves:
 - Psychosis (a state of severe mental impairment)
 - Delusion (a false belief)
 - Hallucination (seeing, hearing, smelling, or feeling something that is not real)
 - Paranoia (The person has false beliefs and is suspicious.)
 - Delusion of grandeur (an exaggerated belief about one's importance, wealth, power, or talents)
 - Delusion of persecution (the false belief that one is being mistreated, abused, or harassed)
- People with schizophrenia do not tend to be violent.

Mood Disorders

- Mood disorders involve feelings, emotions, and moods.
- Two common mood disorders are:
 - Bipolar disorder (manic-depressive illness)
 - The person has severe extremes in mood, energy, and ability to function.
 - Signs and symptoms can range from mild to severe.
 - Major depression
 - Depression involves the body, mood, and thoughts.
 - The person is very sad.
 - Causes include a stressful event, physical disorders, and hormonal factors in women.

Personality Disorders

- Personality disorders involve rigid and maladaptive behaviors.
 - Maladaptive means to change or adjust in the wrong way.
- Antisocial personality disorder
 - The person has poor judgment.
 - He or she lacks responsibility and is hostile.
 - Morals and ethics are lacking.
- Borderline personality disorder (BPD)
 - The person has problems with moods, interpersonal relationships, self-image, and behavior.
 - The person has intense bouts of anger, depression, and anxiety.

Substance Abuse and Addiction

- Substance abuse or addiction occurs when a person overuses or depends on alcohol or drugs.
 - The person's physical and mental health are affected.
 - The welfare of others is affected.
- Substances involved in abuse and addiction affect the nervous system.
 - All affect the mind and thinking.

Substance Abuse and Addiction, cont'd.

- Alcoholism includes these symptoms:
 - Craving (The person has a strong need or urge to drink.)
 - Loss of control (The person cannot stop drinking once drinking has begun.)
 - Physical dependence (The person has withdrawal symptoms when he or she stops drinking.)
 - Tolerance (The person needs to drink greater amounts of alcohol to get high.)
- Alcoholism is a chronic disease lasting throughout life.
 - It can be treated but not cured.

Drug Abuse and Addiction

- Drug abuse is the overuse of a drug for non-medical or non-therapeutic effects.
- Drug addiction is a chronic, relapsing brain disease.
 - The person has an overwhelming desire to take a drug.
 - The person has to have the drug.
 - Often, higher doses are needed.
 - The person cannot stop taking the drug without treatment.

Drug Abuse and Addiction, cont'd.

- Drug abuse and addiction:
 - Affect social and mental function
 - Are linked to crimes, violence, and motor vehicle crashes
 - Have physical effects
- Legal and illegal drugs are abused.
- A drug treatment program combines various therapies and services to meet the person's needs.
 - Drug abuse and addiction are chronic problems.

Eating Disorders

- An eating disorder involves extremes in eating patterns.
- Anorexia nervosa: The person has an intense fear of weight gain or obesity.
- Bulimia nervosa: Binge eating occurs.
- Binge eating disorder: The person often eats large amounts of food.

Suicide

- Suicide means to kill oneself.
- Suicide is most often linked to:
 - Depression
 - Alcohol or substance abuse
 - Stressful events
- If a person mentions or talks about suicide:
 - Take the person seriously.
 - Call for the nurse at once.
 - Do not leave the person alone.

Care and Treatment

- Treatment of mental health problems involves:
 - Having the person explore his or her thoughts and feelings
 - Drugs as ordered by the doctor
 - Reflecting the person's needs in the care plan
 - Using good communication skills