

Definitions and Concepts for AQA Psychology A-level

Option 2: Eating Behaviour

Anorexia nervosa: (An = without, orexia = hunger, nervosa = nervous). An eating disorder that results in a severe lack of intake of food.

Boundary model: A theory to explain how restricting food intake can potentially lead to obesity. Essentially, if a person passes their self-imposed eating limit (their boundary), they are likely to keep eating to their fill, which is longer than a non restricted eater.

Disinhibition: To remove regular inhibitions. Here, specifically, it means to remove normal limits of food intake and to eat excessively in response to a stimulus (e.g. stress).

Enmeshment: A term used to describe families who are overly connected with each other, to the extent that they do not act as autonomous individuals but rather as a whole. This can cause anorexia nervosa in an attempt to enact some control.

Family systems theory: A theory that suggests that a functioning family is an important factor in individual wellbeing. This theory suggests a dysfunctional family unit could trigger a disorder like anorexia nervosa.

Ghrelin: A hormone that increases hunger.

Hypothalamus: An organ that lies just below the thalamus that is responsible for the regulation of many bodily processes.

Leptin: A hormone that induces satiety.

Neophobia: (Neo = new, phobia = fear) An aversion to anything new, which usually appears as a refusal to try new foods.

Obesity: An excessive amount of fat; a BMI over 30.

Restraint theory: A theory for the cause of obesity, which suggests that restraint of eating can lead to a greater intake of food overall.

Taste aversion: Associating certain foods with illness, if the illness occurred shortly after eating that food.

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