

## Definitions and Concepts for AQA Psychology A-level

### Topic 5: Psychopathology

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**Beck's negative triad:** A component of Beck's cognitive explanation for depression which suggests negative thoughts in depression broach three categories: the self, the world and the future.

**Cognitive behavioural therapy:** A form of therapy used to help patients with depression that aims to directly combat irrational cognitive biases.

**Depression:** A mood disorder that causes sufferers to experience chronic low mood.

**Deviation from ideal mental health:** An definition of abnormality that suggests if a person does not achieve one of the six criteria of ideal mental health, they are acting abnormally. These six criteria are coping with stress, self-actualisation, sufficient self-esteem, autonomy, adaptation to new situations and an accurate idea of the world.

**Deviation from social norms:** A definition of abnormality that suggests that if a person deviates from cultural and social rules, they are abnormal. This definition is restricted temporally and spatially. For example, homosexuality was viewed as abnormal in the past and is currently viewed as abnormal in some countries today.

**Ellis's ABC model:** An explanation for depression which suggests it is caused fundamentally by irrational beliefs. He explains that an "Activating event" (A) is interpreted by your "Beliefs" (B) which lead to unhealthy "Consequences" (C). This cycle causes and perpetuates depression.

**Failure to function adequately:** A definition of abnormality that suggests that a person has abnormal behaviour if they are unable to function in everyday life. This definition encompasses an individual's quality of life as well as their objective behaviour.

**Fear hierarchy:** An order of situations that expose patients to increasing levels of fear-inducing stimuli.

**Flooding:** A form of therapy for phobias wherein a patient is exposed to a huge amount of fear stimuli in order to help the patient associate the stimulus with safety (since in spite of huge amounts of fear, the patient is not actually in any danger).

**OCD:** A disorder characterised by obsessions (intrusive thoughts) and compulsions (repetitive behaviours), either occurring together or alone.

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**Phobia:** An intense, irrational fear of a stimulus.

**Reciprocal inhibition:** Inhibition of fear by learning to be relaxed, since both responses are not possible at the same time.

**Relaxation techniques:** Techniques taught to patients to erase uncomfortable emotions of fear arousal, which can help eliminate a fear response in a phobia, as per reciprocal inhibition.

**Statistical infrequency:** An explanation for abnormality that suggests abnormalities can be statistically determined. If the behaviour is calculated to fall out of the range of normal distribution, it can be labelled as statistically infrequent and therefore abnormal.

**Systematic desensitisation:** A form of therapy for phobias that involves establishing a fear hierarchy and teaching patients relaxation techniques. Use of relaxation at every level of the fear hierarchy gradually causes the fear to become extinct.

