

Psychotic Disorders

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

This tutorial will cover the topic of psychosis. Our discussion breaks down as follows:

1. Psychotic Disorders
2. Symptoms of Psychosis
 - a. Hallucinations
 - b. Delusions

1. Psychotic Disorders

Psychosis and **psychotic disorders** are an extreme psychological concept, demonstrating the more drastic effects of mental disorders. It has been popularized as a result of this, but it is a topic that is widely misunderstood.



DID YOU KNOW

The term psychosis is derived from the Greek word *psyche*, which means the mind, and "-osis," which refers to some abnormal or non-normal state.

Psychosis is a split, or loss of contact, from reality or from normal mental functioning. Psychotic disorders are different ways in which this split state may present itself. A person with psychosis has a completely different experience of reality from everybody else around them. The most recognized form of a psychotic disorder is schizophrenia.

Psychosis can also be caused in other ways, such as by specific damage to the brain. This is called organic psychosis. It can actually occur normally through the aging process and the deterioration of the brain. This would be diagnosed as dementia.



EXAMPLE Alzheimer's is a form of dementia, whereby a person has a completely different kind of mental perspective on what is going on in the world around them. They often relate what is occurring to past events, and not to the reality around them.

Psychosis can also be caused by people intentionally through the use of drugs. This is usually a temporary state.

➦ **EXAMPLE** If someone uses a drug like LSD, or acid, they can experience a temporary form of psychosis. This isn't what we would call a psychotic disorder, but rather an intentional psychotic state.



TERM TO KNOW

Psychotic Disorders

Mental disorders that involve a split from, or loss of contact with, reality

2. Symptoms of Psychosis: Hallucinations and Delusions

Psychosis and psychotic disorders are characterized by two major features or symptoms:

- Hallucination
- Delusions

1a. Hallucinations

Hallucinations are any imagined sensations from a stimulus that is not actually there. Hallucinations can be very real for a person that's having them. They can take the form of any sensory input.

➦ **EXAMPLE** Visual hallucinations can include flashes of color or light. Often, visual hallucinations also take the form of a human figure.



TERM TO KNOW

Hallucinations

An imagined sensation, or a feeling that a person has without any stimulus to cause it

2b. Delusions

Delusions, which are something that a person strongly believes in, even if there's compelling evidence to the contrary. This can range from very realistic beliefs, to the very bizarre or far-fetched.

➦ **EXAMPLE** A person with extreme delusions might be convinced that aliens are controlling their brain.

There are several different forms of delusions:

- **Paranoia:** When a person believes that they're being persecuted by others. This can lead to a paranoid delusion disorder. This is the most important type of delusion to remember.

➦ **EXAMPLE** A person with paranoid delusions might think that the police are constantly monitoring them.

- **Erotomania:** When a person believes that another person loves them, even though they might have never met them.

➞ **EXAMPLE** Celebrity stalkers may suffer from an erotomanic delusion.

- *Grandiose Delusion:* When a person has feelings of being a great person or an overinflated sense of identity.

➞ **EXAMPLE** A person with a grandiose delusion might think they are the second coming of Jesus.

- *Jealous delusions:* When a person has strong feelings that a person's spouse or significant other is cheating on them, without any evidence to back it up.
- *Somatic delusions:* When a person believes that their body is diseased, rotting, or falling apart.



TERMS TO KNOW

Delusions

A strong belief that a person holds, regardless of contrary evidence

Paranoia

A delusion where a person believes they are being persecuted by others



SUMMARY

Psychotic disorders are an extreme psychological concept. A person with psychosis has a complete split with reality, and a completely different view of reality. **Symptoms of psychosis** include **hallucinations and delusions**. Delusions are beliefs that a person holds, even if there's compelling evidence to the contrary. Paranoia, when a person believes that they're being persecuted by others, is the most important type of delusion to remember, but other types of delusions include: erotomanic delusions, grandiose delusions, jealous delusions, and somatic delusions.

Good luck!

Source: This work is adapted from Sophia Author Erick Taggart



TERMS TO KNOW

Delusions

A strong belief that a person holds, regardless of contrary evidence.

Hallucinations

An imagined sensation, or a feeling that person has without any stimulus to cause it.

Paranoia

A delusion where a person believes they are being persecuted by others.

Psychotic Disorders

Mental disorders that involve a split from, or loss of contact with, reality.

