

Mental health and wellbeing

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Marxism

Marxists believe that mental health is caused directly through capitalism as the proletariat are exploited by the bourgeoisie in low paid jobs, which often causes stress related illnesses (Health Knowledge, no date). Income is one of the major factors determining individuals' standards of living and often influences their access to health care, educational prospects and leisure opportunities (Health Knowledge, no date). All of which impact mental health.

Marxists believe that those who are labelled as mentally ill become oppressed as a result of stigma, and like all types of oppression, can affect all classes (Rosenthal, 2016). Despite this, it is largely the working class who are the worst affected, suffering from all forms of discrimination including medical and housing inequality (Rosenthal, 2016). They are therefore more likely to experience poverty, unemployment and homelessness (Rosenthal, 2016).

Attachment Theory

The attachment theory refers to the emotional bonds and relationships individuals develop throughout the life cycle (Cherry, 2018).

When an attachment bond is broken through separation, such as bereavement, strong attachment behaviours are triggered, causing severe physiological stress and emotional pain (Raphael, 1994). This means that they are likely to develop mental health problems such as anxiety and depression (Raphael, 1994).

Approximately twenty percent of individuals aged 60+ experience mental health issues worldwide, most commonly depression which affects 7% of the population (WHO, 2017). Similarly, 3.8% of the older population experience anxiety and 1% suffer from substance misuse problems (WHO, 2017). Despite this, many issues regarding substance misuse are often disregarded among the older population (WHO, 2017). Finally, a 25% of deaths resulting from self-harm are made up of individuals aged 60 or above (WHO, 2017). Mental health issues are often overlooked by both elderly individuals themselves and health professionals (WHO, 2017). The reluctance of the elderly to seek help is often related to the stigma attached to such issues (WHO, 2017).

There are multiple reasons for the development of mental health issues amongst the elderly population. The elderly are likely to not only face the common life stresses that most adults experience, but also stresses that are linked with later life, such as loss of ability (WHO, 2017). For example, older adults are likely to experience reduced mobility and other health problems (WHO, 2017). Additionally, they are more likely to experience bereavement and a drop in socioeconomic status with retirement (WHO, 2017). All of which can lead to issues such as loneliness and isolation and may result in needing long term care (WHO, 2017).

Other common causes of mental health problems amongst the elderly include:

- Financial stress
- Housing
- Transport

(Chepkirui and Numbisi, 2015)



(Get Active Cornwall, 2018).

Mental health is the:

State of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community (World Health Organisation, 2014).

There are three major laws in Wales which ensure the wellbeing of its citizens. These include:

- Mental Health Act 1983 (revised 2007)
- Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Social services and wellbeing act 2014.

(Welsh Government, 2016).

The Mental Health Measure 2010 places legal obligations on local health boards and authorities regarding the treatment of mental health issues (Welsh Government, 2016). It is believed to help those facing such issues by raising independent mental health promotion and ensuring that care is focused on specific mental health needs of individuals (Welsh Government, 2015).

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 sets to improve the wellbeing of individuals requiring care and support (Welsh Government, 2016). The Act promotes individual voice with individuals having more power in the type of support needed (Welsh Government, 2016).

Age UK

Age UK is a non-profitable organisation which runs a variety of services in providing support for the elderly, in particular those experiencing mental health issues (Age UK, 2017). They aim to provide information and advice to improve the wellbeing of the elderly. They also do so by offering services such as:

- Cafes and restaurants
- Day centres
- Exercise
- Social activities
- IT Training courses
- Home help

(Age UK, 2017).

Such services are provided to create friendly and relaxed places for elderly individuals to socialise, improving their mental health (Age UK, 2017). It also encourages them to become more independent and improves the quality of their lives (Age UK, 2017). The aspect of physical activity is especially important as it is believed to impact mental health and vice versa (Age UK, 2017).

Samaritans

Samaritans is a charity which provides emotional support to anyone experiencing emotional distress through offering free confidential services (Counselling Directory, 2018). They also promote the awareness of mental health issues such as depression (Counselling Directory, 2018). The organisation first established as a charity with a telephone helpline in 1957, and now offer support in 203 locations in the UK (Counselling Directory, 2018).

Samaritans offer support for anyone experiencing emotional issues, regardless of the time and for how long. Furthermore, they do not require assessments or waiting lists (Samaritans, 2018). They offer confidential support so that individuals feel safe and share their issues without concerns of judgment (Samaritans, 2018). The organisation aims to reduce the number people experiencing mental health issues and do so by staying committed to several values (Samaritans, 2018). These include listening, confidentiality, people making their own decisions, being non-judgmental and human contact (Samaritans, 2018).

Support from GP

First stages of support usually start with a doctor, where they assess individual needs and determine the best strategies for improving mental health. This is often one of the preferred methods as it is confidential, meaning the doctors do not share any information without consent (nidirect, no date). Doctors often treat individuals with mental health issues directly, though sometimes it is more appropriate to refer patients to mental health services (nidirect, no date).

Mental Health Services

Mental health services often involve assessments by psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers. They assess individuals based on several questions, including:

- Thoughts and feelings
- Social history
- Previous mental health problems
- Lifestyle

(nidirect, no date).

After diagnosis, mental health services will work with individuals to develop personal wellbeing plans. These plans summarise individual needs and propose future support for recovery. Some interventions include:

- Conversation therapies
- Family and social care
- Lifestyle training

(nidirect, no date).



(Hawke's Bay, no date)

Specific services

There are other specific services available, which usually involve receiving care from specialists, for example;

- alcohol or drug addiction
- eating disorders
- psychological therapies or trauma
- personality disorders

(nidirect, no date).

Social/ community care

Social/ community care involves support in doing everyday tasks such as improving relationships and managing financial pressures. It can be accessed both by a doctor's referral or direct contact by the individual (mind.org, 2018).

Residential Care

There are numerous housing services available to support those who aren't able to live by themselves as a result of mental health issues (mind.org, 2018). Individuals needing further care often seek advice from support workers, carers and mental health teams regarding housing options. These options include:

- Hostels are usually a short-term option which provides individuals with supervision until they are able to live more self-reliantly.
- Residential care homes usually cater for those who have serious mental health issues.
- Therapeutic communities offer reintegration programmes with short stay accommodation.
- Supported housing schemes allow individuals experiencing mental health problems to live by themselves in furnished accommodation, though a mental health support worker assists them in times of need.

(mind.org, 2018).

Hospital treatment

Individuals experiencing severe mental health problems or crises usually seek hospital support. This is usually voluntary, though if at risk of harming oneself or others, individuals can be taken in, under the Mental Health Act 1983 (mind.org, 2018). This Act is the principal legislation that highlights the rights of individuals experiencing mental health disorders. It includes both the assessment and treatment rights (NHS, 2016).

The duration of stay in hospital depends on each individual situation. This type of support means that patients are treated faster, receive constant support and are kept safe (mind.org, 2018).

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