

Psychopharmacology & Psychological Disorders

Instructor: Dr. Bitá Sharifzadeh, OPQ # 10884-07 Email: psy.elite@dbn.life	Class Instruction: Online at the student's own pace. CEC #: RA06064-24
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Course Syllabus

Problem & Need:

As mental health professionals, it is not uncommon to counsel or treat clients who are taking various medications. These could be pharmacological and/or psychopharmacological treatments in addition to psychotherapy. Oftentimes, the side effects of certain medications can mimic symptoms of psychological disorders, thus rendering the understanding of these medications and their side effects a very important part of evaluation, diagnosis, and psychotherapy.

Unfortunately, many programs in psychology and psychotherapy fail to cover psychopharmacology in depth, and as such, many practitioners feel ill-equipped when discussing psychopharmacology with clients. Consequently, this lack of knowledge may have adverse effects on client outcomes. As a teaching program centered on excellence, DBN Elite has made it its mission to fill in this gap!

In the Psychopharmacology & Psychological Disorders course, practitioners will review the primary symptoms that encompass several disorders, including mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and bipolar disorders. Etiologies and risk factors will be discussed as well as the differential diagnoses that one must be aware of when assessing a client. Finally, practitioners will learn the primary psychotropic medications used in the treatment of these disorders and possible side effects that mental health clinicians must be aware of when working with clients.

Course Clientele:

Psychotherapists and psychologists looking to gain an in-depth knowledge of a variety of mental health disorders and the use of psychotropic medication in their treatment.

Length of Activity and Course Format:

The course is a total of 2 hours and 45 minutes and will be available online on [DBN Elite](#). The course must be completed within 6 months of purchasing it.

Trainer:

Dr. Bitá is a Clinical Psychologist with over 20 years of experience in treating individuals, couples, and families. She holds a doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from Concordia University as well as a postdoctoral degree in Psychopharmacology from Alliant University. Her specialties include the treatment of depression, anxiety, trauma, and OCD, amongst others. Her preferred modalities are CBT, mindfulness, and sensorimotor psychotherapy.

Course Objectives

1. Identify the primary symptoms of mental health disorders, including depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, and bipolar disorders.
2. Assess for differential diagnoses of various disorders;
3. Identify the primary psychotropic medications used to treat depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, and bipolar disorders.

Course Evaluation

The course is pass/fail, no numeric grade will be provided, however, a passing grade is 75%.

-Final Exam (100%): The course evaluation will be a cumulative exam that consists of 35 multiple-choice and true or false questions designed to assess your knowledge of psychopharmacology. The final exam will be available to you once you have completed the lecture. A passing grade is 75% or 27 correct questions.

Content

<i>Topics Covered</i>	<i>Required Reading(s)</i>
<p><i>Depressive Disorders</i></p> <p>-Characteristics/features of different disorders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder • Major Depressive Disorder • Persistent Depressive Disorder (Dysthymia) • Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder • Substance/Medication-Induced Depression • Depressive Disorder Due to Another Medical Condition <p>-Etiologies</p> <p>-Differential diagnoses</p> <p>-Pharmacological treatment: -TCAs, MAOIs, SSRIs, SNRIs</p> <p>-Side effects of previously listed medications</p> <p><i>Bipolar Disorders</i></p> <p>-Characteristics/features of different Disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bipolar I Disorder • Bipolar II Disorder • Cyclothymia <p>-Etiologies</p> <p>-Differential diagnoses</p> <p>-Pharmacological treatment: -Lithium, Anticonvulsants, Second generation antipsychotics</p> <p>-Side effects of previously listed medications</p> <p><i>Anxiety Disorders</i></p>	<p>American Psychiatric Association: p. 156-188</p> <p>Preston et al; p. 77 - 94; pages 175 - 200</p> <p>Hooley et al. (2016): pages 220-268</p> <p>American Psychiatric Association: Pages 123-154</p> <p>Preston et al.: Pages 95 - 106; pages 201 - 216</p> <p>Hooley et al.: Pages 220-268</p>

<p>-Characteristics/features of different disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) ● Specific Phobias ● Social Anxiety Disorder ● Agoraphobia Without Panic ● Panic Disorder ● Anxiety Related to General Medication, Substance Use or Abuse, or Another Psychiatric Disorder <p>-Etiologies</p> <p>-Differential diagnoses</p> <p>-Pharmacological treatment options for previously listed disorders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MAOIs, SSRIs, SNRIs, benzodiazepines, atypical anti-anxiety medication buspirone, tricyclic and serotonergic antidepressants <p>-Side effects of previously listed medications</p>	<p>American Psychiatric Association: pages 189-233</p> <p>Preston et al.: Pages 107-122; pages 217 - 226</p> <p>Hooley et al.: pages 173-219</p>
<p><i>Segment 2: Pre-recorded Q&A Exercise</i></p>	<p>This exercise is to be done as in-class work and should take students up to 5 hours to complete.</p>

Suggested Readings

Resources for the class are available on [DBN Lib](#). The references link to the resources themselves or to their purchase pages if they are unavailable for free.

American Psychiatric Association, (2017) Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5. Arlington, VA

Hooley, J. M., Butcher, J., Knock, M., & Mineka, S. (2016). Abnormal psychology. Essex, England: Pearson Education Limited.

Preston, J., O'Neal, J. H., & Talaga, M. C. (2017). Handbook of clinical psychopharmacology for therapists. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications,

Inc.

Bezchlibnyk-Butler, K. Z., Jeffries, J. J., & Procyshyn, R. M. (2019). Clinical handbook of psychotropic drugs. Boston, MA: Hogrefe.

Healy, D. (2009). Les médicaments psychiatriques démystifiés (5e éd.). Issy-les-Moulineaux : Elsevier Masson SAS.

Muse, M., & Moore, B. A. (2012). Handbook of clinical psychopharmacology for psychologists. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.

Stahl, S. M., & Muntner, N. (2017). Stahl's essential psychopharmacology: neuroscientific basis and practical applications. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.