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Glossary

Glossary of terms for mental health problems and their symptoms		
The English word	Its meaning	Equivalent in your language
A		
Addiction	☞ Dependence	
Alzheimer's disease	The commonest type of ☞ dementia	
Anorexia	A mental health problem characterised by a desire to lose weight or change body shape by refusing to eat	
Anxiety	A state of feeling tense, worried or fearful	
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	☞ Hyperactivity	
Autism	A developmental disorder in which the child has difficulties in interacting and communicating with others across many settings. The child typically also shows narrow areas of behaviours or interests	
B		
Bed-wetting	A condition in which a child is wetting the bed well past the age when it is not expected (by 7 years)	
Bereavement	The experience of losing a loved one through death	
Bipolar disorder	A severe mental disorder where a person experiences episodes of high and low mood with periods of normal mood in between	
Bulimia	When a person eats a large amount of food and then makes themselves vomit or takes laxatives because of unhappiness with body shape or weight	
C		
Child behavioural disorder	Includes ☞ conduct disorder and ☞ hyperactivity	
Common mental disorders	☞ Depression and ☞ anxiety	

Compulsion	A behaviour that is repeated again and again even though the person tries to resist doing it
Conduct disorder	A condition in which a child (usually a teenager) consistently behaves badly and is undisciplined
Confusion	A condition when a person does not know where they are, what time it is or who they are
Conversion disorder	A condition in which a person develops physical symptoms caused entirely by mental stress
Convulsion	☞ Seizure
D	
Delirium	A state, often due to a physical disease, in which a person is confused (☞ confusion)
Delusion	A belief that is irrational and untrue but is held with firm conviction
Dementia	A condition in which the person shows progressively worsening memory and behaviour problems
Dependence	A state when a person must take a drug regularly in order to avoid a withdrawal syndrome
Depression	A state of sadness, despair or loss of interest in daily life
Developmental disorders	A group of conditions present from early childhood in which there are delays or persistent abnormalities in the intellectual, emotional or physical development of the child
Disorientation	A state in which a person does not know what day or time it is or where they are (typically associated with ☞ delirium or ☞ dementia)
Drug abuse	The use of a drug in a manner that may cause social, legal, economic or health damage to the person
Dyslexia	A group of developmental disorders in which a child of normal intelligence has specific problems with school tasks such as reading, spelling or writing (also referred to as specific learning disorders)

E	
Eating disorder	☞ Anorexia and bulimia
Enuresis	A condition in which a child wets their clothes after an age when this is not expected (about 3 years)
Epilepsy	A condition in which ☞ seizures occur repeatedly
F	
Fit	☞ Seizure
G	
Grief	☞ Bereavement
H	
Hallucination	An experience in which a person hears, sees, smells or feels things that are not real
Hyperactivity	A developmental disorder where the child cannot sit in one place for long and has difficulty with attending to tasks which require concentration
Hysteria	☞ Conversion disorder
I	
Impotence	A condition in which a man is unable to get an erection of his penis
Insomnia	Difficulty in sleeping
Intellectual disability	A developmental disorder where a child develops more slowly than normal
Internet addiction	When a person is unable to control their impulse to use the internet, leading to excessive use and emotional distress when unable to access
Irritability	Feeling short-tempered
M	
Manic–depressive disorder	☞ Bipolar disorder
Mental disability	Mental health problems that lead to severe and ongoing impairments in the person’s daily functioning
Mental disorder	Symptoms of mental health problems that can be classified using a medical diagnosis, which are typically of a longer duration than mental distress and not necessarily linked to difficulties in life

Mental distress	Symptoms of mental health problems which are often of short duration and occur in response to difficulties in life
Mental health problem	An overall term for any disturbance of mental health, including mental distress, disorder or disability
Mental retardation	☞ Intellectual disability
O	
Obsession	A thought that comes repeatedly into a person's mind even though she does not want it
Obsessive–compulsive disorder	A condition in which obsessions and compulsions occur together
P	
Panic	A state of severe anxiety during which the person feels as if he is going to die or collapse
Perinatal depression	A condition in which depression occurs during pregnancy or in the months after childbirth
Phobia	A state in which a person develops an irrational fear of an everyday situation such as crowds or markets
Post-traumatic stress disorder	A condition of mental distress occurring in a person who has witnessed or experienced a life-threatening experience
Premature ejaculation	A condition in which a man has an ejaculation (semen being discharged from the penis) too soon during sexual intercourse
Psychosis	A severe mental disorder associated with delusions and hallucinations
Psychosomatic	A term used to describe complaints or a condition in which there are physical health complaints caused by a psychological illness
S	
Schizophrenia	A type of psychosis which often lasts many years
Seizure	A condition when a person is not fully aware of their surroundings and may show jerky or unusual movements

Specific learning disability	☞ Dyslexia
Suicide	A person ending their own life
T	
Trauma	A life-threatening or frightening event
W	
Withdrawal syndrome	A state of discomfort in a person who is dependent on drugs or alcohol after the drug or alcohol is stopped