

Free research paper about mental disorder

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Bipolar disorder, also known as manic-depressive illness, is a mental disorder that is characterized by unusual shifts in mood, energy and activity levels.

The term " manic-depressive illness" was coined by German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin in the late XIX century and at that time referred to all mood disorders. Ernst Kretschmer, German psychiatrist and the author of temperament typology, concluded that a certain type of people predisposed to this illness, in his classification they are called cyclothymic. These people are really cheerful, sociable, very adaptive and emotionally labile, but they are susceptible to unreasonable mood swings which under the stress can get out of control.

Bipolar disorder affects people of all ages, gender and ethnicity. It is difficult to diagnose and according to various estimates from 1% to 7% of the world population suffer from this illness.

It is believed that this is genetic disorder, although the principle of inheritance is still unclear. Probably, predisposition is not in a certain gene, but in a set of genes which are, for example, responsible for the regulation of neurotransmitters in the brain. The structure of the brain, disruptions in the exchange of neurotransmitters and changes in the nerve cells, stress and major life events can also affect on the development of bipolar disorder.

Unfortunately, there is no way to reduce the number of incidences of bipolar disorder. Since genetic predisposition plays an influential role in the development of this illness, it is impossible to prevent it. However, it is important to recognize the early symptoms of the illness. In " The Bipolar Disorder Survival Guide" David J. Miklowitz says that getting an accurate diagnosis is the first step toward reclaiming your life from bipolar disorder.

Regularly visiting the doctor and taking the necessary medicines, the patient can control his mood and avoid further deterioration of health. The only way to reduce the symptoms is to learn how to manage stress and control emotions. This contributes to the normal and healthy lifestyle that includes regular sleep, healthy eating, no alcohol, drugs and risky behavior. It is also very helpful to involve your family in combating the illness. Family members can control the behavior of the patient, they can motivate and support him, that certainly makes it much more effective to cope with future crises.

Works Cited

- Miklowitz, D. J. (2011). The bipolar disorder survival guide: what you and your family need to know. 2nd ed. New York: Guilford Press.