

Psyc 430 : depression

Psychology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Case Study: Depression Answer Sheet Ellen: Depression and Suicidality

Diagnosing Ellen 1a. Refer to the DSM-IV checklist and list all symptoms that Ellen has that match the criteria for major depressive episode. Which of Ellens symptoms meet any of the criteria? (Be sure to match specific symptoms with specific criteria.)

Feelings of guilt and worthlessness, inability to sleep, low appetite and weight loss, her period of bereavement over death in the family is longer than average, diminished energy and loss of interest. And frequent thoughts of death and suicide (Cassel, 2004).

1b. Can Ellen be said to be suffering from a major depressive disorder?

Yes, because all of the symptoms mentioned above occur on a regular basis and do not represent a single isolated incident.

1c. Explain and defend your diagnoses or lack thereof.

Again, the symptoms mentioned present the unipolar, persistently depressed state that Ellen is in is not an isolated incident and it continues throughout out her day. Her focus on suicide and on her own lack of value seems indicative of a serious major depressive disorder (Cassel, 2004).

2. Where does Ellen fit with Shneidman's taxonomy of people who intentionally end their lives?

It would be my estimation that Ellen fits into at least 2 categories in Shneidman's Taxonomy of suicide. She is a death seeker, in that she wants to actively end her life, she is a death initiator because she sees very little loss in her death and already considers her life to be over and meaningless (Clay Rhimes).

3. What factors are present that may trigger a suicide attempt by Ellen?

Her level of worthlessness and her family losses and end of a romantic

relationship can all influence suicidal behavior in some people. Ellen is easily received as one of those people that are thinking about suicide seriously that all it would take is one more stressor, one more loss, one hurt could push her over the edge.

Explaining Ellen's Depression and Suicidality

1. What genetic factors might play a role in Ellen's depression?

It would appear that there is a level of depression and addiction in her family.

2. What biochemical factors might play a role in Ellen's depression?

There are potential chemical imbalances that can contribute to depressive feelings and actions, however, in Ellen's case I think that she was led to depression by legitimate tangible events in her life not perceived ones.

3a. What would a psychodynamic theorist say about the origins of Ellen's depression?

Most psychodynamics would blame a great deal of the problem on her poor relationship with her parents, particularly her mother. That, missing aspect of her life and childhood could have contributed to her experiences I her life today (Medicine Net, 2012).

4. How might Freud's concept of symbolic or imagined loss help explain Ellen's depression?

One could perceive that when Ellen's mother died, her feelings of loss were impacted by lost time and the fact that she would never get the relationship she might have wanted with her mother. The fact that the loss was impacted by the end of a relationship only added and exacerbated the issues going on in Ellen's life (Clay Rhimes).

5. What evidence is there that Ellen is engaging in the cognitive triad and

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automatic thoughts?

Ellen does suffer from an inherent level of negative thinking, pessimism, and helplessness. The idea being that nothing can change and it can only get worse. This is part of the reason that Ellen entertains herself with images and plans of her inevitable suicide. Ellen's automatic thoughts include her continuous comforting image of suicide; they are part of her day-to-day existence now (Medicine Net, 2012).

6. How might the hormone theory help explain Ellen's depression?

It is not uncommon for women to be more effected by depression due to hormonal imbalances and issues, more so than men. It is possible that hormones, like cortisol, can contribute to the depression being studied (Medicine Net, 2012).

7. How would the body dissatisfaction explanation lend to understanding Ellen's depression?

While it is obvious that Ellen's depression is manifesting itself in the weight loss that she perpetually participates in. however, it would seem that her physical fixation is less about body dissatisfaction specifically, but more of a side effect of the depression and loss of interest and energy (Medicine Net, 2012).

8. With regard to Ellen's wish to commit suicide, which of Durkheim's categories does Ellen belong and why?

Ellen would likely fall into the category of an Anomic Suicide, which occurs in response to events in one's life, which is exactly how Ellen ended u in the state she is presently in (Clay Rhimes).

Treating Ellen

1. Explain how a psychodynamic therapist would treat Ellen for her

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depression and suicidal tendencies.

Psychodynamics would focus more on healing the issues that Ellen has with her childhood and the rather unemotional and detached relationship she had with her parents as a child. This would help the psychotherapist to explain to Ellen why she acts and behave as she does. This will help her to understand and change her behaviors and thinking (Medicine Net, 2012).

2. Explain how a behavioral therapist would treat Ellen for her depression and suicidal tendencies.

They would be more inclined to focus on how Ellen can change her way of thinking and therefore change the way she feels. She cannot be depressed if she doesn't think about depressing things anymore (Medicine Net, 2012).

3. Explain how a cognitive therapist would treat Ellen for her depression and suicidal tendencies.

They would likely focus on her automatic thoughts, like suicide, her way of seeing herself, and the world around her. Cognitive therapist see depression as a negative flaw in one's thinking (Medicine Net, 2012).

4. Explain how an interpersonal therapist would treat Ellen for her depression and suicidal tendencies.

These therapists would work to improve her communication skills and her perception of those around her at work, home, and on their private lives.

Ellen admits she has no real friends and little family so she is lonely, for that reason an interpersonal therapies might focus on improving her relationships and her attitude in the workplace (Medicine Net, 2012).

5. Explain what biological treatment might be appropriate for Ellen.

They would approach her treatment with the enhancement of drugs, like antidepressants, in combination of traditional counseling.

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