

How useful  
psychology is in  
everyday life



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Psychology is not a single subject of enterprise as infact it can be pinned down to quite a lot of coalated specialities for example developmental psychology, clinical psychology, cognitive psychology, psysiological psychology which all have different focus points.

Developmental psychology has a focus point on studying the age-related changes which occur in all living beings across the life span. On the otherhand, clinical psychology is more based on finding the causes and treatment of psychological disorders and adjusment problems for example phobias and depression. Whereas psysiological psychology is mainly about the studying the link which is between the brain and behaviour. Cognitive psychology thought is all about examining the more fundermental issues regarding mental processes such as perception, thinking, memory and language.

With the given examples above, the next parts of this essay will be focusing on one or two of these subject areas in psychology to help better the notion of ' how psychology is useful in everyday life.'

The main topic for discussion will be clinical psychology as this is a very key part of everyday living and especially those who struggle with disorders and other various things.

When Diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental disorders and disabilities are mentioned in relation to psychology then it is usual refered to as ' clinical psychology.'

With clinical psychology, a variety of difficulties are addressed and dealt with. Psychological difficulties such as: depression, anxiety, learning difficulties, relationship problems, phobias, child and family problems and serious mental health illnesses.

Those who work as clinical psychologists work mostly in health and social care settings this including hospitals, community health teams, child and adolescent mental health services and social services, health centers, care homes etc. In these settings, clinical psychologists usually work as with a team of professionals for example social workers, medical practitioners as most of these people work within the constraints of the National Health Service.

As the question for this essay is ' How useful is psychology in everyday life.?' and clinical psychology is pretty much linked to abnormal psychology which is the nature and development of abnormal behaviour, thoughts, feelings associated with distress or ' impaired functioning that is not a culturally expected response to an event.'

Psychological study helps us to understand that the most obvious of stress is traumatic events which are situations of extreme danger which are outside the range of any human experience. A lot of people go through a specific series of psychological reaction after traumatic events (Horowitz, 1986).

With this in mind, psychology becomes helpful in everyday life as in such a situation, it would highlight the cause of stress, the symptoms and or whether or not the individual has been diagnosed with any other conditions.

There are also some studies which have been conducted by psychologists which highlight the effect of certain incidents which occur. Some of these studies suggested that men and women show high levels of anxiety, depression, dismay and a lot of other indicators of emotional distress within the first six months after they've been traumatised through rape or other assaults (Duncan et al., 1996; Kessler et al., 1997).

So with studies like the above in place, psychology is then very useful as it helps to devise methods of treatment for such people.

Although, the diathesis-stress model of mental illness brings about the idea that some individuals have a long term vulnerability factor which when mixed in with a proximal stressor leads to psychological disorder. This means that in some cases, it is not only the diathesis or the stressor that lead to symptoms but in fact that both must be present (Hewstone, Fincham and Foster. pg 319)

The usefulness of psychology in this situation is that it helps to understand what disorders are, what they look like, how they progress and what the causes of these disorders are and then coming to a conclusion on some the potential biological and psychological causes of these disorders.

Generally, psychology tries to understand the correlation between human behaviour and the brain, the environment, the situation etc. In doing this, it introduces people to the understanding of why people behave in certain ways and keen studies such as the social learning theory which suggests that people learn behaviour through observation and merely imitating what they observe.

The question asked is how useful is psychology in everyday life? the above paragraph paints the picture that psychology is useful in everyday life as it helps better the understanding of individuals through the notion that people only learn and copy what they see. Furthermore psychologists, psychiatrists and other medical personal can find ways to counteract any negative behaviours learned from childhood etc.

In the eitheenth century, there was a case of a young boy in France who grew up alone in a forest in southern France called Aveyron (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 2007). The young boy roamed about in the forest looking for food and was sometimes spotted by nearby villagers. He was always naked, filthy and covered with scars (Yousef, 2001).

January 1800 was when it was decided the boy had to be caught and this was done in a tanner's garden in the French village of Saint-Sernin as the boy was burrowing for vegetables.

It was explained that the boy was four and a half feet tall but it was believed that he appeared of roughly around the age of 12 or 13 (Lane 1976). The boy was given the name Victor and was carefully examined.

Externally, Victor seemed like any other typical young boy but he could not speak and could only make " wierd, meaningless cries" and he refused to wear any clothes. The boy refused to respond to other people around him by not paying attention to the people around him and simply ignoring anything anyone was doing. The physicians suggested the belief that Victor had been abandoned from a very young age and without any interaction with other humans he had learned to look after himself in his own way. After these

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examinations Vitor was sent to Paris. The two physicians who Victor was sent to had different views of why Victor behaved in the way he did. One believed that it was due to nature (which is Victor's inborn traits) which caused Victor's behavioural patterns but the other (Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard) believed it was merely down to nurture. Itard believed that Victor could be trained and taught how to fit into the modern society of the time.

This wasn't the case as in the space of 5 years, Victor never learned to properly communicate and still didn't care much about interpersonal interactions as his main focus was on his own personal desires. This suggests that Victor couldn't really survive on his own in the so-called 'civilised' world as he had done in the wild.

The main points which are supposed to be derived from Victor's are why do we behave the way we do? and psychology is useful in such circumstances as it helps to understand problems such as Victor's through careful, general study and research.

In life every individual faces challenging times and challenging people, so it is vital to have general knowledge about the personality and behaviours of those that come into contact on a daily basis. Psychology is useful as it offers such knowledge so that a general overview of the whole situation is obtained.

Psychology gives light to the knowledge which is of the mind and this is in its strengths and also in its weaknesses this helps people to quickly analyse the situations they are facing and come up with solutions to face these

situations. Socrates quoted as saying " care for your psyche, know thyself, for onces we know ourselves, we may learn how to care for others.'

Putting what has been said so into much thought and consideration, psychology is very useful in everyday life as it helps to develop understanding for certain types of behaviours like aggressive behaviour. In such cases psychology opens doors to help us understand this through studying the brain cell, hormones, inherited characteristics, socialising involving and with parents, the stimuli leading up to the aggressive behaviour. Psychology has helped people suffering with aggressive behaviour as through psychological study, it is understood that compulsive violence is a result of and is associated with tumours and damage to a particular part of the brain which is the temporal lobe (Elliot, 1988).

In everyday life, psychology suggests that being able to control to control ones emotions and understand the emotions of people around is a big part of the relationships people are involved in. Daniel Goleman (1995) claims that having a high emotionally intelligence quotient is actually more important in life than your IQ.

In conclusion, psychology is an integral part of everyday life as it has been involved in most of studies which have been conducted on some of the life threatening illnesses. Through such studies, psychologists have been involved in determining various diseases like parkinson's disease, alzheimer's disease and other neurological diseases. Through psychology, doctors were able to develop medicines and even mitigate some illnesses.

In terms of lifestyle and everyday living, psychology is useful as it offers methods for people to get motivated for instance most athletes have psychologists who bring forth various motivational methods to spur them on before an event. Psychology can also be a helpful tool to helping individuals improve their leadership skills, improve communication, improve personal memory, make more precise and accurate decisions, get better grades through things like research methods and memory training and many others. Psychology is a very important and useful discipline for everyday life.

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