
Postgraduate Certificate in Nutritional Psychology

Eating Disorders and Disordered Eating

Eating Disorders and Disordered Eating are complex conditions that involve a range of emotional, psychological, and physical issues related to food, body image, and weight. Understanding the key terms and vocabulary associated with these conditions is essential for professionals working in the field of Nutritional Psychology. In this course, we will explore these terms in detail to provide a comprehensive understanding of Eating Disorders and Disordered Eating.

Anorexia Nervosa

Anorexia Nervosa is a serious mental health condition characterized by an intense fear of gaining weight, distorted body image, and extreme weight loss. Individuals with Anorexia Nervosa often restrict their food intake, leading to severe malnutrition and other health complications. It is important to differentiate between Anorexia Nervosa and healthy dieting behaviors.

Bulimia Nervosa

Bulimia Nervosa is another eating disorder characterized by recurrent episodes of binge eating followed by compensatory behaviors such as vomiting, excessive exercise, or fasting. Individuals with Bulimia Nervosa often have a sense of lack of control during binge episodes and may experience feelings of guilt or shame afterwards.

Binge Eating Disorder

Binge Eating Disorder is characterized by recurrent episodes of binge eating without compensatory behaviors. Individuals with Binge Eating Disorder often feel a loss of control during binge episodes and may eat large amounts of food in a short period of time. This can lead to feelings of guilt, shame, and distress.

Orthorexia

Orthorexia is not officially recognized as an eating disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), but it refers to an unhealthy obsession with healthy eating. Individuals with Orthorexia may become fixated on the quality and purity of their food, leading to restrictive eating patterns and social isolation.

Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)

Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder is a feeding or eating disorder characterized by a persistent

failure to meet appropriate nutritional and/or energy needs due to a lack of interest in eating or food, avoidance based on the sensory characteristics of food, or concerns about the consequences of eating.

Pica

Pica is an eating disorder characterized by the persistent eating of non-nutritive substances such as dirt, chalk, or paper. Individuals with Pica may have nutritional deficiencies or other underlying health issues that drive them to consume non-food items.

Rumination Disorder

Rumination Disorder is an eating disorder characterized by the repeated regurgitation of food, which is then re-chewed, re-swallowed, or spit out. This behavior is not due to a medical condition and is often associated with psychological factors.

Eating Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (EDNOS)

Eating Disorder Not Otherwise Specified is a category used to describe disordered eating patterns that do not meet the criteria for specific eating disorders such as Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, or Binge Eating Disorder. EDNOS may include a range of symptoms and behaviors that are still cause for concern.

Body Mass Index (BMI)

Body Mass Index is a measure of body weight relative to height that is commonly used to classify individuals as underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese. While BMI is a useful screening tool, it does not account for factors such as muscle mass, bone density, or distribution of fat.

Energy Balance

Energy balance refers to the relationship between energy intake (calories consumed) and energy expenditure (calories burned). When energy intake exceeds energy expenditure, weight gain may occur. Conversely, when energy expenditure exceeds energy intake, weight loss may occur.

Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR)

Resting Metabolic Rate is the number of calories the body needs to maintain basic physiological functions while at rest. RMR accounts for the majority of daily energy expenditure and is influenced by factors such as age, sex, weight, and muscle mass.

Macronutrients

Macronutrients are the three main components of the diet that provide energy: carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Each macronutrient plays a unique role in the body and is essential for overall health and well-being.

Micronutrients

Micronutrients are essential vitamins and minerals that are required in small amounts for various physiological functions in the body. Micronutrients are crucial for metabolism, immune function, and overall health.

Nutrient Density

Nutrient density refers to the amount of essential nutrients (such as vitamins, minerals, and fiber) in a food relative to its energy content. Foods that are nutrient-dense provide a high concentration of nutrients without excessive calories.

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Body Image

Body image refers to the perception that individuals have of their own bodies, including thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to their appearance. Distorted body image is a common feature of eating disorders and can lead to negative self-esteem and mental health issues.

Weight Stigma

Weight stigma refers to negative attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes about individuals based on their body weight or size. Weight stigma can have harmful effects on mental health and can contribute to the development or exacerbation of eating disorders.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a type of psychotherapy that focuses on changing negative thought patterns and behaviors. CBT has been shown to be effective in treating eating disorders by addressing underlying psychological factors and promoting healthy coping strategies.

Family-Based Treatment (FBT)

Family-Based Treatment is an evidence-based approach for treating eating disorders in adolescents. FBT involves the family as an active participant in the treatment process, focusing on restoring normal eating patterns and addressing family dynamics that may contribute to the eating disorder.

Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT)

Medical Nutrition Therapy is a therapeutic approach to treating medical conditions, including eating disorders, through the use of evidence-based nutrition interventions. MNT involves individualized nutrition counseling, meal planning, and education to support optimal health outcomes.

Mindful Eating

Mindful Eating is a practice that involves paying attention to the sensory experience of eating, including taste, texture, and hunger cues. Mindful Eating can help individuals develop a healthier relationship with food and promote more balanced eating behaviors.

Intuitive Eating

Intuitive Eating is an approach to eating that encourages individuals to listen to their body's hunger and fullness cues, rather than following strict diet rules or restrictions. Intuitive Eating focuses on honoring hunger, respecting fullness, and enjoying food without guilt.

Food Diary

A food diary is a tool used to track food intake, portion sizes, and eating behaviors over a period of time. Keeping a food diary can help individuals become more aware of their eating habits and make informed decisions about their diet.

Portion Control

Portion control involves managing the amount of food consumed at a meal or snack to maintain a balanced diet and prevent overeating. Portion control can help individuals regulate calorie intake and promote healthy eating habits.

Eating Environment

The eating environment refers to the physical, social, and emotional context in which food is consumed. Creating a positive eating environment can help individuals enjoy their meals, reduce stress around food, and promote mindful eating habits.

Trigger Foods

Trigger foods are foods or food groups that may lead to overeating, binge eating, or other disordered eating behaviors in some individuals. Identifying trigger foods can help individuals develop strategies to manage cravings and prevent unhealthy eating patterns.

Body Positivity

Body positivity is a movement that promotes self-acceptance, self-love, and respect for all body types. Embracing body positivity can help individuals develop a healthy body image, improve self-esteem, and

cultivate a positive relationship with food and exercise.

Self-Compassion

Self-compassion involves treating oneself with kindness, understanding, and acceptance, especially during challenging or difficult times. Practicing self-compassion can help individuals cope with stress, build resilience, and foster a positive relationship with food and body image.

In conclusion, understanding the key terms and vocabulary related to Eating Disorders and Disordered Eating is essential for professionals working in the field of Nutritional Psychology. By familiarizing themselves with these concepts, practitioners can better support individuals struggling with these complex conditions and promote positive changes in their relationship with food, body image, and overall well-being.