ALEVEL PSYCHOLOGY:

SOCIAL INFLUENCE:::
Conformity
A change in a persons behaviour or opinion as a result of real or imagined pressure from a person or a group of people
There are three main types of conformity; compliance, identification and internalisation

Compliance:
Most superficial type of conformity.
Conform publicly (out loud) with the views or behaviours expressed by others in the group but continues to privately disagree.
For example, may laugh at a joke that others are laughing at while privately not finding it very funny.
Temporary change in behaviour that may not continue in the absence of the group.

Identification:
A deeper level of conformity than compliance.
Generally involves public compliance and private acceptance, although this is often temporary so does not always continue when the person leaves the group.
For example, in the army you may adopt the behaviours and beliefs of fellow soldiers, but on leaving the army for civilian life, new opinions and behaviours will be adopted.
Usually occurs as membership of the group is desired.

Internalisation:
The deepest level of conformity.
The views of the group are internalised, they are taken on at a deep and permanent level, and they become part of the person's own way of viewing the world.
It involves public and private acceptance of the group's views and behaviours.
For example, if you are influenced by a group's religious faith so that you truly convert to that faith, then you will practice those values in the absence of the group.

Research into Conformity - Asch
Unambiguous task – line judgement Pilot study - only three mistakes in 720 trials 123 American male undergraduates 'Standard line' and 3 comparisons. All but one of the participants were "confederates" – 6-8 per group Incorrect answer on 12 out of the 18 trials – "critical trials" The true (naïve) participant was always the last or last but one to answer Mean conformity rate of 36.8% - Participants agreed with the incorrect majority answer on just over one-third of the critical trials. Wide individual differences: 5% conformed on every critical trial, 25% remained completely independent. One of the reasons they agreed with the majority was so as not to stand out from the crowd - clearly an example of compliance Asch Evaluation Temporal validity.
Asch's study took place during the McCarthyist era where during the 1950's, thousands of American's were accused of being communists and became the subject of aggressive investigation. Therefore, at this time the participants in the study may have been more willing to conform (37% mean conformity rate is quite high on an unambiguous task). The same may not be true of participants today, therefore the study may lack temporal validity – accuracy over time.
In the late 1970s in England Perrin & Spencer tried to replicate Asch's research using a group of science and engineering students. In their initial study they obtained only one conforming result out of 396 trials. In a subsequent study Perrin & Spencer used youths on probation as the participants and their probation officers as the confederates and found similar levels of conformity to the original Asch study.

The autonomic nervous system is responsible for vital functions such as heart rate. It transmits information to and from the internal body organs like the lungs. Therefore, the autonomic nervous system controls automatic and involuntary movements. This system is further divided into two sections:

Sympathetic nervous system: involved in fight or flight response
Parasympathetic nervous system: involved in fight or flight response

Neurons are nerve cells that process and transmit messages through electrical and chemical signals.
The cell body contains the nucleus and has dendrites extending from it, which carry electrical signals from other neurons to the cell body. While the axon, an extension of the cell body, carries the signals away from the cell body. The axon, for motor and sensory neurons, is coated in a myelin sheath, as fatty substance which increases the speed at which the impulses propagate. There are breaks in the sheath called nodes of Ranvier which are between 0.2 and 2mm wide, these speed up transmission by forcing the signal to jump across the gaps.

Sensory neurons have long dendrites and two short axons with myelin sheaths. They carry signals from receptors in the peripheral nervous system to the central nervous system.

Motor neurons have short dendrites and long axons with myelin sheaths. They carry signals from the central nervous system to effectors (muscles and glands).

Relay neurons have short dendrites and one very short axon without a myelin sheath. They connect the sensory and motor or other relay neurons, they are found in the brain and spinal cord.

Neurons transmit pulses of electrical activity known as action potentials.
Action potential: A short increase or decrease of electrical activity in the membrane of a neuron, transmitting a signal away from the cell body.
Electrical transmission: the firing of a neuron

When a neuron is in a resting state, the inside of the cell is negatively charged compared to the outside. When the cell is activated, the cell becomes positively charged. This causes action potential to occur. This results in the electrical impulse being sent along the axon.

How do neurons transmit signals?

Neurons don’t make direct contact, they are separated by a synapse. The signal needs to cross this to continue on its journey to or from the central neuron system. This is done using neurotransmitters which diffuse across the synapse.

The process of synaptic transmission

An electrical impulse travels along the axon of the transmitting neuron. This triggers the nerve ending of the synaptic neuron to release neurotransmitters from the vesicles. The

Atypical antipsychotic drugs: Clozapine = blood condition.

Although there is mass amounts of evidence for the effectiveness of these drugs, there are been some challenges to their usefulness.

Healy argue that some successful trials have had their data published many times exaggerating the evidence for positive effects. Healy also suggests that because antipsychotic drugs have powerful calming effects, it is easy to demonstrate that they have some positive effects on patients - it is not the same as saying it reduce the severity of the psychosis.
Furthermore, studied assess short-term effects.
It is widely believed that antipsychotic drugs are used in hospitals to calm patients and make it easier for staff to work with them rather than for benefits of patients.
It could be considered unethical as it is effectively controlling their behaviour and dehumanising them.

Psychologists have tried to link S to childhood and adult experiences of living in a dysfunctional family.
The schizophrenogenic mother: Fromm-Reichmann - proposed an explanation for S based on accounts she heard from her patients about their childhood. FR noted that many of her patients spoke of a particular type of parent called schizophrenogenic mother; cold rejected and controlling, tends to create a family climate characterised by tension and secrecy. This led to distrust, then paranoid delusions and then S.

Double-bind theory: Family climate is important in the development of schizophrenia but emphasises the role of communication style within the family.

The developing child regularly finds themselves trapped in situations where they fear they are doing the wrong thing but receive mixed messages about it and feel unable to comment on the unfairness of the situation or seek clarification. When they get it wrong, which is often, they are punished by withdrawal of love which leaves them confused and understands the world as dangerous leading to delusions or disorganised thinking.

Expressed emotion and Schizophrenia: EE is the level of emotion, in particular negative emotion expressed towards a patient by their carers. It has several element; verbal criticisms, hostility and needless self-sacrifice.

This is a serious source of stress for the patient and an explanation for relapse in patients with S. It can also trigger the onset of schizophrenia in vulnerable person.

Cognitive explanations - focuses on the role of mental processes

S is associated with several types of abnormal information processing and can provide explanations for S as a whole. S is characterised by disruption of normal thought processing. We can see it in many of its symptoms - page before.

Frith et al - two kinds of dysfunctional thought processing that could underline symptoms

feelings through a different medium than talking therapy, especially useful for those with communication difficulties.

It is unlikely that one type of therapy will address all the symptoms involved in S.
An approach that acknowledges that there are biological,psychological and societal factors in the development of schizophrenia.

It says that both a vulnerability to schizophrenia and a stress trigger are necessary in order to develop the condition. One or more underlying factors make a personal particularly vulnerable to developing schizophrenia but the onset is triggered by stress,
Meehl's model - in original D S model, diathesis/vulnerability was entirely genetic, the result of a single 'schizogene'. This led to development of a biologically based schizotypic personality (one characteristic is sensitivity to stress). Meehl claims that if a person does not have the schizogene, then no amount of stress would lead to schizophrenia.
The modern understanding of diathesis - one way our understanding of diathesis has changed is that it is now clear that many genes appear to increase genetic vulnerability, not a single schizogene.
Modern views of diathesis also includes a range of factors beyond the genetic, including psychological trauma so trauma become the diathesis rather than the stressor.
The modern understanding of stress - in original model, stress was seen as psychological in nature, in particular relating to parenting. Although psychological stress, including that resulting from parenting may still be considered important, a modern definition of stress includes anything that risks triggering S such as cannabis (interferes with dopamine system making users 7x more like to develop S) as found by researchers.
Treatment according to the interactionists model
Compatible with both biological and psychological treatments.
The model is associated with combining antipsychotic medication and psychological therapies, commonly CBT.

Psychologists claims that it is perfectly possible to believe in biological causes of schizophrenia and still practise CBT to relieve symptoms. However it does require adopting the interactionist model.

Original diathesis stress model is over simple
The classic model of single schizogene and schizophrenic parenting style as major source of stress is known to be very oversimple.
Multiple genes increase vulnerability to schizophrenia, each having a small effect of its own.
Also stress can come in many form. Therefore vulnerability and stress do not have one single source.
Now vulnerability can be result of early trauma as well as genetic makeup and stress can come in many forms including biological.
Study found childhood sexual trauma as vulnerability factors and cannabis as trigger.
Support for the effectiveness of combinations of treatments
Tarrier et al - 315 patients were randomly allocated to a medication or CBT group, medication and supportive counselling or control group of medication only.