

The Biopsychosocial Formulation Model

- I. Biological formulation (creation of a biological/descriptive database)
 - A. What symptoms are elicited?
 1. Mood
 2. Anxiety
 3. Psychotic
 4. Somatic
 5. Cognitive
 6. Substance
 7. Personality
 8. Other

- B. What biological predispositions are present?
 - 1. Genetics
 - 2. Physical conditions
 - 3. Medications/substances
- C. Do the demographics of the patient match the known epidemiology of the disorder(s) under consideration?

II. Psychological formulation

- A. General psychological formulation
 - 1. Identifying psychological vulnerabilities
 - a. Disruptions in psychological development
 - b. Recurrent difficulties in relationships (past, current, and with therapist)
 - c. Revelatory statements and behavior
 - 2. Identifying psychosocial stressors
 - 3. Identifying psychological consequences
 - a. Strong emotions
 - b. Thoughts/fantasies
 - c. Changes in cognition
 - 4. Coping mechanisms
 - a. Adaptive
 - b. Maladaptive

- B. Psychodynamic formulation (recurrent difficulties around specific issues — Freudian stage or Eriksonian crisis)
 - 1. Dependency trust (oral stage or basic trust vs. mistrust)
 - 2. Control (anal stage or autonomy vs. shame and doubt)
 - 3. Self-esteem (phallic stage or initiative vs. guilt)
 - 4. Intimacy/triadic relationships (oedipal stage or initiative vs. guilt)
- C. Cognitive perspective
 - 1. Automatic dysfunctional thoughts
 - 2. Negative core beliefs
 - 3. Cognitive distortions (errors in logic)
- D. Behavioral perspective
 - 1. Is there behavioral reinforcement of a maladaptive behavior?
 - 2. Is there something that extinguishes a desired behavior?
 - 3. Is there a paired association between a behavior and an environmental cue that initiates the behavior?

III. Social formulation

- A. Creation of a social database

1. Family
 2. Friends/significant others
 3. Social issues
 4. Education
 5. Work
 6. Housing
 7. Income
 8. Access to healthcare services
 9. Legal problems/crime
 10. Other
- B. Assess social stressors and strengths
- C. Perform cultural and spiritual assessments (adapted from *DSM-IV, 2000*)
1. Cultural/spiritual identity of the patient
 2. Cultural/spiritual explanations of the patient's illness
 3. Cultural/spiritual factors related to the psychosocial environment and levels of functioning
 4. Cultural/spiritual elements of the relationship between the patient and the clinician
 5. Overall cultural/spiritual assessment for diagnosis and treatment

IV. *DSM-IV* (2000) differential diagnosis

V. Risk assessment

- A. Create a risk assessment database
 - 1. Static risk factors
 - 2. Dynamic risk factors
 - 3. Protective factors
 - 4. Pathway to suicide or violence
- B. Formulate a risk assessment
 - 1. Suicide risk
 - 2. Violence risk
- C. Develop a risk reduction plan
 - 1. Dynamic risk factors
 - 2. Planned interventions
 - 3. Status

VI. Biopsychosocial treatment plan

- A. Biological
 - 1. Recommended biological assessments (reversible workup)
 - a. Laboratory studies
 - b. Neuroimaging
 - c. Other studies
 - 2. Recommended biological interventions
 - a. Review and revision of existing medications
 - b. Addition of medication
 - c. Other somatic treatments

B. Psychological

1. Recommended psychological assessments
2. Recommended psychological interventions

C. Social

1. Recommended social assessments
2. Recommended social interventions

VII. Prognosis

A. Disorder-related factors

1. Course
2. Timing
3. Social considerations
4. Hereditary

B. Treatment-related factors (CRAPS)

1. Compliance with treatment
2. Response to prior treatment
3. Availability of treatment
4. Personality/defense mechanisms
5. Social supports