

Case Study #3

Learning Objectives:

1. Learn the specific symptoms and causes of the degenerative disorders, such as, but not limited to: Parkinson's and Huntington's.
2. Learn what the neurological changes that accompany the degenerative disorders.
3. Learn the pharmacological and degenerative aspects of Schizophrenia.
4. Learn the symptoms and possible causes of major affective disorders such as depression.
5. Learn the symptoms and possible causes of the anxiety disorders such as panic disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder.

Scenarios:

- a. You are on your first rotation as a budding, bright medical student. Into your care comes a 72 year old woman by the name of Mrs. K. She is presented with the following symptoms: She has severe trouble recognizing people she has just recently met, but shows no loss of memories as far as 10 years ago. Mrs. K. also reports having difficulty keeping appointments. Most unnerving is the fact that two days ago she needed assistance home from her weekly bridge meeting, as she became lost three blocks from her house.
- b. Mr. D. is a successful young male at the age of 27. He comes to you with the following statement: "There must be something wrong with me." You examine Mr. D. and find nothing physically wrong. However while the examination is occurring, he recount the following story: "I was just sitting there, on the 7:43 train, reading over the briefings as I always do, (after all, when you're the rookie of the firm, you've got to be on top of your game) when suddenly it hit me. I'm drenched from head to toe in sweat, my heart is racing, and I can't seem to catch my breath. God, I felt like I was having a heart attach. I tried to get up from my seat, but was absolutely petrified."

Questions:

1. What, in your opinion, is Mrs. K. suffering from? What is the reasoning behind your answer?
2. Mrs. K. reports difficulty with recent memory. What type of amnesia is she experiencing? What is the name of the syndrome that also shows a problem with recent memory due to chronic alcohol use?
3. If you were to look at the structure of Mrs. K's brain, what specific *anatomical* structures would appear to be abnormal?
4. Mrs. K's disease is most likely the caused by the build up of what protein in the neural structures?
5. What is wrong with Mr. D? (What disorder is he suffering from?)
6. Are Mr. D's symptoms due to a physical ailment such as a heart condition?
7. If left untreated, Mr. D's condition could progress into something a bit more serious. What? (Hint: Ms. Weaver plays one in CopyCat)
8. The best treatment for Mr. D's disorder is a drug that is an agonist to the GABA receptor complex. What is the name of that drug?