

## Biopsychosocial Model Glossary

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**Biological:** Any factors that relate to physiology, health or factors people are born with.

- **Diet:** includes anything an individual eats or drinks throughout the day. Changes in eating or drinking habits can be a sign of a medical or psychiatric condition.
  - **Allergies:** a hypersensitivity to a substance (foods, drinks, environments, drugs, pollens) which causes the body to react (sneezing, watery eyes, rashes, inflammation).
  - **Diet Quality:** the degree to which the items an individual eats or drinks are healthy and balanced.
  - **Dietary Restrictions:** include anything an individual is restricted from eating or drinking. Examples include food allergies, puree diets, and lactose intolerance.
  - **Eating Habits:** refers to when and how often people eat and drink throughout the day. Includes things like skipping meals and overeating.
- **Exercise:** Any physical activity an individual engages in.
  - **Change in Activity:** any recent change in in a person's physical activity routine.
  - **Exercise Duration:** when an individual chooses to exercise, how long does it last (15 minutes, 30 minutes, an hour)?
  - **Exercise Frequency:** how often an individual exercises. For example, the number times per week.
  - **Exercise Intensity:** how much effort someone puts into their exercise activity.
  - **Exercise Type:** the type of physical activity an individual chooses to engage in. For example, swimming, running, walking, dancing, playing hockey.
- **Genetics:** people's biological make-up as determined by heredity (passed down from their biological parents). Physical features such as hair and eye colour are determined by genetics.
  - **Syndromes:** A group of symptoms that collectively characterize a disease, psychological disorder, or other condition. Fragile X syndrome is an example of a genetic syndrome
    - **Behavioural Phenotypes:** common behavioural and developmental patterns that individuals with specific syndromes display. For example, short attention span and limited impulse control are behavioural phenotypes of Fragile X Syndrome.
    - **Physical Characteristics:** common physical features associated with syndromes. For example, long faces and prominent ears are common physical characteristics of individuals with Fragile X Syndrome.
  - **Predispositions:** genetic affects which influences a person's chance of getting a medical or psychiatric condition. Genetic predispositions can be modified by the environment. For example, a person may have a genetic predisposition for heart disease if it runs in his/her family; however, if they exercise regularly and maintain a healthy diet they may never experience heart disease in their lifetime.
- **Medical Conditions:** any and all conditions affecting a person's health.
  - **Allergies:** a hypersensitivity to a substance (foods, environments, drugs, pollens) which causes the body to react (sneezing, watery eyes, rashes, inflammation).

- Ongoing Health Issues: any ongoing health concerns that are low-risk yet still affect a person's quality of life. Some examples include chronic pain, allergies, vision problems, arthritis.
- Sensory Impairments: conditions that affect a person's ability to see, hear, or process sensory information. Sensory impairments include conditions such as visual impairments and sensory integration difficulties in autism.
- Serious Illnesses: any medical condition or illness which represents a high risk for the person. Examples include lung cancer, heart disease and Alzheimer's disease.
- Signs: anything you observe which may tell you about a person's medical condition. For example, noticing an individual slurring their speech is a sign of a stroke.
- Symptoms: anything an individual tells you about a possible medical condition. For example, an individual telling you that everything looks blurry is a symptom of stroke.
- **Medications**: any medications the person is currently taking whether over the counter (OTC) or prescription (Rx).
  - Dose: The specific amount of medication to be taken at a given time. Prescription medication dose is determined by a medical doctor or a psychiatrist and an over the counter medication dose can be found on the medication label.
  - Medication Adherence: the degree to which a person consistently takes their medication as directed by their doctor. For example, a person consistently refusing their daily medication would indicate low medication adherence.
  - Medication Changes: recent medication changes that may affect a person's health and well-being.
  - Medication Schedule: The scheduled times an individual is to take their medication as directed by their doctor or psychiatrist.
  - Side Effects: known side effects to medications the person is currently taking. These are often found on medication information sheets provided by the pharmacy.
- **Psychiatric Conditions**: mental health conditions diagnosed by a medical doctor, psychologist or psychiatrist. Examples include major depressive disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, and borderline personality disorder.
  - Behavioural Symptoms: symptoms of psychiatric conditions that affect how people behave (what they do). For example, a behavioural symptom of obsessive compulsive disorder is ritualistic and compulsive behaviours.
  - Cognitive Symptoms: symptoms of psychiatric conditions that affects thinking, memory and beliefs. For example a cognitive symptom of schizophrenia is delusional thinking.
  - Emotional Symptoms: symptoms of psychiatric conditions that affect how people feel. For example, sad mood is an emotional symptom of major depressive disorder.
  - Motoric Symptoms: symptoms of psychiatric conditions that affect movement and coordination. Facial muscle tics are a motoric symptom of Tourette syndrome.
  - Perceptual Symptoms: symptoms of psychiatric conditions that affect the senses. For example, auditory hallucinations are a perceptual symptom of schizophrenia.
  - Sensory Impairments: conditions that affect a person's ability to see, hear, or process sensory information. Sensory impairments include conditions such as visual impairments and sensory integration difficulties in autism.

- Somatic Symptoms: symptoms of psychiatric conditions that affect how the body functions. For example, a somatic symptom of anxiety is increased heart rate.
  - **Sleep**
    - Sleep Disorders: medical disorders that affect people's sleeping patterns and sleep quality. Examples include insomnia, narcolepsy, and sleep apnea.
    - Sleep Quality: how well people sleep. For example, frequent waking throughout the night affects sleep quality.
    - Sleep Quantity: the number of hours a person sleeps at night and during the day.
    - Sleep Schedule: a person's wake and sleep times. They may be routine or irregular.
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**Psychological**: Any factors that relate to a person's patterns in feeling, thinking or behaving.

- **Cognitive Processes**: a person's abilities/deficits as they relate to memory, attention decision making and problem solving.
  - Attention Span: the amount of information a person can pay attention to at one time. Individuals with a limited attention span become distracted easily.
  - Decision Making: the thought process of assessing and choosing among several alternatives.
  - Memory: a person's ability to take in information, store it and recall it.
    - Episodic Memory: a person's ability to remember events, experiences, and situations. For example, a person's memory of their friend's graduation is an episodic memory.
    - Knowledge: accumulated information which includes remembering facts and understanding concepts.
    - Long-Term Memory: a person's ability to store information over a long period of time. Anything remembered for more than 30 seconds.
    - Memory Changes: any recent changes in a person's ability to recall information. Signs of memory changes include forgetting, confusion, asking questions repeatedly and difficulty recognizing familiar objects or people.
    - Procedural Memory: memory of how to perform tasks such as driving a car or washing dishes.
    - Short Term Memory: a person's ability to store information over a short period of time (up to 30 seconds).
  - Problem Solving: a person's ability to think through problems and find solutions.
- **Communication Skills**: the means people use to relate to others, express wants and needs, and convey thoughts and feelings.
  - Expressive: the ability to communicate to others verbally and non-verbally.
  - Receptive: the ability to understand others' verbal and non-verbal communication.
  - Non-verbal Communication Skills: the ability to express and understand non-spoken parts of communication (gestures, body language, facial expressions).
  - Verbal Communication Skills: the ability to use and understand spoken words.
- **Coping Skills**: skills used to deal with stressful situations. Effective coping skills are used when a person avoids becoming upset when faced with a stressor or when they effectively calm themselves down after becoming upset.
  - Emotional Regulation: coping skills used when people try to directly manage their emotions during stressful situations. An example of emotional regulation is using deep breathing to calm down when one recognizes they are upset.
  - Impulse Control: the degree to which a person can control their behaviours. This involves resisting immediate rewards and waiting to obtain rewards in the future. For example, an individual with high impulse control will resist the urge to eat a bag of chips in order to maintain a healthy body weight.
  - Other Directed Coping: When coping skills are directed by another person (staff, family, peers, or a professional) to help the person manage the stressful situation.
  - Self Directed Coping: when coping skills are initiated and used by the person themselves to manage the stressful situation.

- **Stress Tolerance**: the amount of stress that people can handle until they become upset or distressed. Someone with a high stress tolerance may be able to face many stressors before becoming upset, whereas someone with a low stress tolerance will become stressed easily.
  - **Emotional States**: People's emotional experience at a given time
    - Happy
    - Sad
    - Angry
    - Afraid
    - Apathy (indifferent)
    - Frustrated
    - Anticipation
    - Trust
  - **Learning History**: The cumulative sum of behaviour patterns and reward contingencies throughout a person's life. Some behaviour patterns have a long learning history and have been embedded in a person's behavioural repertoire.
  - **Motivation**: how much drive a person has to start, follow-through with and complete a task.
    - **Extrinsic Motivation**: when a person is motivated by external rewards. For example, a person may be motivated to show up to work because they will receive a salary.
    - **Intrinsic Motivation**: when motivation comes from inside the individual (they enjoy doing the task for the sake of doing it). For example, a person may be motivated to show up for work simply because they love their job.
  - **Self Concept**: concepts central to the self, which include individual personality traits, identity, self-awareness, self-esteem and self-acceptance.
    - **Identity**: an understanding of who one is. "How you fit in." This includes social identity, cultural identity, sexual identity, and professional identity.
    - **Individual Personality Traits**: an individual's unique combination of personality characteristics. Examples of personality traits include being imaginative, social, easy-going, impulsive, analytical, considerate, agreeable, excitable, and caring.
    - **Self-Acceptance**: the degree to which someone accepts who they are. "Being okay with who you are." Includes accepting positive and negative aspects of the self and changeable and unchangeable aspects of the self.
    - **Self-Awareness**: how conscious someone is of their traits, behaviours, feelings, thoughts. "Knowing yourself."
    - **Self-Confidence**: a person's evaluation of their abilities to perform tasks and overcome challenges. "Do you believe in yourself?"
    - **Self-Esteem**: a global evaluation of how one is doing in life. "Do you like yourself?" Self-esteem is rated somewhere along a positive-negative continuum.
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**Social:** the environmental conditions, program characteristics and interpersonal relationships that affect a person.

- **Current Environment:** The physical environment the person is currently in. Includes objects, people and the setting.
  - Amount of Space: the amount of space an individual has in their present environment (home, work, school, public). Some individuals may become distressed if they feel their environment is overcrowded or too small to meet their needs.
  - Amount of Stimulation: the amount of sensory information a person experiences in their current environment. Some individuals may become overly excited or distressed if they experience too much environmental stimulation whereas too little stimulation can result in boredom.
  - Comfort Level: how comfortable a person's environment is. This may include things like furniture and clothing.
  - Disruptions and Changes: any disruptions or changes in a person's physical environment. This may include recent renovations, moving furniture, moving personal belongings and access to rooms or environments.
  - Privacy: the degree to which a person controls others' access to their space, information and belongings. Pertains to access being carried out with respect and care.
  - Sensory: elements in an individual's current environment that affects their sensory systems.
    - Auditory
    - Scents
    - Tactile (touch)
    - Taste
    - Visual
- **Program:** any element of support or service delivery that affects a person's life.
  - Change in Routines: recent changes in the routines of the program. This may include change in personal time, staff time, meal time, recreation/outings, staff scheduling.
  - Meaningful Choices: the degree to which a person is able to make decisions about aspects of their life that matter to them. Includes the amount of choices they make and how important the choices are to them.
  - Meeting the Person's Needs: the degree to which a program is providing the supports and services to meet the person's needs. If his or her needs are not being met it may be appropriate to directly change the support provided or to refer the person to another program.
  - Program Structure: how a program, support or service is delivered. Some individuals may experience distress or anxiety if the program is too structured. In some circumstances lack of program structure may be unhelpful to a person who thrives in a structured and routine environment.
  - Staff Changes: any recent staff changes within the program such as staff entering or leaving the program.
- **Relationships:** any and all relationships in a person's social world (friends, family, staff peers, professionals).

- Attention: the interpersonal attention a person is currently receiving from individuals in their social environment. Includes both the amount of attention received and whether it is positive (e.g. praise) or negative (e.g. scolding).
- Communication: the use of verbal and non-verbal communication to share information, relate to others and express wants and needs to others.
  - Verbal Communication: information communicated to another person using words. Includes what is said (asking questions, giving a directive, providing reassurance) and how it is said (tone, voice volume, pacing of speech, articulation).
  - Non-verbal Communication: all aspects of communication other than words. Includes body language, facial expressions, gestures, proxemics (space between the communicator and listener) and eye contact. Individuals may not always be aware of their own non-verbals and how others are interpreting them. People may also intentionally use non-verbals to communicate which go unnoticed by others.
- Friends, Family and Staff: the characteristics of a person's relationship with their friends, family and staff.
  - Amount of Contact: how much direct or indirect (phone, mail, email) contact the individual has with friends, family and staff.
  - Empathy: actively attempting to understand someone else's worldview. In supportive relationships empathy is experienced when a person feels understood.
  - Predictability of Contact: how regular or routine the contact is with friend, family or staff. Involves whether or not the person anticipates social contact.
  - Relationship Dynamics: the type of roles individuals display in relationships. Refers to the style or type of relationship individuals have. Examples of relationship dynamics include dominant, submissive, hostile, friendly, trusting, mistrusting, competitive, egalitarian, and caring.
    - Power Balance: a relationship dynamic that describes how much influence and control one person has over other in determining what they say, what they do and how they feel. The power balance may be equal or imbalanced in a relationship.
  - Relationship Quality: the degree to which people are equally valued and regarded positively in a relationship.
  - Rapport: the degree to which a relationship is trusting and mutually understanding. It is often described as people "clicking" or simply "getting each other." Rapport can strengthen over time; however, individuals with compatible personalities often have an easier time establishing and maintaining a solid rapport.
- Peer Social Models: individuals within a person's social world that they look up to and model themselves after in behavior and/or attitude. Peer social models can have a positive or negative social influence.