4.3 Characteristics of Depression: Behavioural, Emotional and Cognitive

AQA 7182 · about 60 minutes · Write-in edition

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Describe the behavioural characteristic 'reduced activity levels' as it appears in clinical depression, naming how it might affect daily functioning.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 Outline how disruption to sleep patterns is a behavioural characteristic of depression, with one example of how sleep may change.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 Outline the emotional characteristic 'lowered mood' in depression, and give one simple behavioural sign a friend might notice.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

4 Describe the cognitive characteristic 'poor concentration' in depression and give one educational or work-related consequence.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Explain why aggression and self-harm can be considered behavioural characteristics of depression, giving one reasoned example.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

6 Describe how anger can be an emotional characteristic of depression and suggest one consequence this emotion could have for relationships.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

7 Outline what is meant by 'lowered self-esteem' as an emotional characteristic of depression, with one example thought a depressed person might have.

(Total for Question 7 is 2 marks)

8 Outline what is meant by 'absolutist or black-and-white thinking' as a cognitive characteristic of depression, and give a short example thought.

(Total for Question 8 is 2 marks)

9 Three short vignettes. For each vignette identify the single characteristic of depression that is best illustrated, and explain briefly how the vignette shows that characteristic.

Vignette A: Noah no longer goes to his weekly football training and spends most evenings alone in his bedroom. His friends say he used to be the most active person in the group.

Vignette B: Priya wakes most mornings at 4am and cannot get back to sleep. She feels exhausted but still cannot sleep more than four hours a night.

Vignette C: Kwame tells his partner, 'I am useless and nothing will ever get better,' and refuses to apply for a promotion he is qualified for.

(a) Vignette A: Identify the characteristic and explain how the details illustrate it. **(4)**

(b) Vignette B: Identify the characteristic and explain how the details illustrate it. **(4)**

(c) Vignette C: Identify the characteristic and explain how the details illustrate it. **(4)**

(Total for Question 9 is 12 marks)

10 Case study: Erin has lost a lot of weight recently without trying, eats very little, feels tearful and worthless, and often finds it hard to concentrate on work tasks. Identify two separate characteristics of depression illustrated by Erin and explain how each is shown by the case details. Each characteristic explanation is worth 3 marks.

(a) Identify and explain the first characteristic (3 marks). **(3)**

(b) Identify and explain the second characteristic (3 marks). **(3)**

(Total for Question 10 is 6 marks)

11 Outline two behavioural characteristics and two cognitive characteristics of depression, and for each give one brief example of how it might present in a workplace setting. (Total 8 marks.)

(Total for Question 11 is 8 marks)

12 Describe the cognitive characteristic of having a negative view of the self, the world and the future in depression, and give one short-term impact this negative outlook can have on behaviour.

(Total for Question 12 is 4 marks)

Mark scheme · 4.3 Characteristics of Depression: Behavioural, Emotional and Cognitive

Question 1

states reduced activity levels means the person shows decreased energy/motivation for usual activities, e.g. staying in bed more or withdrawing from social events oe **B1**

links to daily functioning, e.g. difficulty doing work, household tasks or self-care, reducing participation in normal routines oe **B1**

Answer: Reduced activity levels means low energy and motivation so the person does fewer normal activities, for example staying in bed, avoiding work or socialising. This can impair daily functioning such as managing household tasks or attending school/work.

Question 2

identifies sleep disruption as a feature, e.g. insomnia or hypersomnia (sleeping too little or too much) oe **B1**

gives an example, e.g. difficulty falling asleep, early morning waking, or sleeping excessively/longer than normal oe **B1**

Answer: Sleep disruption in depression can mean insomnia (difficulty falling or staying asleep, or early morning waking) or hypersomnia (sleeping much more than usual). For example, someone may wake several hours earlier than intended and be unable to get back to sleep.

Question 3

identifies lowered mood as a persistent feeling of sadness/emptiness/hopelessness oe **B1**

gives a visible sign a friend might notice, e.g. crying more, less smiling, withdrawal from activities oe **B1**

Answer: Lowered mood is a persistent feeling of sadness, emptiness or hopelessness. A friend might notice increased crying, less smiling, or withdrawing from social activities as a behavioural sign.

Question 4

states poor concentration involves difficulty focusing, making decisions or sustaining attention oe **B1**

gives a consequence, e.g. reduced exam/work performance, mistakes, slower task completion oe **B1**

Answer: Poor concentration means struggling to focus, make decisions or keep attention on tasks. This can reduce work or exam performance, cause mistakes or slow task completion.

Question 5

states aggression and self-harm can be behavioural outcomes of depression, e.g. irritability, anger outbursts or deliberate self-injury oe **B1**

provides an example or brief explanation, e.g. low mood and frustration may lead to verbal aggression or self-harm as a way to cope with emotional pain oe **B1**

Answer: Depression can lead to irritability, anger or aggression, and in some cases self-harm, as behaviours that arise from intense negative emotion or attempts to cope. For example, a person may lash out verbally when frustrated, or engage in self-injury to try to relieve emotional pain.

Question 6

states that anger can be present in depression, e.g. increased irritability, frustration or even hostile outbursts oe **B1**

gives a relationship consequence, e.g. conflict with family or friends, reduced support, or distancing by others oe **B1**

Answer: Anger in depression can show as irritability, frustration or outbursts. This can strain relationships, for example causing arguments or leading others to withdraw support.

Question 7

identifies lowered self-esteem as reduced self-worth or negative self-evaluation oe **B1**

gives an example thought, e.g. 'I am worthless' or 'I cannot do anything right' oe **B1**

Answer: Lowered self-esteem means feeling less worthy or having a negative view of oneself. For example a person might frequently think, 'I am useless' or 'I do everything wrong.'

Question 8

identifies absolutist thinking as seeing situations in extremes, with no middle ground, e.g. 'always' or 'never' statements oe **B1**

gives an example thought, e.g. 'If I fail this task then I am a complete failure' oe **B1**

Answer: Absolutist thinking is viewing things in extremes with no middle ground, using 'always' or 'never' language. Example: 'If I make one mistake I am a complete failure.'

Question 9

(a) identifies reduced activity levels (behavioural) cao **B1**

(a) explains link: stopping football and isolating in bedroom shows withdrawal from previously enjoyed activities and reduced energy/motivation oe **M1**

(a) applies consequence: friends note he was previously active, showing a clear change from prior functioning oe **A1**

(a) explicitly ties behaviour to functional impact, e.g. less exercise/social contact, which supports a diagnosis-relevant behavioural change oe **A1**

(a) Answer: Reduced activity levels: Noah has withdrawn from football and social contact, showing decreased motivation and activity compared with his previous behaviour, affecting his exercise and friendship interactions.

(b) identifies disruption to sleep patterns (behavioural) cao **B1**

(b) explains link: waking at 4am and being unable to return to sleep is insomnia, a common sleep disturbance in depression oe **M1**

(b) applies impact: chronic poor sleep causing exhaustion can worsen mood and concentration, linking behavioural symptom to broader functioning oe **A1**

(b) uses details from vignette rather than generic description, e.g. specific wake time and hours slept oe **A1**

(b) Answer: Disruption to sleep patterns: Priya wakes at 4am and cannot get back to sleep, an example of insomnia; this chronic poor sleep can increase exhaustion and worsen mood and cognitive functioning.

(c) identifies negative view of the self and future, and/or lowered self-esteem and negative future expectation (cognitive/emotional) cao **B1**

(c) explains link: 'I am useless' shows negative self-view and low self-esteem; 'nothing will ever get better' shows pessimistic view of the future oe **M1**

(c) applies behaviour: refusing to apply for a promotion shows the cognitive beliefs affecting decision-making and behaviour oe **A1**

(c) connects the thought content to likely functional consequences at work and for mood, reinforcing the cognitive characteristic's real-world impact oe **A1**

(c) Answer: Negative self-view and pessimistic view of the future (cognitive) and lowered self-esteem: Kwame's statement 'I am useless' and 'nothing will ever get better' reflect low self-worth and hopelessness, which lead him to avoid opportunities like applying for a promotion.

Question 10

(a) identifies disruption to eating behaviour (behavioural) cao **B1**

(a) explains detail: significant weight loss and eating very little are direct signs of disrupted eating patterns seen in depression oe **M1**

(a) applies consequence: weight loss may affect physical health and indicate severity of depressive symptoms oe **A1**

(a) Answer: Disruption to eating behaviour: Erin's significant unintended weight loss and eating very little show reduced appetite and changes to eating common in depression, which can affect physical health and indicate severity.

(b) identifies poor concentration (cognitive) or lowered mood/feelings of worthlessness (emotional) as acceptable; reward higher marks for concentration here cao **B1**

(b) if poor concentration chosen: explains Erin finding it hard to concentrate on work tasks as a cognitive impairment typical of depression oe **M1**

(b) applies impact: links difficulty concentrating to possible reduced work performance and stress, showing functional effect oe **A1**

(b) Answer: Poor concentration: Erin often finds it hard to concentrate on work tasks, a cognitive symptom of depression which can reduce job performance and increase stress. (Alternatively, lowered mood/feelings of worthlessness are emotional symptoms shown by being tearful and feeling worthless.)

Question 11

behavioural characteristic 1 accurately outlined, e.g. reduced activity levels or withdrawal oe **M1**

applies behavioural characteristic 1 to workplace example, e.g. missing shifts, less participation in meetings oe **A1**

behavioural characteristic 2 accurately outlined, e.g. disruption to sleep/eating or self-harm/aggression oe **M1**

applies behavioural characteristic 2 to workplace example, e.g. arriving late due to insomnia, or visible agitation/arguments with colleagues oe **A1**

cognitive characteristic 1 accurately outlined, e.g. poor concentration or indecision oe **M1**

applies cognitive characteristic 1 to workplace example, e.g. making mistakes on reports or missing deadlines due to inability to focus oe **A1**

cognitive characteristic 2 accurately outlined, e.g. negative self-view or absolutist thinking oe **M1**

applies cognitive characteristic 2 to workplace example, e.g. refusing promotion because of 'I am useless' thought, or assuming a small error means 'I will fail at this job' oe **A1**

Answer: Possible answers: Behavioural 1: reduced activity levels, e.g. employee stops attending optional meetings or misses shifts. Behavioural 2: sleep disruption, e.g. chronic lateness or tiredness at work due to insomnia. Cognitive 1: poor concentration, e.g. making mistakes on reports or missing deadlines. Cognitive 2: negative self-view or absolutist thinking, e.g. believing 'I am useless' and not applying for promotion or assuming one minor error means total failure.

Question 12

identifies negative views of self, world and future as recurring negative beliefs about personal worth, the environment and expectations about what will happen oe	**M1**
explains negative self-view, e.g. low self-worth or self-blame oe	**A1**
explains negative view of the world/future, e.g. seeing situations as hopeless and expecting continued failure/negativity oe	**A1**
gives a short-term behavioural impact, e.g. social withdrawal, reduced effort in job/studies or giving up on activities oe	**A1**

Answer: People with depression often hold persistent negative beliefs about themselves (low self-worth, self-blame), see the world as threatening or unrewarding, and expect a bleak future. This negative outlook can lead to withdrawal from social activities or reduced effort at work or study in the short term.