Lexicon of cross-cultural terms in mental health

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Introduction

Work on assessment, diagnosis, classification, and nomenclature of mental disorders has long been a major component of the work of the World Health Organization’s Programme on Mental Health, with particular emphasis on standardization of methods.1

In 1992, after more than a decade of development and testing, WHO published The ICD-10 Classification of Mental and Behavioural Disorders: Clinical Descriptions and Diagnostic Guidelines.2 That publication represented a significant advance towards the achievement of a “common language” for use by mental health professionals and other workers worldwide; it has been developed in several versions3— for different categories of users—and translated into many languages. A set of diagnostic instruments intended for use by clinicians and researchers in different cultures and settings has also been produced,4 together with training materials intended to facilitate use of the classification.

Both the classification and the instruments use terms that require precise definitions if they are to be capable of reliable use across cultures. These definitions have been produced by a process of international collaboration and consensus-building and published in a number of lexicons and glossaries related to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision (ICD-10).3,5 The scope and coverage of these publications are described in detail elsewhere.6

The present publication is a new member of that series of lexicons and glossaries and has been developed to provide definitions of the terms used in cross-cultural psychiatry, in comparative research, and in the application of ICD-10 in various cultural settings. It covers: diagnostic terms that describe disorders with a different prevalence or different clinical picture in different cultures

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Lexicon of cross-cultural terms in mental health

(e.g. sensitiver Beziehungswahn); concepts important to the understanding of human experience in a sociocultural context (e.g. enculturation during child development); terms that describe cultural values or customs relating to mental health; terms that may cause problems for clinicians attempting to classify them as symptoms (e.g. flashback); and syndromes that are part of the traditional lay categories of illness in particular cultures or cultural areas. A number of terms already covered by the other WHO lexicons and glossaries are also included, but are addressed from a cross-cultural and comparative standpoint. The use of bold type for any term within a definition indicates the existence of a lexicon entry for that term.

A list of selected references is given at the end of the lexicon. This is intended as an entry to the relevant literature rather than as an exhaustive list of important publications, and includes seminal manuscripts, exemplary research projects, and review articles on cross-cultural aspects of mental health.

The initial list of terms in this lexicon was compiled after an extensive survey of the cross-cultural psychiatric literature, including existing lexicons and glossaries. The main criterion for inclusion of terms was frequency of use in the literature; no attempt was made to provide comprehensive coverage of all terms used in the field. Drafts of the lexicon were circulated to more than 20 individuals known for their interest and expertise in the areas of cross-cultural psychiatry and lexicography, and the text was finalized only after a number of meetings between these experts and the lexicon’s editors.

It is unlikely that every psychiatrist or other mental health professional will find that all definitions correspond to his or her own understanding or usage of terms. Nevertheless, a working compromise is essential if a “common language” is to be established for purposes of communication. This lexicon is an attempt to achieve that compromise, and it is hoped that it will contribute to better understanding and collaboration among psychiatrists and their professional colleagues throughout the world.

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Definitions of terms

acculturation The process of culture change, whether of an individual or of a group, as a result of continuous contact between members of culturally distinct groups.
See also: assimilation; integration; marginalization; separation

acculturation failure Inability to adapt to another culture, usually including difficulty in using its language and reluctance to accept its norms and values.

acculturation maladjustment Excessive slowness or inadequacy in adapting to the demands of a new environment or culture, identity crisis, and/or social marginality.

acculturative stress Stress during the process of individual or group acculturation, which may be due to factors in the acculturating group (e.g. difficulty in modifying their cultural identity) or in the other group (e.g. opposition to integration of the acculturating group).

achieved status See status, achieved.

adaptation The process by which individuals or populations make biological, behavioural, or psychological adjustments to survive in a particular setting or culture.

adolescence A transitional period between childhood and adulthood, usually but not always corresponding to psychological changes of puberty, with duration ranging from some months to as long as 10 years.

adolescent alienation See alienation, adolescent.

affinal kin See kin, affinal.

age grades Culturally recognized and socially constructed stages in the life cycle (e.g. childhood, adolescence, marriage age, middle age, old age, retirement age) that mirror biological changes.

age role Social behaviours, obligations, and functions specific to an age grade within a culture (e.g. voting, parenting).
Definitions of terms

age sets  Cohorts of individuals who move through age grades together, such that their particular history and experience cause a particular age set to differ in certain respects (e.g. average height, attitudes, beliefs) from adjacent age sets.

aggression  Hostile, threatening verbal and/or behavioural attack by one person or group against another; aggression is usually forbidden within the cultural group but may be sanctioned if directed outside the group.

alexithymia  The individual’s inability to perceive his or her own affect or anxiety, often related to previous violence or threat (e.g. child abuse, combat, rape, refugee flight).

alienation  Lack of meaningful relationships between the individual and others in his or her society or culture.

alienation, adolescent  Antipathy or even hostility towards one’s own society or culture during adolescence.

alien’s paranoid reaction  Paranoid symptoms occurring as a result of relocation to a foreign community or culture, and seen in guest workers, foreign students, refugees, and other migrants.

altered state of consciousness  Temporarily reduced awareness of external stimuli, induced by psychoactive substances or by various psychological exercises; sometimes induced for religious or healing purposes.

See also: trance

altruism  Individual or group acts of self-sacrifice for the benefit of others, largely determined by the values of a culture.

altruistic homicide  See homicide, altruistic.

altruistic suicide  See suicide, altruistic.

amok  A sudden, unprovoked, indiscriminate, murderous assault on associates and strangers, occurring mainly in south and south-east Asia. Pre-amok brooding following some perceived slight or insult and post-amok amnesia may occur, but not invariably.

Synonyms: cafard (Polynesia); iich’ aa (Navajo peoples of North America); mal de pelea (Puerto Rico)

animism  A world view in which humans, animals, and significant topographical features (e.g. mountains, forests, great trees, deep rivers, oceans) each
possess their own spirit or anima, which transcends death and is capable of acting in preternatural ways to alter the course of events.
See also: sorcery

anomic depression  A chronic dysphoric state that occurs in the context of anomie and is characterized by discouragement, defeat, low self-esteem, and moral disorientation.
See also: deculturation

anomic suicide  See suicide, anomic.

anomie  Cultural disintegration, caused internally and/or externally, so that cultural norms, values, and mores no longer possess meaning for or influence over a people; lawlessness and dissension in a society due to conflicting norms; absence or weakening of an individual's norms or values, characterized by anxiety, isolation, and personal disorientation.
See also: alienation; deculturation; identity

anthropophobia  Literally, fear of people; typically involves an aversion to being looked at by others or having face-to-face interaction with others.
See also: taijin-kyofu-shou

antisocial  Refers to a condition of being against society, resulting in behaviour that disrupts the social order (e.g. illegal acts).

Arctic hysteria  See piblokoq.

asceticism  Denial or avoidance of pleasurable experiences for religious or cultural reasons.

ascribed status  See status, ascribed.

asocial  Refers to a condition of indifferece to social experience and customs, leading to certain dysfunctional, but not necessarily harmful, behaviours (e.g. social withdrawal, idiosyncratic grooming or dress).

assimilation  A psychosocial process by which a dominant cultural or ethnic group absorbs a non-dominant group, thus forming a single cultural or ethnic group.
See also: acculturation; identity

ataque de nervios  A Latin American syndrome that includes emotional lability, verbal or physical aggression, and a sense of heat rising from the chest into the head, often precipitated by a traumatic event, by sudden unexpected loss, or by family conflict (e.g. divorce, separation, death).
attachment behaviour  See behaviour, attachment.

baa tsche  See latah.

back translation  A procedure for checking the adequacy of a translation, in
which translated material is translated back into the original language; the
translators for the back translation should be new to the material.

behavioural norm  See norm, behavioural.

behaviour, attachment  Social behaviour related to the affective link between an
infant and his or her care-givers.

behaviour, dissocial  Behaviour undertaken for some personal benefit, despite
deleterious effects on the family, community, or greater society; examples
include stealing, lying, failing to meet social commitments.

behaviour, illness  See illness behaviour.

behaviour, type A  See type A behaviour.

belief, cultural  See cultural belief.

belief, delusory cultural  See cultural belief, delusory.

belle indifférence  In French, an apparent lack of concern about disabling (usu-
ally somatic) symptoms, often accompanying dissociative or conversion
disorders.

See also: alexithymia

berdache  Among some indigenous peoples of North America, a person with a
male sexual identity who has assumed a female gender role (i.e. dressing
like a woman and performing tasks traditionally done by women).

See also: gender role; sexual identity

bereavement, cultural  See cultural bereavement.

berserk  In Scandinavia, a sudden outburst of violence against other people and
destructiveness towards property.

See also: amok

bicultural  Possessing the values, norms, information, experiences, and skills of
two cultural or ethnic groups. This occurs in several circumstances (e.g.
having parents of two different ethnic or cultural groups, growing up in a
family of one cultural group while attending school or working in a community of another ethnic or cultural group).

**bilateral family system**  See family system, bilateral.

**bilineal inheritance**  See inheritance, bilineal.

**bilingual**  Being fluent in two languages, with the implication of being familiar with the cultures associated with the two languages.

**bilingual test-retest**  A means of assessing a psychometric translation by having people familiar with both languages (i.e. the original and the translated languages) complete the same test in both languages; the two results for each individual are then compared with each other in order to assess similarity or discrepancy between the results.

**bisexuality**  Sexual activity with members of both sexes.

**blindness, cultural**  See cultural blindness.

**body language**  The communication of thoughts and feelings through gestures, body posture, and body movements.

**bouffée délirante**  An acute, transient, psychotic condition associated with clouding of consciousness, psychomotor excitement, and agitated behaviour, followed by nonorganic amnesia and good prognosis; originally reported in Africa.

**brain fog**  From “brain fatigue”, a malady among students characterized by symptoms in the head (from a feeling of burning to hallucinations of worms crawling in the brain), eye symptoms (from tearing to pain), inability to read, impaired recent memory, and fatigue despite adequate rest; originally described in anglophone Africa. *Surménage* is a similar lay entity in francophone settings.

**brainwashing**  The use of social isolation, threat, exposure, starvation, sleeplessness, and torture to change a prisoner’s morale, self-esteem, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or behaviour.

**bride price**  The money or property given by a groom’s family to the bride’s family at the time of marriage; in patrilineal clans, a quit-claim by the bride’s family towards any children of the union.

**brujeria**  See sorcery.
burnout A modern colloquial term for a syndrome of physical, emotional, or attitudinal exhaustion characterized by impaired work performance, fatigue, insomnia, depression, increased susceptibility to physical illness, and reliance on alcohol or drugs of abuse for temporary relief with a tendency for this to escalate into physiological dependence, and, in many cases, suicide. This North American syndrome is generally considered to be a stress reaction to unrelenting performance and emotional demands stemming from the individual's excessive devotion to his or her occupation, with a concomitant neglect of family and recreational life.

cafard See amok.

cargo cult Socio-religious movement in which a central belief involves the delivery of "cargo" by a deity; first described in the South Pacific during the Second World War, when native islanders observed ships and planes delivering "cargo" to combatants in that area.

cargo cult syndrome In a psychiatric patient, the delusion that he or she will receive great unearned wealth.

cargo thinking The expectation that material goods should or will be forthcoming without effort on one's own part.

caste An endogamous unit within a society, which is characterized by specific prestige, occupations, and social status. See also: endogamy

change, culture The modification of norms, values, customs, beliefs, world view, technology, and other aspects of culture; it may occur slowly and in an orderly manner, or rapidly with dislocation and chaos. See also: change, social

change, social Change in social institutions (e.g. economics, education, health services, law) and/or the relationship of the individual to social institutions (e.g. obligations, responsibilities, freedoms). See also: change, culture

chibih See susto.

cluster suicides See suicides, cluster.

communication, nonverbal See nonverbal communication.

compensation neurosis See neurosis, compensation.
competence, cultural  See cultural competence.

concubinage  A culturally approved practice in which an extramarital partner lives within the extended family as a fictive kin member, but in the absence of any formal or legal relationship. 
See also: kin, fictive

confidentiality  Social imperative for secrecy regarding certain knowledge, such as clinical information regarding medical or psychiatric patients.

connotation  The feeling or symbolism associated with a word or phrase, independent of its denotative meaning; important in translation of psychiatric assessment instruments. 
See also: equivalence; translation

consciousness, altered state of  See altered state of consciousness.

contagion  Originally applied to infectious disease, this term is often applied to the spread of psychiatric conditions; the spread occurs either (1) rapidly in a group of similar individuals, or (2) from one ethnic group known to express the condition to another group in which the condition has been absent.

contagion, delusion of  Delusion of having acquired a disabling or fatal infection or infestation as a result of contact with infected persons or contaminated materials.

contagion ritual  A culturally prescribed ritual designed to prevent magical contagion (e.g. isolation of menstruating women, hiding the placenta after childbirth).

countertransference, cultural  See cultural countertransference.

couvade  Culturally sanctioned sick role in the husband of a pregnant or recently delivered woman; may occur episodically in cultures without a couvade tradition. 
See also: age grades

criminalization  The assignment of criminal status to some psychiatric patients or other socially deviant persons due to asocial or dissocial behaviour. 
See also: asocial

cross-cultural psychiatry  See psychiatry, cross-cultural.

cult  Originally, a system of religious worship, a creed, or a sect; recently the term has been applied to sects newly established by charismatic leaders
Definitions of terms

who demand total devotion and foster strong dependence among their followers.

cult, cargo  See cargo cult.

cult, zar  See zar cult.

cultural belief  An unsubstantiated but widely held belief within a particular culture, which may be mistaken for a delusion by a clinician not familiar with that culture.

cultural belief, delusory  A delusion in which cultural beliefs are manifest (e.g. a delusion that one's moment-to-moment behaviour is controlled by a malevolent spirit); such a delusion is often more acceptable to the social unit than one that would be viewed by others as being patently impossible.

cultural bereavement  The self-limited grieving response developed by an individual on leaving his or her own culture. See also: culture shock

cultural blindness  A person's inability to perceive cultural characteristics in others belonging to different cultures. See also: ethnocentrism

cultural competence  An individual's ability to function within a particular culture.

cultural countertransference  The clinician's emotional responses to the patient as a function of the clinician's culture, the patient's culture, and the intercultural histories of their respective groups. See also: cultural formulation; cultural transference

cultural deprivation  Failure of the culture to provide survival skills to the developing human being in a particular society, and failure to gratify essential needs (e.g. for identity, work, security, self-esteem, social status). See also: alienation; anomie; identity; pseudomaturatation

cultural determinism  The view that human development, psychology, and behaviour are determined by culture, with little or no contribution from biological or psychological factors; an opposite concept to that of biological determinism or psychological determinism.

cultural diffusion  The spread of cultural traits (including psychiatric syndromes, diagnostic categories, treatment methods) through contact across societies. See also: contagion
cultural formulation That aspect of psychiatric assessment that includes a patient's cultural identity, social role or function, explanation for the illness, cultural transference and countertransference, and cultural implications for diagnosis and treatment.

cultural identity See identity, cultural.

cultural lag Persistence of a custom or norm beyond its time of functional contribution to the society or culture (e.g. idealization of large families in a crowded society).

cultural pathogenicity Cultural practices that elicit, favour, or precipitate psychiatric disorder. See also: norm conflict; role conflict; status inconsistency

cultural pluralism See pluralism, cultural.

cultural psychiatry See psychiatry, cultural.

cultural relativism The view that different cultures and their various manifestations are all equally valid in their prescriptions for behaviour.

cultural transference The patient's feeling towards the clinician based on the patient's attitudes towards his or her own culture and towards the clinician's culture (or that which the patient perceives to be the clinician's culture); may be influenced by historical relations between the patient's and the clinician's cultures. See also: cultural formulation; cultural countertransference

culture The totality of all the beliefs, behaviours, and values transmitted among the members of a group by learning; it includes systems of ideas and meaning.

culture-bound syndrome See syndrome, culture-bound.

culture change See change, culture.

culture, guilt-based Culture in which the individual experiences remorse and a loss of self-esteem through failure to behave in a socially acceptable fashion. See also: culture, shame-based

culture, mainstream In a multiethnic society, those shared aspects of the larger society (e.g. government, history, language, law, public education).
Definitions of terms

culture-related syndrome  See syndrome, culture-related.

culture, shame-based  Culture in which the individual’s failure to behave in a socially acceptable fashion brings disgrace to his or her family, peers, or other social group.
See also: culture, guilt-based

culture shock  The distress experienced when a person suddenly leaves a familiar culture for an unfamiliar one; typically, distress does not begin for some weeks but may then persist over a period of months.
See also: cultural bereavement

curse  An invocation intended to bring spiritual or magical harm upon a person or object.
See also: sorcery; witchcraft

deculturation  Loss of traditional culture as people subscribe to new or foreign cultural features; first applied in Africa, it refers to adoption of the superficial behaviours, values, and material culture of industrialized societies and concurrent abandonment of core aspects of the original culture.
See also: anomie

delusion  Persistent false beliefs not amenable to change through knowledge or experience; these can be difficult to distinguish from cultural beliefs.
See also: cultural belief

delusional content  Specific details and information contained in a delusion; these often contain culture-specific material (e.g. regarding spirits, ghosts, ancestors).

delusion of contagion  See contagion, delusion of.

delusory cultural belief  See cultural belief, delusory.

depression, anomic  See anomic depression.

deprivation, cultural  See cultural deprivation.

determinism, cultural  See cultural determinism.

deviance  Behaviour that deviates significantly from that considered normal within a culture (e.g. rule-breaking, censured or stigmatized conduct, or adoption of marginal roles).
See also: norm; normality
dhat  See semen loss.

diffusion, cultural  See cultural diffusion.

disability  The inability of an individual to work or to discharge his or her age-related responsibilities as a result of health impairment, including psychiatric disorder.

disorientation  An obscuring of the culturally relevant temporal, topographical, or personal spheres of consciousness, associated with various forms of cerebral organic syndromes and dissociative disorders.

displaced person  See person, displaced.

dissocial behaviour  See behaviour, dissocial.

dissociation  A temporary alteration of consciousness not due to organic mental disorder; clinical manifestations include numerous culture-related syndromes such as amok, latah, multiple personality, Ganser syndrome, possession syndrome.
See also: alexithymia; hysteria

dissociative stupor  A profound diminution or absence of voluntary movement and normal responsiveness to external stimuli, in which no evidence of a physical cause is revealed by physical examination or laboratory investigation and there is no evidence of recent stressful events or problems.

dowry  Money or property brought by a bride to her marriage, typically in cultures with matrilineal inheritance or a matriarchal family system.

dream  Mental images during rapid-eye-movement (REM) sleep with different meaning in various cultures; for example, some societies consider them to be actual events occurring in another time and place.

dream-like state  State of disordered consciousness, with depersonalization, derealization, and mild clouding of consciousness.
Synonym: oneiroid state
See also: dissociation

drinking, ritual  Drinking of alcohol on social occasions prescribed by the culture (e.g. birth, baptism, marriage, completion of business or political negotiation).

drinking, social  Alcohol drinking in a group at a social event or ceremony, often in amounts prescribed by the culture; social drinking is not necessarily synonymous with moderate drinking.
Definitions of terms

dysmorphicophobia  A subjective feeling of ugliness despite the individual's appearance being within normal limits; may be favoured in societies in which attractiveness and acceptance by others are highly valued.  
See also: anthropophobia; taijin-kyofu-shou

eating disorder  Psychiatric disorder related to eating, which may be related to cultural ideals regarding body image, i.e. starving and purging in societies that value slimness, overeating in societies that value obesity as a sign of wealth or of membership of the leisured classes.

El Zar  See zar cult.

emic  Describes an individual's or group's own point of view regarding its customs, motivations, rationales, norms, and values.  
See also: etic

emigration  Leaving one's own native country, usually for a prolonged or permanent stay in a foreign country.

emotion, expressed  See expressed emotion.

empty nest  Colloquial term for the grieving or loneliness of parents when the last child leaves home; described for nuclear families with neolocal residence (i.e. living away from the families of both husband and wife).

enabling  An interpersonal action or public policy that facilitates continued misuse or abuse of alcohol or drugs, an eating disorder, pathological gambling, excessive shopping, promiscuous sexuality, stealing, or other behaviours problematic to society.  
See also: neurosis, compensation; secondary gain

enculturation  The process of acquiring cultural knowledge, values, social skills, language, and other attributes of culture during childhood and adolescence.  
See also: socialization

endogamy  A marriage custom in which partners are expected to have some kin relationship to one another.  
See also: caste

epidemic  In psychiatry, the sudden appearance or increased rate of a stereotyped behaviour, somatic complaint, pseudohallucination, or cognitive-emotional symptom in a group of people (e.g. students, factory workers, soldiers).  
See also: contagion; hysteria; koro
equivalence  In translation, the correspondence in meaning between words, phrases, or sentences in different languages.
See also: connotation; translation

espanto    See susto.

ethnic identity   See identity, ethnic.

ethnic group    A distinct subcultural group that shares dress, language, national origin, geographical location, occupation, and/or religion, and tends to remain distinct through in-marriage and a separate identity.
See also: identity; subculture

ethnic pluralism  See pluralism, ethnic.

ethnocentrism    The overvaluation of one’s own culture vis-à-vis other cultures, so that biased judgements are made regarding that which is good, correct, beautiful, moral, normal, sane, or rational based on one’s own culture as the standard; cultural or ethnic prejudice.
See also: cultural relativism; racism

ethnonationalism Modern totalitarianism characterized by superordinate loyalty to and belief in the superiority of one’s own ethnic group, total immersion of one’s individual destiny with that of the ethnic group, and disregard for the rights and interests of other ethnic and national groups.
See also: ethnocentrism; racism

ethnopsychiatry  In an ethnic group, the range of concepts shared by the general population regarding psychiatric disorders, their nature, assessment, and care; this term includes interactions between persons with psychiatric disorders and practitioners, both lay and professional

etic    Refers to an outsider’s interpretation of behaviour, customs, norms, values, etc. in another culture.
See also: emic

existentialism A modern, secular approach to life based on the acceptance of that which now exists; developed in Europe during and after the Second World War.

exogamy    A marriage custom in which individuals marry outside their kin system.

expressed emotion Family expression of criticism and hostility towards a psychiatric patient, associated with poor social function and high morbidity; varies markedly with culture and with ethnic group.
Definitions of terms

extended family  See family, extended.

falling out  Among Afro-Caribbeans, sudden collapse in which the affected person can hear but cannot move.

family, extended  Kin related by blood and marriage, extending over three or more generations and including siblings and their spouses.

family, nuclear  Husband, wife, and their children.

family system, bilateral  A family system in which both parents share authority, although certain authority may fall more within the domain of one of the parents.

family system, matriarchal  A family system in which authority, responsibility, and status are deeded to a senior woman in the family.

family system, patriarchal  A family system that invests authority and responsibility in a senior man in the family; kinship is restricted to the father's relatives.

fatalism  A world view in which untoward events are accepted as inevitable, rather than preventable or solvable.

faute de mieux  "For lack of anything better" in French; choosing less desirable alternatives under certain conditions (e.g. homosexual relationships among heterosexual individuals in prison, cannibalism in circumstances of starvation).

fetishism  The displacement of erotic arousal onto a body part (e.g. a lock of hair, a foot) or an object (e.g. a shoe, underwear).

fictive kin  See kin, fictive.

folie à deux  Shared delusional ideas between closely associated people; apt to occur in socially isolated families, cults, refugees, and immigrants. The same condition within a family is termed folie à famille.

folk explanation  Lay person's understanding of his or her illness. 
See also: metaphor

formulation, cultural  See cultural formulation.

frigophobia  See pa-leng.
Lexicon of cross-cultural terms in mental health

**fugue**  A dissociative condition marked by amnesia and flight from one’s home and community.

*See also:* alexithymia; dissociation

**Ganser syndrome**  A condition seen in incarcerated persons, manifested by confusion and approximate answers to questions regarding *orientation*, memory, and cognitive function.

**gender role**  *See* role, gender.

**genital retraction syndrome**  *See* koro.

**geophagia**  The practice of eating earth or clay; a culturally prescribed lay therapy for specific conditions or maladies (e.g. pregnancy, diarrhoea).

**grisi siknis**  In Central America, a brief disorder among adolescent girls, in which they run from the village; due to presumed sexual assault by a devil.

**guilt-based culture**  *See* culture, guilt-based.

**hallucination**  A sensory perception, in any sensory modality, occurring in the absence of the appropriate external stimulus; to be distinguished from culturally prescribed “pseudo-hallucinations” or *trance*.

**hallucinations, hostage**  Visual or auditory imagery produced by isolation and threat.

**haltlose personality**  *See* personality, haltlose.

**hedonism**  Valuing one’s own enjoyment or pleasure over and above responsibilities to, or rights of, others; excessive focus on the active pursuit of pleasure.

*See also:* asceticism

**hexing**  *See* sorcery.

**homicide, altruistic**  Murder in which the murderer kills beloved others in the belief that death will spare them misery and is a kind act; it is variable across cultures.

**homicide, magical**  The killing of a person through purportedly magical means.

**hospitalism**  Overdependence on hospital care, following prolonged or repeated hospitalization.

*See also:* Münchhausen syndrome; secondary gain
Definitions of terms

hostage hallucinations  See hallucinations, hostage.

hwa-byung  Literally, "anger-fire sickness"; a Korean syndrome characterized by epigastric symptoms and a fear of impending death.

hysteric  A syndrome marked by amnesia, fugue, pseudo-convulsions, pseudo-paralysis, pseudo-sensory loss, spirit possession, stupor, and/or trance; known from classical Greek times, when the cause was presumed to be the hyster (uterus) because it occurred almost exclusively in women. Prevalence of this condition can differ greatly from one culture to another, as well as within the same culture over time. Both men and women may manifest this condition.

hysteria, Arctic  See piblokoq.

hysteria, Siberian  See piblokoq.

ideal norm  See norm, ideal.

identity  The distinctive set of personal characteristics by which a person is known, both as an individual and as a member of a group.  
See also: identity, cultural; identity, ethnic

identity crisis  A state of psychological disorientation and role confusion associated with considerable psychosocial change over a relatively brief period of time. It may occur during life-cycle transitions (e.g. adolescence, parenthood, retirement) or in association with institutional, cultural, or social change.

identity, cultural  The attitudes, beliefs, customs, language, norms, social skills, and values associated with belonging to a particular culture.  
See also: identity

identity, ethnic  The internalized attitudes, beliefs, rituals, norms, and values associated with belonging to a particular ethnic group; a major source of self-esteem, but may be over-determined (e.g. in ethnonationalism, racism).

identity, negative ethnic  Low opinion of one's own ethnic group.  
See also: alienation; movements, nativistic

identity problems  Poor self-esteem, low self-confidence, and confusion regarding one's identity.  
See also: identity, negative ethnic
identity, sexual  Identity based on one’s biological sex.

idioms of distress  The expression of psychosocial distress in terms (often bio-
logical) that are familiar and acceptable within a culture.
See also: syndrome, culture-bound; syndrome, culture-related

iich’aa  See amok.

illness behaviour  Behaviour of a person who feels ill and is seeking social
sanction for the sick role; includes both verbal and nonverbal expression of
symptoms, health care-seeking, and compliance with healing regimens.

illness, impersonalistic  Illness in which infectious agents, bad luck, accidental
contagion, or other mechanistic, rather than personal, factors are perceived
as the cause of illness.
See also: illness, personalistic

illness, personalistic  Illness believed to result from one’s personal behaviour or
relationships (e.g. interpersonal discord, breaking cultural taboos).

illness, sorcery  See sorcery illness.

immigration  Coming to a foreign country, usually to assume citizenship in the
new country.

impersonalistic illness  See illness, impersonalistic.

imu  See latah.

incest  Sexual intercourse between persons who are not permitted (by law or
cultural tradition) to marry one another.

individualism  A world view in which the interests of the individual are viewed
as having political or moral dominance over other considerations.

inheritance, bilineal  The passing of property from both father and mother to
surviving offspring.

inheritance, matrilineal  The passing of property from mother to offspring;
certain property (such as a family home) may preferentially pass to a
daughter.

inheritance, patrilineal  The passing of property from father to offspring;
daughters may or may not participate in this inheritance, depending on the
culture.
integration  A form of acculturation in which individuals are able to maintain their own cultural identity and mores while concurrently maintaining positive and productive relationships with the adjacent or dominant culture.  
See also: acculturation; identity; migrant

intelligence quotient (IQ)  Score derived from performance in an intelligence test, which reflects not only cognitive skills but also such factors as experience with test-taking, motivation, and dialectal differences.

interdependence  A cultural norm for strong reciprocity and support within a family, group, or community.

internal language  See language, internal.

internal migrant  See migrant, internal.

interpretation  Translation of meanings from one language to another, including connotative meanings, such that the feelings and valuations of the speaker or writer are retained.  
See also: connotation; translation

jiryan  See semen loss.

karoshō  A Japanese syndrome in which an individual is presumed to have died of over-work; most prevalent in young adults.  
See also: work-aholism

kin  Two or more individuals who perceive themselves as having a family relationship to one another.  
See also: family, extended; kin, affinal; kin, fictive

kin, affinal  Two people related to one another through marriage rather than through birth into the same family.

kin, fictive  Two people not of the same kin group who have assumed a kin-like relationship (e.g. living together, exchanging mutual obligations).

kleptomania  The compulsive stealing of objects that are not necessarily needed or even wanted.

koro  The fear or belief that one's sexual organs (e.g. penis, testicles, breast, nipples) are shrinking into the body, with eventual disappearance of the organs resulting in death; occurs in epidemic or sporadic cases.  
Synonym: genital retraction syndrome

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**kuru**  A chronic degenerative neurological disease of humans caused by an unconventional infective agent; limited to New Guinea and probably transmitted via the custom of ritual cannibalism of deceased family members.

**language**  A system of symbols for communicating ideas, feelings, and meanings through spoken words, nonverbal sounds, facial expressions, gestures, and other means having conventional meanings.  
*See also:* interpretation; translation

**language, body**  *See* body language.

**language, internal**  The words used in performing mental tasks that require manipulation of symbols; a potential source of misunderstanding between clinicians and patients whose “internal language” systems differ.

**lanti**  A Filipino “fright” illness similar to *susto* in Latin America, perhaps due to a common Spanish influence in Latin America and the Philippines.  
*See also:* cultural diffusion; susto

**latah**  In Malaysia, a repetitive pattern of exaggerated startle response to sudden fright or surprise, followed by shouting vulgar or nonsense words, mimicking bystanders, or automatically following the commands of bystanders.  
*Synonyms:* baa tsche (Thailand); imu (Ainu people of Japan); mali mali (Philippines); myriachit (Siberia)

**life change events**  Major and minor stresses, losses, achievements, acquisitions, and status changes that, if excessive and concentrated over a limited time, produce temporary vulnerability to medical and psychiatric conditions.

**life cycle transitions**  Behavioural and role adaptations that individuals make in response to age-related culture-relevant changes (e.g. pubescence, pregnancy, parenthood, menopause, retirement, widowhood).  
*See also:* age grades; mid-life crisis; rites of passage

**limited goods**  A world view in which tangible resources (e.g. money, land) as well as intangible resources (e.g. friendship, happiness) are regarded as having limited availability.  
*See also:* Weltanschauung

**lycanthropy**  The delusion of being an animal, seen in some cultures.

**machismo**  A male cultural identity in which men, perceived as less mature than women, focus on peer relationships with other men, fighting, risk-taking, and episodic intoxication; described in Latin America.
Definitions of terms

**magic**  The use of **preternatural** means to affect a particular event or to predetermine a particular outcome (e.g. putting a **curse** on someone or something, or placing a charm).

See also: preternatural; sorcery; witchcraft

**magical homicide**  See homicide, magical.

**magical thinking**  Belief that thinking something will happen is the same as causing it to happen.

See also: animism; witchcraft

**mainstream culture**  See culture, mainstream.

**maiıyire**  A syndrome of Papua New Guinea marked by dizziness, confusion, lethargy, and a feeling of imminent death, thought to be due to **possession** by mystical powers; young women are at risk during trial marriages, and young men are at risk as they try to establish their warrior reputations.

**maladjustment, acculturation**  See acculturation maladjustment.

**mal de pelea**  See amok.

**mai mali**  See latah.

**marginality**  A social **status** involving a position on the fringe of a social group; this status involves reduced power and claim to membership within the group, with the possibility of exclusion for minor offences.

**marginalization**  Social position of a **bicultural** person who functions at the margin of two cultural groups; often a position with unique stresses and opportunities.

See also: bicultural; identity

**marianisma**  Female cultural **identity** in which women are perceived as more ethical, responsible, self-sacrificing, and mature than men; Latin American in origin.

**maskoon**  Literally “inhabited” in Arabic; refers to **possession** by spirits.

**matriarchal family system**  See family system, matriarchal.

**matrilineal inheritance**  See inheritance, matrilineal.

**matrilocal residence**  See residence, matrilocal.
metaphor A quality attributed to something, although it does not apply in a literal sense (e.g., an “icy” stare); a term applied to patients’ traditional categories of illness, which may affect their complaints, their emotional responses, and the type of treatment undertaken.

mid-life crisis Difficulty in adjusting to the biological and social changes that accompany middle age; may be more common in cultures that value youth and disdain ageing.
See also: life cycle transitions

migrant Anyone who changes their place of residence (e.g., foreign students, foreign workers, foreign embassy staff, tourists, refugees).

migrant, internal An individual who relocates to a new geographical area within the same cultural group or political unit.

millenarian movement See movement, millenarian.

minority A term used of ethnic groups who do not comprise a majority population in the community.
See also: ethnic group

mobility, social See social mobility.

monocultural Term used to describe societies in which a single culture predominates, possibly to the exclusion of others.

monogamy A cultural and/or legal stricture requiring that each man and each woman have no more than one spouse at any one time.

monogamy, sequential Refers to the practice of having more than one spouse during a lifetime, but only one spouse at any one time.

movement, revitalization A religious, cultural, or political effort to reintroduce and give new meaning to past cultural patterns, often appearing during social upheaval, discontent, or change.
See also: alienation; anomie; movement, millenarian; movements, nativistic

movement, millenarian A social movement in which one or more charismatic leaders convince alienated persons to look towards delivery, happiness, and prosperity in a new time or “millennium”.
See also: cargo cult

movements, nativistic Broad-based social movements involving the rediscovery and re- enactment of lost cultural ceremonies, artifacts, languages, and
other elements of culture; typically used in alleviating anomie or negative cultural identity and re-establishing a positive cultural or ethnic identity. See also: alienation; anomie; movement, millenarian

multicultural Term used to describe societies in which one or more cultures coexist (e.g. separate language, dress, occupations, educational systems) within the same geographical region and share the same governmental structure. See also: pluralism, cultural

multiethnic Term used to describe societies in which different ethnic groups share government, educational system, language, dress, mass media, and occupations while preserving their individual identities regarding national origin, religion, values, norms, and customs. See also: pluralism, ethnic

multiple personality See personality, multiple.

Münchhausen syndrome Deliberate production of false signs and symptoms suggestive of medical disorders, in order to fool clinicians and gain access to treatment. See also: peregrinating patient

myriachit See latah.

nativistic movements See movements, nativistic.

negative ethnic identity See identity, negative ethnic.

neolocal residence See residence, neolocal.

eynos A heterogeneous malady among Latin Americans in which stress is perceived as contributing to behavioural, emotional, or mental dysfunction through pathological effects on the nervous system. Synonyms: nerves (English-speaking peoples); nevra (Greece)

network, social See social network.

neurosis, compensation Treatment-resistant psychiatric condition among patients who expect some compensation or reward for their persisting symptoms; seen among accident victims seeking compensation in court, veterans applying for service-connected pensions, and psychiatric patients petitioning for social security disability payments. See also: secondary gain
neurosis, victim  Continued identity as a victimized person after a traumatic experience, rather than a return to a positive identity; seen in combat veterans, rape victims, refugees, hostages, torture victims.
See also: alexithymia; identity; neurosis, compensation; secondary gain; Stockholm syndrome; syndrome, torture

nightmare  A terrifying dream, whose content and meaning are often strongly influenced by culture.
See also: dream

nonverbal communication  Communication without words, as through dress, grooming, facial expression, gesticulation, nonverbal sounds, and body language.
See also: body language

norm  An ethical standard, behavioural model, or model considered desirable, acceptable, or typical for a culture.

normality  A concept with several different meanings in regard to behaviour and mental health: e.g. innocuous or non-pathological; optimal or fittest; habitual, average, or modal; or a measured mean with a standard deviation. Culture contributes to the dimensions of normality, no matter how defined.

normalize  To regard—or demonstrate a propensity to regard—psychopathological expressions as normal variants, thus minimizing them.

norm, behavioural  Observed actual, average, or model behaviour in a cultural group.
See also: norm; norm, ideal; norm, ranking

norm conflict  Situation in which ideal norms do not coincide with behavioural norms, often in regard to alcohol and/or drug use, sexuality, use of wealth.

norm, ideal  Behaviour espoused by a cultural group as being desired or optimal; a socially prescribed behavioural pattern.
See also: norm; norm, behavioural

norm, ranking  Ideal norms expected of those with a special social role and status (e.g. clergy, community or elected leaders, educators, judges, physicians, wealthy persons); typically more exacting and altruistic than the norms expected of other people.
See also: norm; norm, ideal
nuclear family  See family, nuclear.

one hundred and fifty per cent person  See person, one hundred and fifty per cent.

oneiroid state  See dream-like state.

orientation  Identifying oneself and one's associates (orientation to person), and placing oneself in culturally appropriate space and time (orientation to place and time).  
See also: disorientation

otaku  In Japan, a syndrome in which adolescents spend their lives profoundly focused on virtual reality, video games, and music heard through stereophonic headphones, while ignoring social interactions, grooming, education, and personal maturation.

pa-leng  In China, a morbid fear of feeling cold, due to a presumed yin-yang imbalance.  
Synonym: frigophobia  
See also: yin-yang

pasmo  See susto.

pathogenicity, cultural  See cultural pathogenicity.

pathological possession  See possession syndrome.

pathological trance  See possession syndrome.

pathologize  To identify—mistakenly—culturally consistent beliefs or behaviours as psychiatric signs or symbols.  
See also: cultural blindness

pathoplasticity  Refers to modifications in the expression of psychopathology that occur across cultures, in the same culture over time, or in the same patient over time.

patriarchal family system  See family system, patriarchal.

patrilineal inheritance  See inheritance, patrilineal.

patrilocal residence  See residence, patrilocal.

perdida del alma  See susto.
peregrinating patient A wandering psychiatric patient; often applied to the travelling patient with Münchhausen syndrome and/or hospital dependency.
See also: hospitalism; Münchhausen syndrome

person A culturally specific notion of the self, variable among cultures, which can range from extreme individualism (self is seen as a self-supporting, free agent) to extreme ancestor-clan collectivism (self cannot exist apart from kin or group).

personalistic illness See illness, personalistic.

personality, halius A personality disorder observed in Germany, characterized by the absence of normal inhibitions over speech and behaviour, especially in the moral sphere.

personality, multiple A dissociative condition in which the individual manifests multiple personas, i.e. with various ages and personalities, and even of different sex; considered rare outside Europe and North America.

person, displaced A person displaced from home within his or her country of origin because of war, revolution, famine, or natural disaster.
See also: migrant

person, one hundred and fifty per cent A person who has a strong identity in two ethnic groups and must exert considerable energies in coping with and functioning in those two groups.

personality, type A See type A personality.

pibloktog In circumpolar regions, a sudden onset of life-threatening behaviour in which the sufferer suddenly runs off into the frozen wastes or jumps into the icy waters.
Synonyms: Arctic hysteria; pibloktek; Siberian hysteria

pluralism, cultural The coexistence of two or more distinct cultural groups within one governmental entity.
See also: multicultural

pluralism, ethnic A social condition in which two or more ethnic groups live together in a single society while maintaining their own separate ethnic identities.
See also: ethnic group
polyandry  A culturally approved marriage practice in which a woman may have more than one husband at one time.
See also: bride price

polygamy  Refers to either polyandry or polygamy.

polygyny  A culturally approved marriage practice in which a man may have more than one wife at one time.

possession  A cultural–religious construct in which an individual’s mind or soul is occupied by a spirit, with consequences for the health or well-being.
See also: maskoon; syndrome, culture-bound; trance

possession syndrome  Ongoing disability ascribed to possession, typically with alterations in consciousness and loss of identity to the possessing agent.
Synonyms: pathological possession; pathological trance

potlatch  Among some indigenous peoples of North America, the practice of giving away one’s wealth in association with changed or increased social status.
See also: life cycle transitions; status

prejudice  A negative emotional and attitudinal set against an individual or group based on selected social or cultural characteristics.
See also: ethnocentrism; ethnonationalism; racism

preternatural  Refers to out-of-the-ordinary, but presumed natural, experiences that involve trance, speaking “in tongues” (i.e. in a “spiritual” language not understood by the speaker or by others), or putative communication with spirits or the deceased; typically supported by a religious or cultural group.

primary support group  Those people with whom an individual has the strongest and most enduring face-to-face relationships and who form the core or centre of his or her interpersonal environment.
See also: social network

proxemics  Study of the interpersonal distance and body language during communication, including patient–physician interactions.
See also: body language

pseudomaturtation  Manifestation of adult-like attitudes and behaviour by children deprived of parenting.
See also: cultural deprivation
psychiatry, cross-cultural  The comparative study of psychiatric disorders, practice, and categories across cultures.

psychiatry, cultural  The field of psychiatry concerned with the relationship of culture to psychiatric disorder and care.
See also: ethnopsychiatry; psychiatry, cross-cultural; psychiatry, transcultural

psychiatry, transcultural  Psychiatric care or research in which the clinician or investigator belongs to a culture different from that of the patient or subject.

racism  Belief that there is an inherent connection between perceived hereditary and cultural traits, and that some groups are biologically superior to others.
See also: ethnocentrism; ethnonationalism; prejudice

ranking norm  See norm, ranking.

reality testing  The clinical assessment of an individual to discern his or her awareness regarding the physical, social, and cultural environment. Colloquial usage may refer to the individual’s self-assessment regarding his or her physical, social, and cultural environment.

refugee  An individual who has sought refuge in another country because of well founded fears of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.

relativism, cultural  See cultural relativism.

rescuing  Family, friends, or therapists preventing a person from experiencing the adverse consequences of irresponsible behaviour, especially in association with alcoholism, drug abuse, or other behavioural disturbances.
See also: enabling; neurosis, compensation

residence, matrilocal  Daughters live close to their mothers after marriage, and sons relocate away from their homes to live close to their wives’ parents.

residence, neolocal  Choice of residence is up to a newly married couple, whose culture does not require them to live close to either the wife’s family or the husband’s family.

residence, patrilocal  Sons live close to their fathers after marriage, and daughters move away from their homes to live close to their husbands’ parents.
Definitions of terms

revitalization movement  See movement, revitalization.

rites of passage  Formal rituals that celebrate social transitions in the life cycle and mark changes in social role and responsibility.
   See also: life cycle transitions

ritual  A social event to mark changes in the life cycle of an individual, such as birth, graduation, marriage, childbirth, retirement, or death.
   See also: life cycle transitions; rites of passage

ritual, contagion  See contagion ritual.

ritual drinking  See drinking, ritual.

rivalry, sibling  See sibling rivalry.

role  The part played by the individual in society as a result of the responsibilities and status attached to his or her social position, whether as a function of birth, personal achievement, or demographic characteristics (e.g. age, sex, marital status).

role conflict  Incompatibility between two or more of the roles that a person is expected to perform, or between the individual’s role and his or her personality; often the result of irreconcilable demands or ambiguous role definitions.
   See also: identity; status inconsistency

role, gender  Social behaviours, obligations, and functions associated with the individual’s social identity as male or female.

role, sick  A social role in which the individual lays claim to certain social advantages (e.g. release from work, access to care and treatment) in return for certain social obligations (e.g. treatment-seeking, compliance with healing recommendations).
   See also: illness behaviour

rootwork  See sorcery.

ro'ya  In Arab countries, a revelation or vision from God to reverent or saintly persons.

Sapir-Wharf hypothesis  A hypothesis, advanced by two linguists, that culture shapes language, and language in turn influences the way in which people view the universe, perceive relationships, and conduct their lives; language
presumably accomplishes this through vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and phonetics.

**scrupulosity** In Roman Catholicism, the excessive worry of having committed various sins, although the supposed thoughts or actions are morally acceptable.  
*See also:* tahara

**secondary gain** Practical advantages that may be realized by virtue of having some impairment of health (e.g. pensions, compensation payments).  
*See also:* neurosis, compensation

**self-mutilation** Damage to some part of one’s own body; may be acceptable in some cultures under certain conditions (e.g. lacerating the scalp or amputating a digit on the death of a family member).

**semen loss** A presumed cause of weakness and deteriorating health among men in several cultures of Africa and Asia.  
*Synonyms:* dhat (India); jiryan (India); shen-k’uei (China); sukra pameha (Sri Lanka)

**senium** The period of old age, variably defined by cultures (e.g. may begin at the birth of a grandchild, on retirement, at a particular age, on the loss of particular functions, or with the gain of matriarchal or patriarchal role).  
*See also:* life cycle transitions

**sensitiver Beziehungswahn** A non-schizophrenic paranoid psychosis in Germany, with morbid ideas of self-reference, arising in an introverted sensitive person with a poor ability to cope with strong affect.

**separation** A form of acculturation in which a minority group maintains its own culture while remaining outside the mainstream society.  
*See also:* acculturation; minority; mainstream culture

**sequential monogamy** *See* monogamy, sequential.

**sexual identity** *See* identity, sexual.

**shame-based culture** *See* culture, shame-based.

**shen-k’uei** *See* semen loss.

**shinkeishitsu** Literally “nervous traits” in Japanese; a syndrome of obsessions, compulsive perfectionism, social withdrawal, multiple somatic complaints, extreme sensitivity, and neurasthenia.
Definitions of terms

Siberian hysteria  See pibloktoq.

sibling rivalry  Jealousy and competition among siblings, reportedly common in some cultures and rare in others.

sick role  See role, sick.

social change  See change, social.

social drinking  See drinking, social.

socialization  Beginning in early childhood, the development and acquisition of knowledge and skills required for effective social functioning in a particular culture.  
See also: enculturation

social mobility  The ability, within a culture, to change one's social status, especially one's socioeconomic status.  
See also: status; status, socioeconomic

social network  Those persons with whom an individual has regular contact, reciprocal relationships, and close emotional ties.

social support  Advocacy, emotional reassurance, and other resources that members of his or her social network bring to the individual.

socioeconomic status  See status, socioeconomic.

sorcery  Use of preternatural powers by a witch or sorcerer, in association with a ritual, in order to obtain secret information, to affect the outcome of events, or to inflict suffering or death.  
Synonyms: brujeria (Latin America); hexing (Europe); rootwork (Afro-American peoples); voodoo or voudou (Haiti)  
See also: preternatural; witchcraft

sorcery illness  Illness presumably induced by spirits or preternatural forces, called forth by a witch or sorcerer; a more accurate term might be "fear-of-sorcery illness", since evidence for actual sorcery is often lacking.

spirit  A supernatural or non-physical sentient entity.

status  A designated position in a system of culturally structured social relationships.

status, achieved  Status that depends on the individual's own skills, knowledge, efforts, and achievements.  
See also: status; status, ascribed
status, ascribed  The social status of the individual that depends on the status of the class, caste, or subculture into which he or she was born, rather than on his or her own efforts; characteristic of traditional societies with little or no socioeconomic mobility, in which family affiliation serves as the basis for occupation, employment, residence, marriage, wealth, and other important aspects of life.
See also: caste; status; status, achieved

status inconsistency  Inconsistency between an individual’s past or customary status and his or her current or actual status; may be seen among refugees, retired persons, divorced persons.

status, socioeconomic  A specific subtype of status based on education, occupation, position, residence, and wealth.

Stockholm syndrome  Among hostages, the sympathetic identification of the hostage with the aggressor; so-called because of a hostage situation in Stockholm.

stress, acculturative  See acculturative stress.

stupor, dissociative  See dissociative stupor.

subculture  Within a culture, a subgroup that has distinctive behavioural, material, and/or ideological attributes, but that cannot exist independently of the majority society (e.g. ethnic minorities or tribes, professional guilds, religious sects, secret societies).

suicide, altruistic  Suicide committed by the individual in the belief that his or her death will spare others shame or hardship; probably more common in cultures with strong kinship.

suicide, anomic  Suicide thought to be prompted by the absence of meaning and goals in life.
See also: deculturation

suicides, cluster  An epidemic of suicides carried out in a similar fashion over a brief period of time.

sukra pameha  See semen loss.

support group, primary  See primary support group.

support, social  See social support.
Definitions of terms

susto  In Latin America, the presumed loss of one's soul due to sudden fright, with subsequent illness.  
_Synonyms:_ chibib; espanto; pasmo; perdida del alma; tripa ida

syncretism  A blending of an indigenous tradition with the tradition of another group, creating innovations that are distinct from both groups (e.g. the Native American Church, the Christmas tree, Passover).  
See also: cultural diffusion

syndrome, cargo cult  See cargo cult syndrome.

syndrome, culture-bound  A clinical condition that occurs exclusively or most distinctly in one culture.

syndrome, culture-related  Symptom complexes with higher than expected frequency in certain cultures, generally considered to be shaped, influenced, or elicited by cultural or culturally related factors.

syndrome, Ganser  See Ganser syndrome.

syndrome, genital retraction  See koro.

syndrome, Münchhausen  See Münchhausen syndrome.

syndrome, possession  See possession syndrome.

syndrome, Stockholm  See Stockholm syndrome.

syndrome, torture  Distrust, hypervigilance, exacerbation of stress-related illness, avoidance of medical and social personnel, low self-esteem, and brain damage in those who have been torture victims.  
See also: hallucinations, hostage

tahara  Arabic term for the linking of spiritual or religious purity with physical cleanliness.  
_Synonym:_ taharat (Hebrew)  
See also: scrupulosity

taijin-kyofu-shou  A Japanese psychiatric syndrome with fear of losing the good will of others because of one's imagined deplorable shortcomings; symptoms include social fears, tremulousness, self-consciousness, and a sense of a physical defect or deformity in oneself.  
_Synonym:_ TKS  
See also: anthropophobia; dysmorphophobia

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time out  Culturally sanctioned times when individuals are temporarily relieved of their social roles, obligations, responsibilities, and/or constraints (e.g. carnival, New Year celebrations)
See also: role

TKS  See taijin-kyofu-shou.

torture syndrome  See syndrome, torture.

totem  An emblem symbolizing a particular group (e.g. national flag, religious symbol) and associated with special reverence.
See also: identity; value

trance  A temporarily altered state of waking consciousness involving loss of sense of identity, heightened attention and suggestibility, and/or culturally stereotyped behaviours, with markedly diminished responsivity to environmental stimuli.
See also: possession; zar cult

trance, pathological  See possession syndrome.

transcultural psychiatry  See psychiatry, transcultural.

transference, cultural  See cultural transference.

translation  Expression of a thought or concept in a second language, while retaining the meaning of the original language; use of equivalent terms in two languages.
See also: connotation; interpretation; language

trapa ida  See susto.

type A behaviour  A pattern of behaviour characterized by anger, impatience, irritation, aggravation, a sense of urgency, competitiveness, easily aroused hostility and aggressivity, facial tension, and/or muscular set; described in association with specific cardiovascular disorders, it may be more prevalent in certain cultures.
See also: type A personality

type A personality  Personality characterized by a consistent pattern of type A behaviour.

value  That which is esteemed, prized, or deemed worthwhile and desirable by an individual or a culture.

venereophobia  Belief or fear of being infected with a venereal disease.
Definitions of terms

victim neurosis  See neurosis, victim.

vision quest  A search for spiritual guidance in matters with personal and spiritual meaning, through fasting, isolation, and exposure to the elements; employed by indigenous peoples of North America in making major life decisions.
See also: life cycle transitions; rites of passage

voodoo/voudou  See sorcery.

Weltanschauung  The comprehensive perspectives of a people or culture regarding their origins, the nature of their universe, their goals, and the meaning of their life on earth (i.e. their reason for being); the source of a people’s values, efforts, mores, ideals, taboos, and prescriptions for living.
See also: animism; fatalism; limited goods; witchcraft; yin-yang; yoga

Windigo psychosis  A belief of certain indigenous North American peoples that possession by a cannibalistic monster will drive the victim to assault, kill, and eat human victims; no actual cases have been observed in recent times, but “Windigo fear” persists.

wiswas  In Arabic, literally “the devil”; obsessions or compulsions with religious or sexual content, for which sufferers consult religious healers.

witch belief  A system of thought or world view in which illness or other misfortune is attributed to the psychic acts of other people.
See also: sorcery; Weltanschauung

witchcraft  The presumed exercise of preternatural power for particular ends, which may be good as well as evil.
See also: sorcery

witch doctor  A shaman, medicine man, or medicine woman who employs preternatural power or sorcery to heal or treat illness

work-aholism  Excessive commitment to work, over-valuation and over-reliance on the workplace as an exclusive source of identity and support, so that time and commitment to non-work entities (e.g. family, community, avocations) are neglected.

yin-yang  An Asian system for understanding psychology, health, and disease, based on notions of balance between two opposing forces; yin is dark, female, and negative; yang is light, male, and positive.
See also: Weltanschauung
yoga  A Hindu-based system of belief and action for maintaining physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, based on the notion that complete control of the body can render the mind and soul free of bodily interference. 
See also: Weltanschauung

zar cult  A religious movement of the eastern Mediterranean region in which group dance, music, trance, and/or chant are undertaken for healing purposes.  
Synonym: El Zar (Arabic)

Zeitgeist  Literally, “time-spirit” in German; the psychocultural climate or ethos of an era.  
See also: age set

zoopsia  A form of hallucinations in which the sufferer sees animals.
Selected references


