
Analysis Of States Of Consciousness

States of consciousness is a term used to describe the global states that are associated with the action and use of pharmacological agents, hypnosis, meditation, sleep disorders and a routine cycle of sleep. Different levels of consciousness bring along varying behaviour patterns that change with each situation. Consciousness is a term used to mean awareness. This includes awareness of yourself, sensation, thoughts, and of the environment. On the contrary, an unconscious state would indicate that there is a barrier to being aware of your surroundings. The purpose of this analysis is to bring to light the essence and associated disorders of sleep, methods used to alter consciousness and identify the major classification of drugs and their effects.

Firstly, an average human lifespan accounts for a great deal of sleep. It should be noted that all sleep is not the same, but throughout one's time asleep, your brain will cycle between rapid-eye-movement (REM) and non- REM sleep. The first cycle is composed of four stages which consist of the transition of being awake to falling asleep, light sleep, and the last being primarily the deep sleep phase. As one cycles into REM sleep, the eyes flutter behind closed lids as the body becomes temporarily paralyzed as we dream. The purpose of dreams varies from theory to theory but overall its function is to bring together thoughts and processes that bridge the past and future. An attempt to analyze the meaning of dreams helps to visualize a "reliable commentary on the life that you really live" (Langs, 2017). This can include anticipated events, problems that require solving, and people who lives matter in your life. According to Langs, one would consider dreams as a personal counsellor, whose entire purpose is to register these perceptions, analyze conflicts and guide you through avenues of clarity (Langs, 2017). Dreams are rich in symbolism and imagery which makes it difficult to interpret at times.

One of the major types of sleep disorders is insomnia which is characterized by a lack of quality sleep and difficulties with initiation and maintenance. It is associated with high levels of stress and impairments of daytime functioning which has been linked with diminished quality of life if the case becomes persistent (Morin et al., 2015). Psychological and pharmacological therapies have produced an increase in total sleep time but most of the treatments used include improving sleeping patterns, behaviour therapy, and exploring and treating underlying causes. Sleeping agents may be used but are monitored for side effects. Medications used include sedatives, antihistamines, and antidepressants if front line therapies are not effective. Amongst others, restless leg syndrome (RLS) is also a common disorder that plague adults. This sleep-related movement disorder is known best for its constant and often unpleasant urges to move the legs while at rest. Oftentimes the treatment of underlying issues sometimes greatly reduces symptoms. For instance, iron supplementation can correct those who are in need with medical supervision for any changes. Without an associated condition, treatment focuses on lifestyle changes such as maintaining good sleep patterns, exercising and avoiding irritants such as coffee. As for medications, benzodiazepines to improve sleep, opioids to relieve pain, and dopaminergic are used to reduce the restlessness in the legs (Borreguero et al., 2016).

Mind-wandering is one of the moments everyone encounters daily. During these moments one often plans "future discussions or anticipate an event in the future" (Reddy, 2016). It must be noted that daydreams do not interfere with daily functioning and do not cause any distress.

Oftentimes, daydreams are perceived as how a situation would or should have occurred.

Used as an adjunct therapy, hypnosis is known as guided relaxation with an intense level of concentration that is not influenced by one's surroundings. Hypnosis can be considered as a different state of consciousness in the sense that there is a shift of awareness geared towards the direction of sleep without actually falling asleep the traditional way. There is a dissociation of the body from your surroundings which makes this the reason for it being an altered state (Kihlstrom, 2018).

Promoting emotional health, reducing stress, controlling anxiety and enhancing self-awareness are just a few of many benefits of meditation. According to Tang, Holzel & Posner, recent neuroimaging studies have begun to uncover the brain areas that reflect these benefits (2015). Transcendental, zen, and breath awareness meditation are just a few of the various types which overall produces the same results. Those who practice everyday appreciate morning meditation because of the calmness and peacefulness it brings to start a productive day.

Psychologists and medical specialists have devised several strategies to fight pain and relieve symptoms that accompany disorders that affect states of consciousness. Approaches include nerve and brain stimulation, light therapy, hypnosis, cognitive restructuring, and medications. The major classification of drugs used includes hypnotics and sedatives which can be used to decrease the activity of the brain to increase sleepiness. In addition to this, insomnia agents include benzodiazepines to induce sleep. These agents consist of drugs such as lorazepam, clonazepam, and diazepam. Mood stabilizers can be used to treat intense shifts in mood that can happen with drastic reductions in sleep. As for pain, opioids such as morphine used to treat moderate to severe pain can also be used as an adjunct therapy for disorders that are to be treated due to pain associated with other conditions.

In conclusion, human consciousness plays a major role in many aspects of life, thought and behaviour. It is a term used to describe the overall experience of awareness. Sleep is a naturally recurring state of the mind and body characterized by an altered state and reduced sensory and muscle activity. The nature of sleep can be induced by varying methods such as hypnotherapy and a state of pure relaxation such as meditation which benefits one's overall health. The major classification of drugs helps to increase sleepiness and help maladaptive states of consciousness to re-orient back to reality. Overall, the experience of consciousness is fundamental to human nature and additional theories are endlessly evolving.