

Deviation from ideal mental health



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- This definition gives the 'normal' characteristics i.e. those of mental health rather than of mental illness.
- Therefore, if an individual does NOT show these characteristics, they are abnormal
- *Exam advice: Then, add to this description by giving a summary of the characteristics given below*
- *Remember if time to give an e.g. of an illness in relation to the criteria*
- *(obviously it depends on the no. of marks)*



## Jahoda's six categories of ideal mental health

- **Self – attitudes**
- Having high self-esteem and a strong sense of identity
- **Personal growth**
- Also known as self-actualization of one's potential
- Maslow suggested we should all be striving to fulfil our potential



# Jahoda's categories continued....

- **Integration/Resistance to Stress**
- This is the extent to which categories 1 + 2 are integrated and can be assessed in terms of the individual's ability to cope with stressful situations
- **Autonomy**
- The degree to which an individual is independent of social influences and are not dependent on others. They are resilient and can make decisions on their own.



- **Perception of reality**
- Many suggest this is a key factor of mental health
- This is having a realistic view of the world, not being too pessimistic or optimistic
- **Environmental Mastery**
- Being able to meet the demands of any situation and being able to adapt to changing life circumstances



# Evaluation of DIMH

- The definition is culturally relative as different cultures may not agree on what is 'ideal mental health'.
- For example, individualist cultures are concerned with individual goals and achievements, whereas collectivist cultures strive for the greater good of the community, not individual achievement. Therefore, collectivist cultures will not view "self-attitudes" or "personal growth" or "autonomy" as important for mental health.
- Therefore, this definition does not apply to all cultures.



- A strength of deviation from ideal mental health is that it takes a positive approach to defining abnormality.
- This is because it focuses on what is desirable rather than what is undesirable.

