Chapter 5

CONSCIOUSNESS

Section 1: The Study of Consciousness
Section 2: Sleep and Dreams
Section 3: Meditation, Biofeedback, and Hypnosis
Section 4: Drugs and Consciousness
Question: What is consciousness?

CONSCIOUSNESS

- Generally speaking, consciousness means awareness but there is more than one type of awareness
- *Sensory awareness* – conscious or aware of things outside yourself
- *Direct inner awareness* – being aware of things inside you
- *Sense of self* – aware of ourselves and our existence
Question: What are the stages of sleep and what are several sleep problems?

**FIVE STAGES OF SLEEP**

- Stage 1 is light sleep that produces the alpha waves typical of relaxation.
- Stages 2, 3, and 4 are deeper and during stages 3 and 4 the brain produces delta waves.
- Stage 4 is the stage of deepest sleep meaning the one that would be the most difficult to wake up from.
- Final stage is rapid-eye-movement (REM) sleep, in which dreams and nightmares occur.
Chapter 5

Question: What are the stages of sleep and what are several sleep problems?

SLEEP PROBLEMS INCLUDE:

- Insomnia – the inability to sleep
- Nightmares – caused by a variety of events such as work or even depression
- Night Terrors – more severe than nightmares but are seldom remembered
- Sleepwalking – roaming about almost nightly during stages of deep sleep
Question: What are the stages of sleep and what are several sleep problems?

SLEEP PROBLEMS INCLUDE: (continued)

- Sleep Apnea – breathing interruption that occurs during sleep
- Narcolepsy – a rare sleep disorder in which people fall asleep no matter what time it is or where they are
Question: What are meditation, biofeedback, and hypnosis?

MEDITATION, BIOFEEDBACK, AND HYPNOSIS

- Other altered states of consciousness occur when we are awake. These are achieved in the following ways:
  - *Meditation* – a systematic narrowing of attention that slows metabolism and helps produce feelings of relaxation
  - *Biofeedback* – a system for monitoring and feeding back information about certain biological processes, such as blood pressure
  - *Hypnosis* – a condition in which people appear to be highly suggestible and to behave as if they are in a trance
HYPNOSIS

- Relaxed, trance-like mental state characterized by heightened suggestibility.
- Popularized by Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815).
- Debate--highly focused state vs. altered state.
- Possible experience--enhanced fantasy, role-playing abilities, redistributed attention, and so on.
Five Qualities of the Hypnotic State

- Heightened suggestibility
- Dissociation: possible separation from sensations connected to external reality; can perform acts that do not register in conscious memory or engage in two behaviors while remembering only one.
- Vivid imagery
- Enhanced memory
- Posthypnotic suggestion: influences later behavior but effectiveness fades over time.
OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

- **Posthypnotic amnesia** occurs when subjects are told they will not remember what happened while hypnotized.
- **Dissociation Theory:** hypnosis is a splitting of central control of thought processes and behavior. Subjects agree to give some control to the hypnotist.
- **Age regression:** hypnotized subjects behave as if they are reliving experiences from childhood.
- **Applications:** pain-killer, stress reliever, entertainment, research, etc.
Question: In what ways do various types of drugs affect consciousness?

DRUGS AND CONSCIOUSNESS

- **Depressants** – slow the activity of the nervous system and give people a sense of relaxation but can have negative effects
- **Narcotics** – addictive depressants that have been used to relieve pain and induce sleep and can give the user a feeling of pleasure
- **Stimulants** – increase the activity of the nervous system and speed up the heart and breathing rate. Stimulants include nicotine, amphetamines, and cocaine
Question: In what ways do various types of drugs affect consciousness?

**STIMULANTS**

- **Nicotine** – a drug found in tobacco leaves that spurs the release of the hormone adrenaline which causes the heart rate to increase.
- **Amphetamines** – help people stay awake and reduce appetite.
- **Cocaine** – a stimulant derived from the leaves of the coca plant which produces feeling of pleasure, reduces hunger, deadens pain, and boosts self-confidence.