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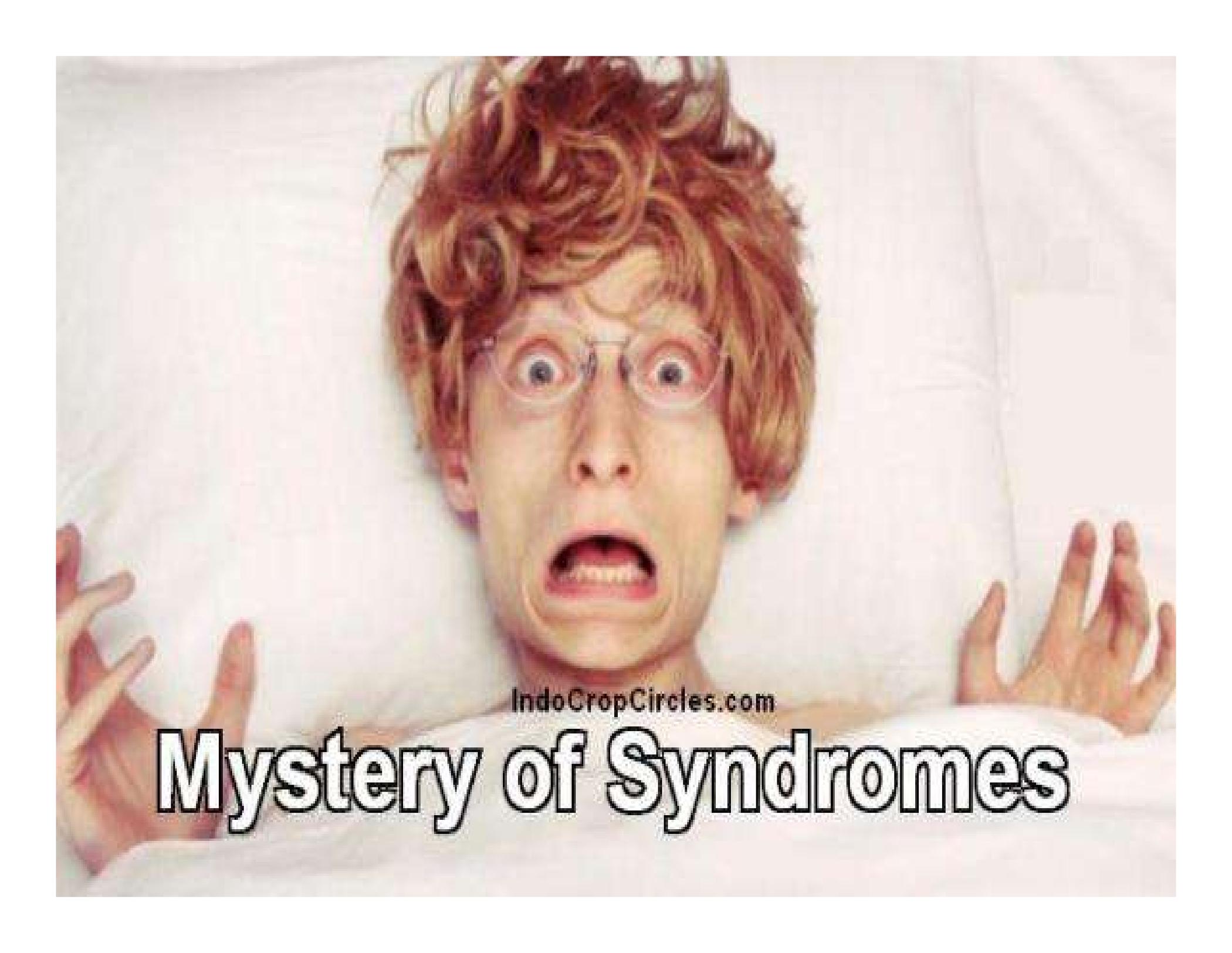
Culture bound syndrome

- Has it found its right niche?

Culture bound syndrome

Myth or medicine





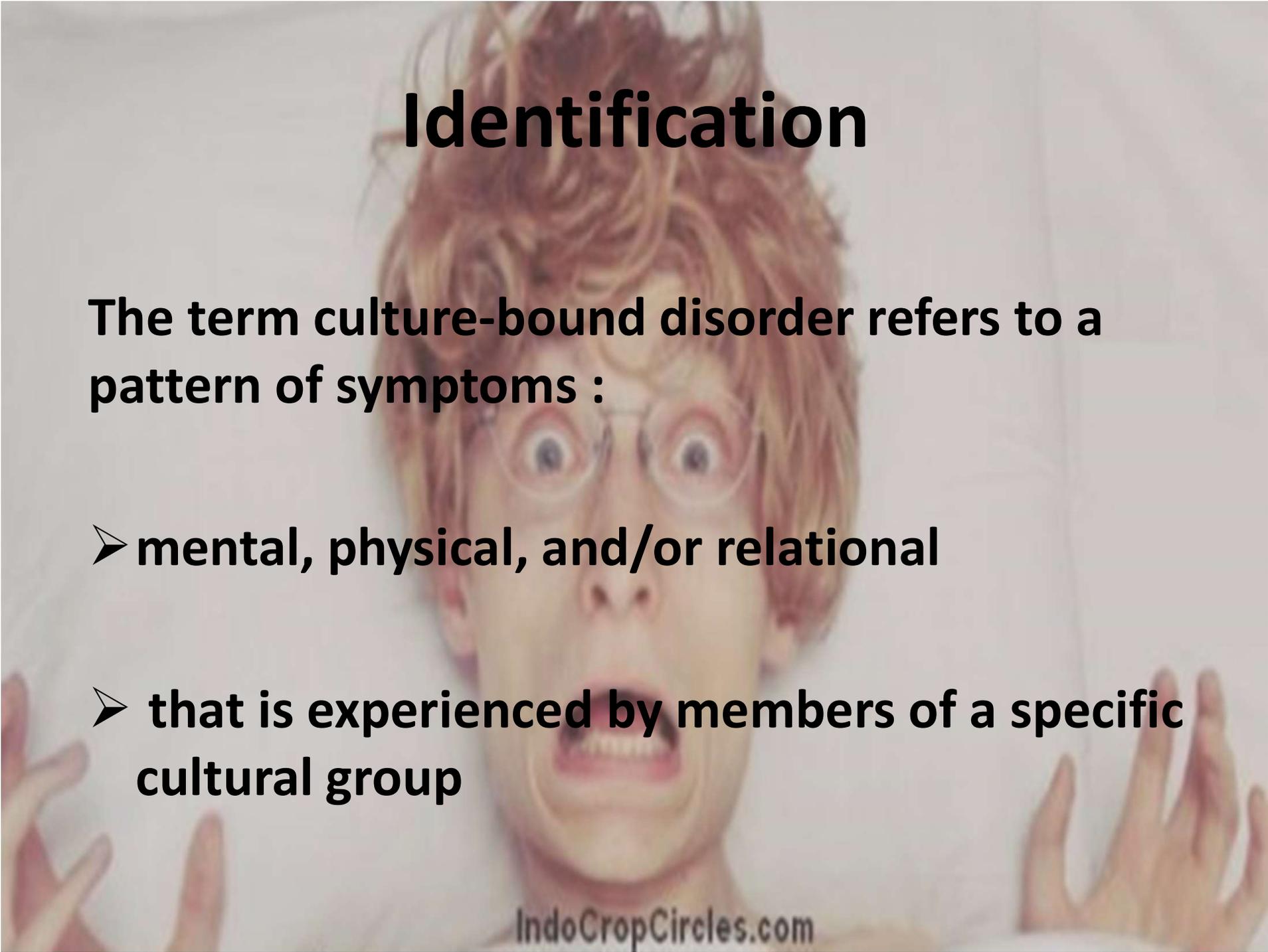
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Mystery of Syndromes

Culture bound Syndrome

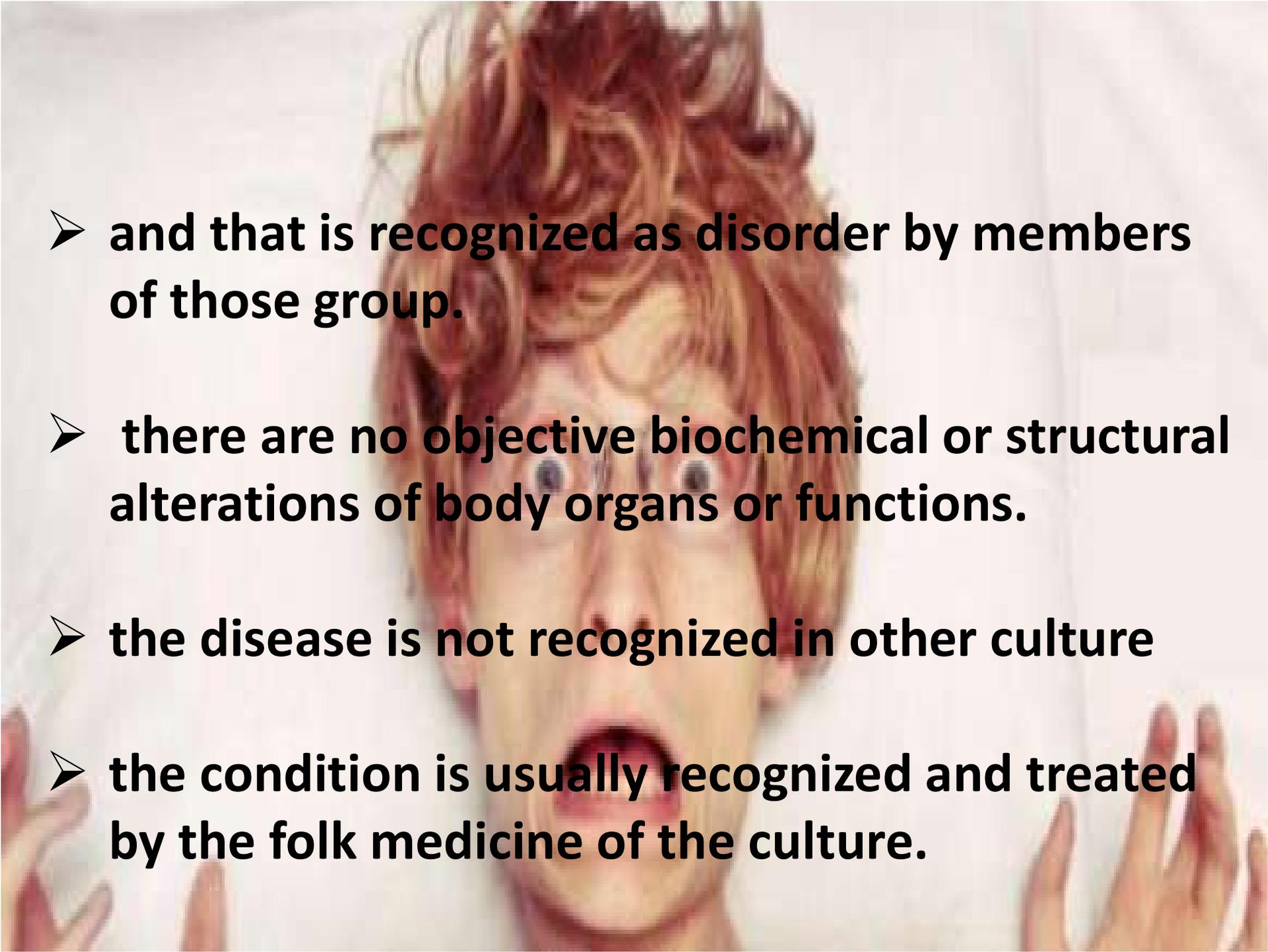
- A syndrome may be regarded as culture bound if particular cultural conditions are necessary for the occurrence of that syndrome.
- The more of the surrounding context that is included in the definition of a syndrome, the more restricted its distribution is likely to be.

Identification



The term culture-bound disorder refers to a pattern of symptoms :

- **mental, physical, and/or relational**
- **that is experienced by members of a specific cultural group**

- 
- **and that is recognized as disorder by members of those group.**
 - **there are no objective biochemical or structural alterations of body organs or functions.**
 - **the disease is not recognized in other culture**
 - **the condition is usually recognized and treated by the folk medicine of the culture.**

Culture-bound disorders may involve

Somatic expressions :

- ✓ **temporary loss of consciousness**
- ✓ **involuntarily clenched teeth**



Cognitions

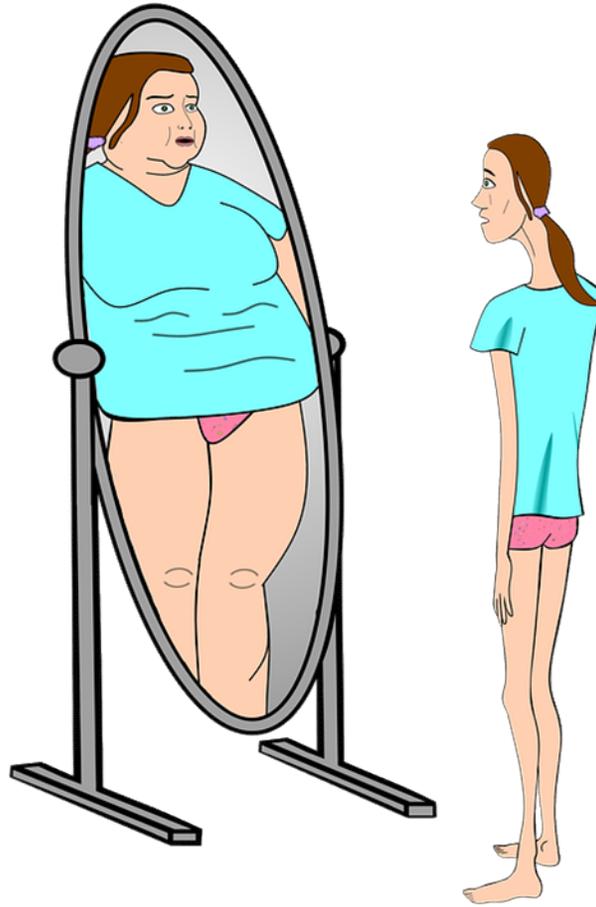
- ✓ a belief that one's genitals are retracting into the body
- ✓ or a conviction that one has been abducted by extra terrestrial beings.

Behaviors

- ✓ extreme startled responses
- ✓ corprophagia
- ✓ speaking in tongues



When the mirror lies





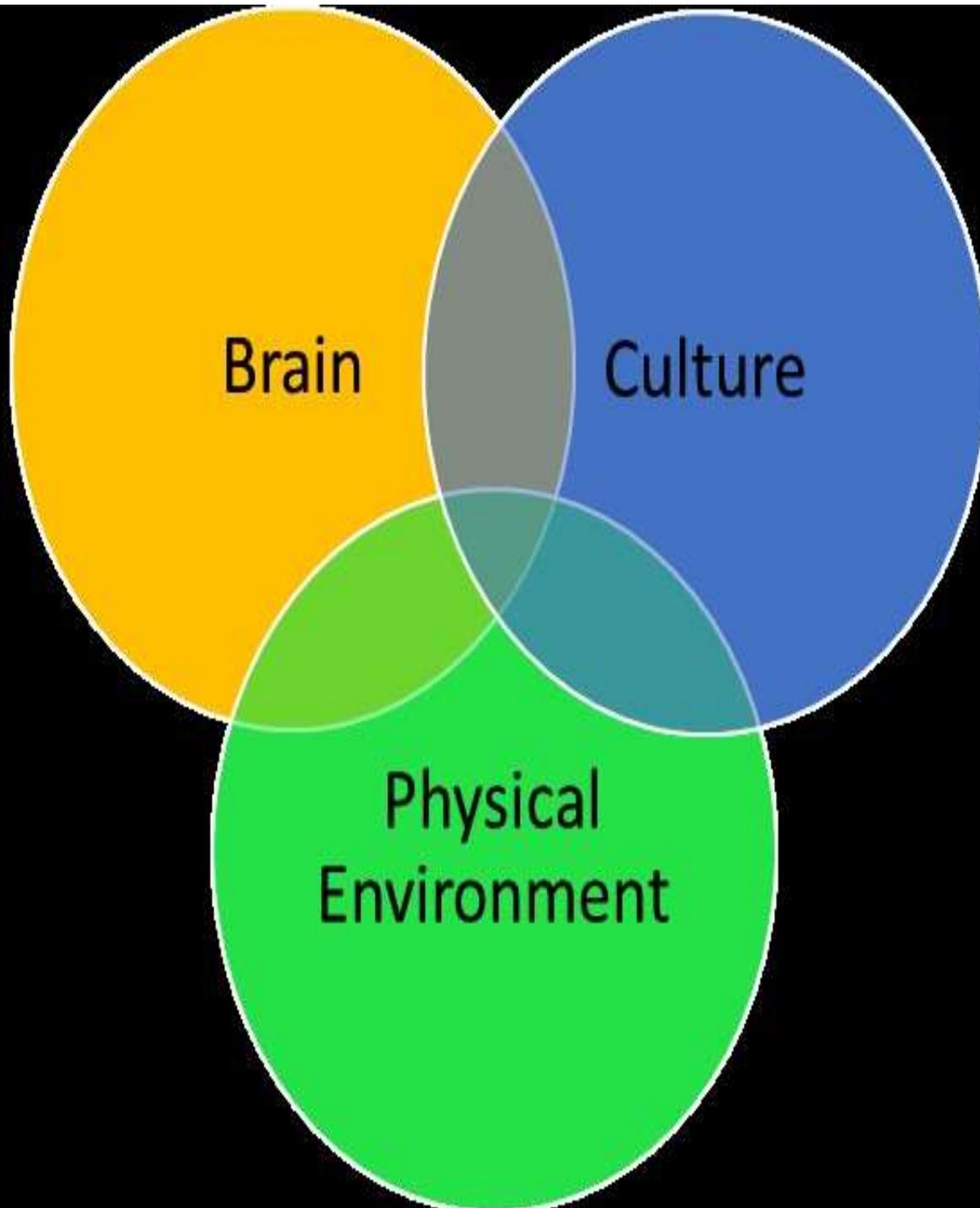
The terms culture-bound syndrome, culture-specific disorder, and folk illness are also used to refer to such phenomena.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

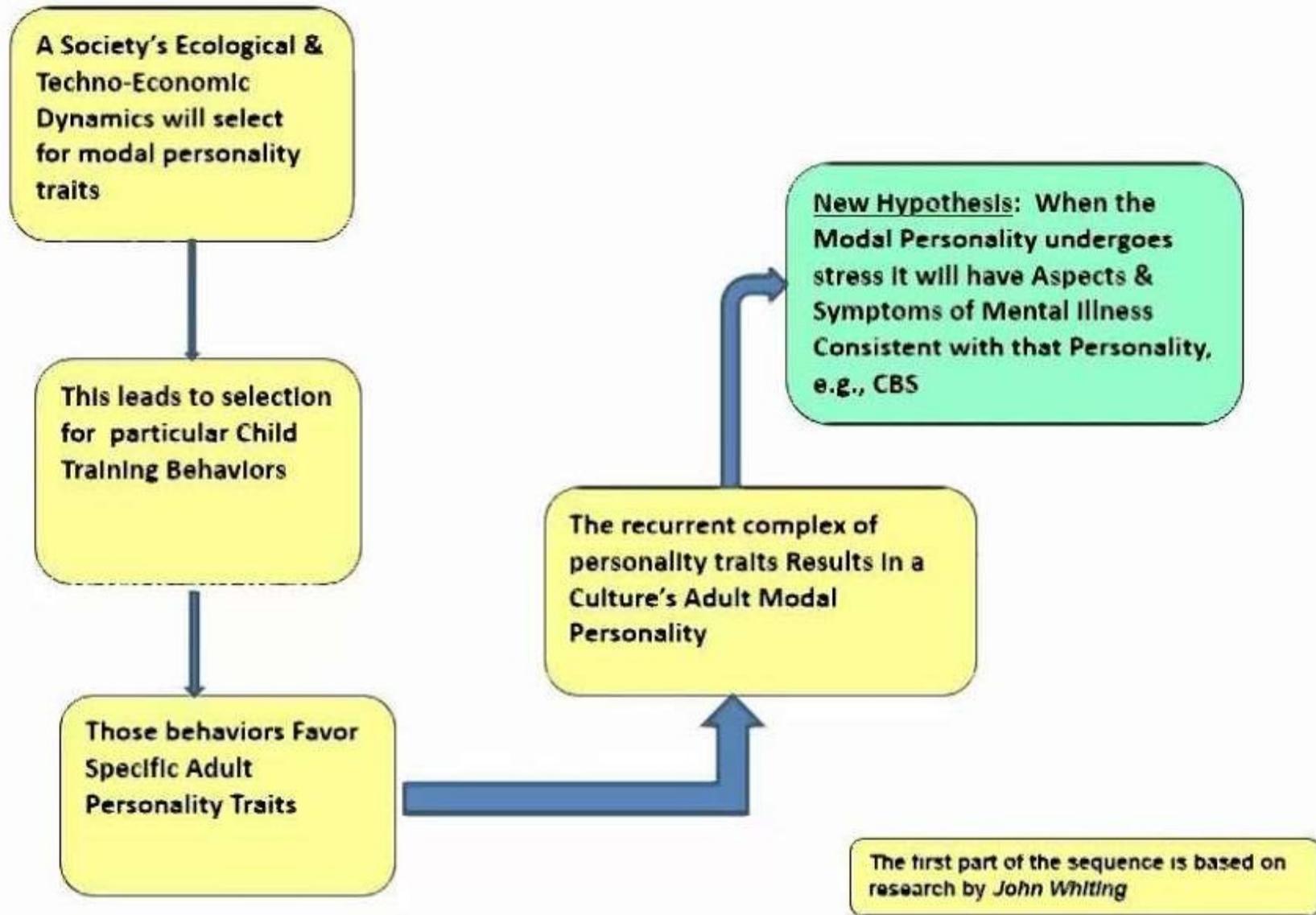
- Pow Meng Yap, a pioneer in cultural psychiatry (1962) introduced 'atypical cultural bound psychogenic psychosis' which he later abbreviated to 'culture bound syndrome'
- In 1985 in the book "**The Culture Bound Syndromes**", Ronald Simons & Charles Hughes used the **taxonomic principle to group the syndromes** based on their **phenomenological similarity** across diverse cultural settings.

Influence of culture on psychiatry

- Culture also influences mental illness in many ways — assessment and diagnosis, illness behaviour and help-seeking, the expectations of patients and health professionals and the acceptance of appropriate therapies.
- Concepts of illness vary between cultures and people from different cultures express their symptoms differently.
- What may be abnormal and psychopathological in one culture may be culturally acceptable in another.
- Thus, an understanding of the patient's culture is important in assessing the clinical significance of specific symptoms and behaviours and in the treatment of mental disorders.



Theoretical Perspective for the Development of Culture Bound Syndromes





Culture bound syndromes

- Amok
- Ataque de nervios
- Bilis and colera (aka muina)
- Boufee delirante
- Brain fag
- Dhat
- Falling- out or blacking out
- Ghost sickness
- Hwa-byung
- Koro
- Latah
- Locura
- Mal de ojo
- Nervios
- Pibloktoq
- Qi-gong psychotic reaction
- rootwork
- Sangue dormido
- Shenjing shuairuo
- Shen-k'uei or shenkui
- Shin-byung
- Spell
- Susto
- Taijin kyofusho
- Zar

Common Culture Bound Syndromes

Syndrome	Region/Pop Affected	Description
Koro	Southeast Asia and Africa	Episode of sudden and intense anxiety that the penis (or in women, the vulva and nipples) will recede into the body and possibly cause death.
Amok	Malaysia	Dissociative episode characterized by a period of withdrawal and brooding followed by an outburst of violent, aggressive or homicidal behavior; often a response to a perceived slight
2-D Love	Japan	Men develop what appear to be amorous relationships with animated female characters; they may carry around pillows or other tangible reminders of these characters wherever they go
Windigo	Native Americans	Morbid state of anxiety with fears of becoming a cannibal
Susto	Mexico, Central America, and South America	Illness attributed to a frightening event that causes the soul to leave the body and results in unhappiness and sickness. Ritual healings are focused on calling the soul back to the body and cleansing the person to restore bodily and spiritual balance
Taijin Kyofu Sho	Japan	Intense fear that one's body, its parts or its functions, displease, embarrass, or are offensive to other people in appearance, odor, facial expressions, or movements

In India, common culture bound syndromes are

- Dhat Syndrome,
- Possession Syndrome,
- Koro,
- Gilhari syndrome,
- Bhanmati sorcery,
- Compulsive spitting,
- Culture-bound suicide (sati, santhra),
- Ascetic syndrome,
- Suudu,
- Jhin jhinia etc.

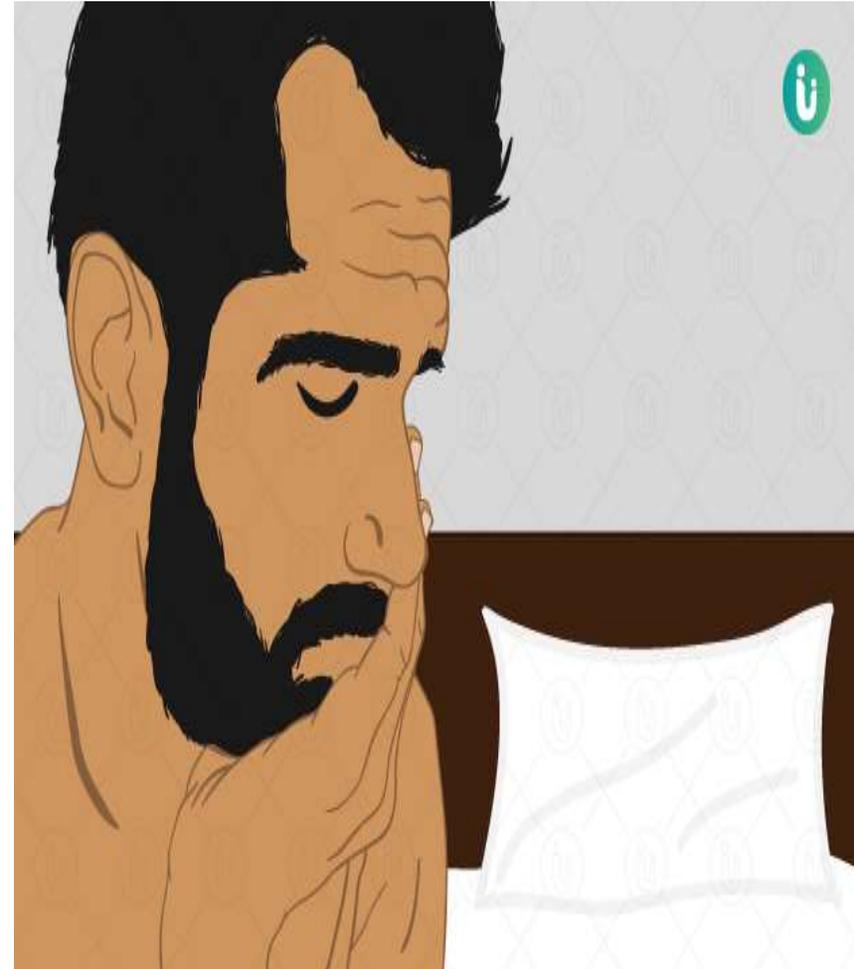
Manifestations currently labeled as culture bound syndromes and their diagnostic equivalents in DSM IV

CBS	Diagnostic equivalents in per DSM-IV
Dhat syndrome	Depressive disorders Anxiety disorders Somatization disorders
<i>Amok</i>	Dissociative disorder
<i>Boufee delirante</i>	Brief psychotic disorder
Falling out/blacking out	Conversion disorder
<i>Koro</i>	Panic attack
<i>Shenjing shuairuo</i>	Mood disorders Anxiety disorders

CBS – Culture-bound syndrome; DSM-IV – Diagnostic and statistical manual for mental disorders - IV

Dhat syndrome

- in the cultures of South Asia (including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka)
- male patients report that they suffer from premature ejaculation or impotence, and believe that they are passing semen in their urine.



Possession Syndrome

- In religious shrines during special annual festivals where people get possessed simultaneously.
- Majority are females who otherwise don't have any outlet to express their emotions.
- Treatment- careful exploration of underlying stress which precipitated the possession attack.



Possession Syndrome

- Diagnosable under Dissociative disorders.
- Person is possessed usually by 'spirit/soul' of deceased relative or a local deity.
- Speaks in changed tone, sometimes in opposite sex tone.



Usually seen in rural areas or in migrants from rural areas.

“KORO”



Koro is typically defined as a ***culture bound syndrome*** involving:

- delusions of genitalia shrinkage
- acute anxiety
- psychosomatic complaints
- The conviction among some individuals that death will occur once the genitalia fully retract

The individual feels an acute state of anxiety from a ***subjective experience of shrinking*** of their penis / breasts/ labia. They ***anticipate not only impotence /sterility but also death!*** They are ***also able to convince people in their immediate environment and so “life saving” measures*** are taken!

Gilhari Syndrome

- Characterised by patient complaining of small swelling on the body changing its position from time to time as if a gilhari (squirrel) is travelling in the body.
- Not much literature available.
- Nosological status is not clear.



Amok

- Seen in Indonesia & Malaya
- Starts with period of *threatening* followed by *violent behavior*, sometimes use of dangerous weapons
- Afterwards *amnesia* is reported



Run "amak"-maker

2-D Love

- **In Japan.**
- **Men develop what appear to be amorous relationship with animated female characters**
- **They may carry around pillows or other tangible reminders of these characters wherever they go.**

News: Japanese man marries holographic popstar



Windigo

- This strange disorder begins with a morbid sense of anxiety about physical symptoms including poor appetite, nausea and vomiting.
- Anxiety centers around the belief that a person is being overcome by a supernatural monster and is becoming a windigo, a cannibal.
- There is potential for suicide or the person to be a target of violence.
- Location: native americans of central and north eastern canada.

SUSTO

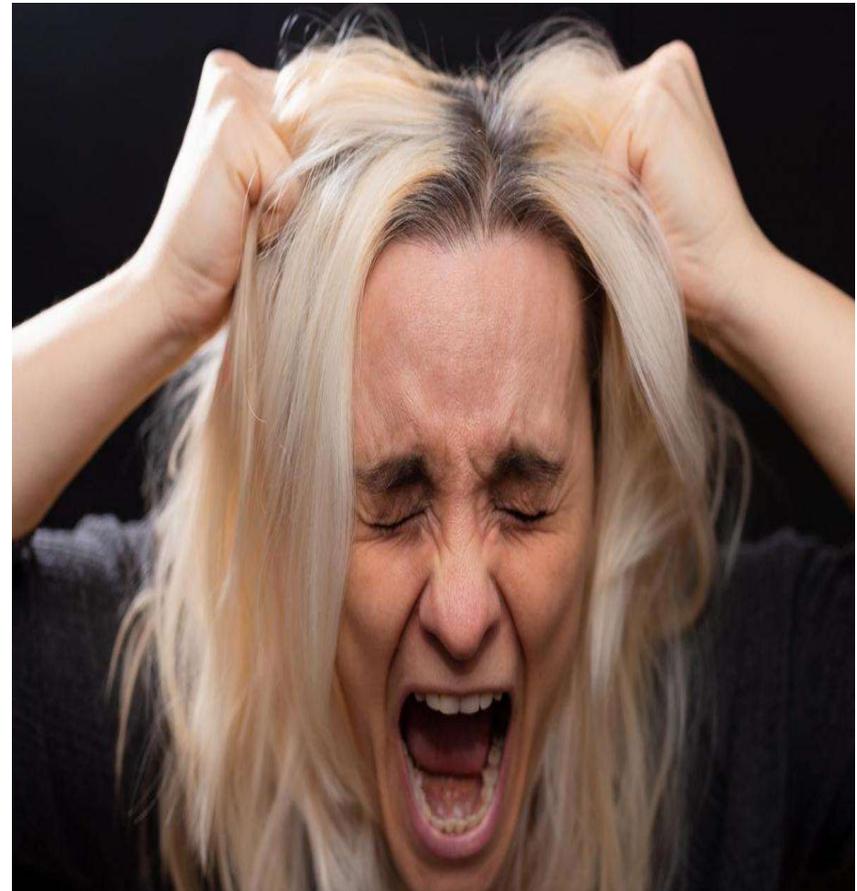


- **Susto (Latino societies)**

- Literally "fright", this generally falls into either natural or supernatural origin. Natural origins are cultural stressors, and are more likely to affect women than men. Supernatural origins may be thought to have been sent by a sorcerer, and may be triggered by witnessing supernatural phenomenon such as ghosts.
- Symptoms include nervousness, anorexia, insomnia, listlessness, fatigue, despondency, muscle tics and diarrhea.

Bouffée délirante

- **In West Africa and Haiti**
- **Sudden outburst of aggression, confusion and psychomotor excitement, possibly including visual or auditory hallucinations and paranoia**



Falling-out/ Blacking out

- **in the southern United States and the Caribbean**
- **a constricted consciousness as a psychological response to anxiety and specific stressors**
- **Sudden collapse characterizes episodes of falling-out, whether without warning or preceded by dizziness and a spinning sensation**
- **the individual can usually hear and understand what is going on around them**

Taijin kyofusho

- in Japan
- the disorder (sho) of fear (kyofu) of interpersonal relations (taijin)
- The symptoms of this disorder include avoiding social outings and activities, rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, trembling, and feelings of dread and panic when around people.



Take home message

- **There is a need to reconsider CBSs in the light of the available literature.**
- **Relabeling and inclusion of these manifestations in the mainstream diagnostic categories in the upcoming revisions of the diagnostic manual would pave way for a better understanding and management of these conditions.**

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Thank You