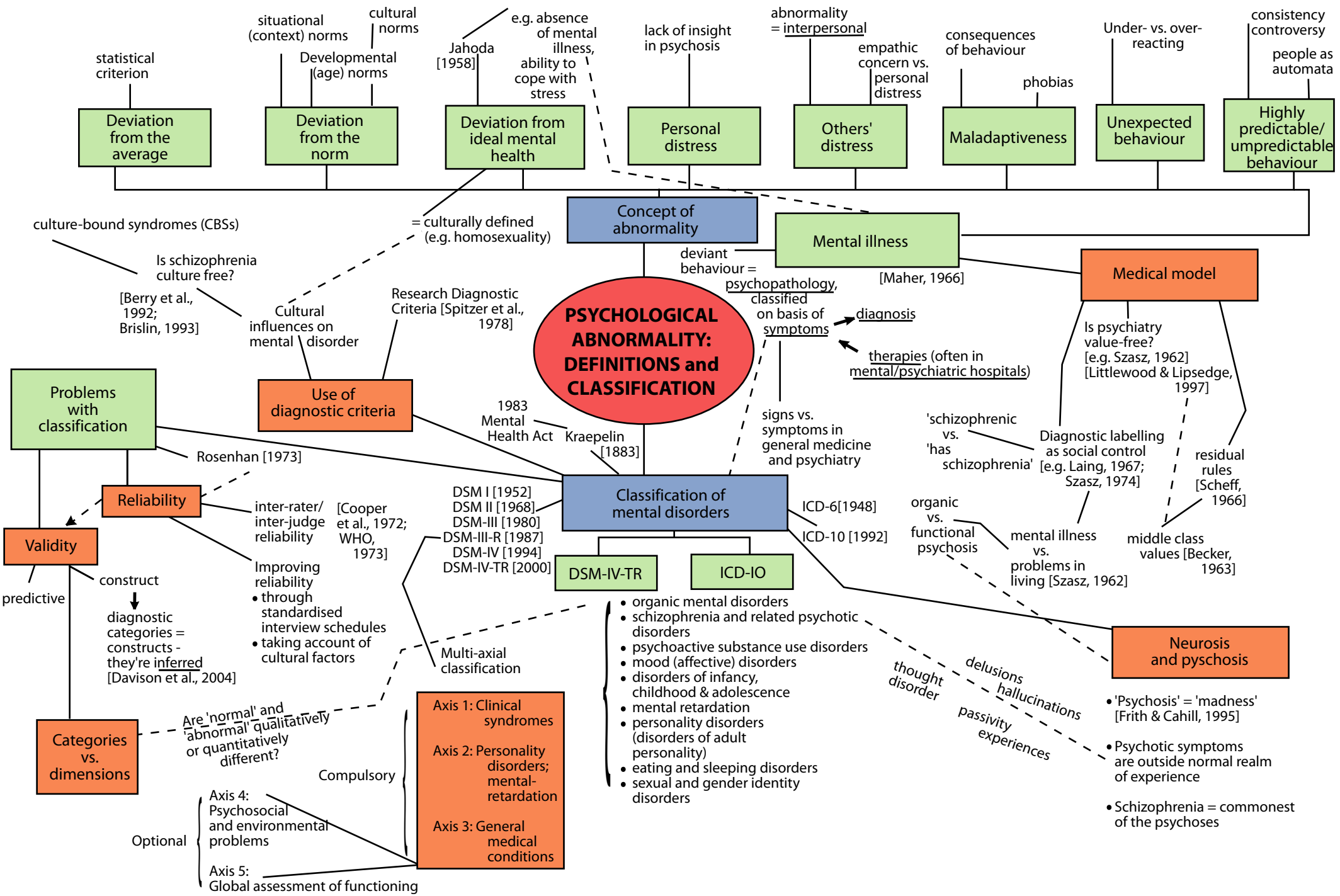
PSYCHOLOGICAL ABNORMALITY: DEFINITIONS and CLASSIFICATION
Concept of abnormality
statistical criterion
Deviation from the average
situational (context) norms
cultural norms
Developmental (age) norms
Deviation from the norm
Jahoda [1958]
e.g. absence of mental illness, ability to cope with stress
Deviation from ideal mental health
= culturally defined (e.g. homosexuality)
lack of insight in psychosis
Personal distress
abnormality = interpersonal
empathic concern vs. personal distress
Others' distress
consequences of behaviour
phobias
Maladaptiveness
Under- vs. over-reacting
Unexpected behaviour
consistency controversy
people as automata
Highly predictable/ umpredictable behaviour
Mental illness
deviant behaviour = psychopathology, classified on basis of symptoms
diagnosis
therapies (often in mental/psychiatric hospitals)
[Maher, 1966]
Medical model
Is psychiatry value-free? [e.g. Szasz, 1962] [Littlewood & Lipsedge, 1997]
'schizophrenic vs. 'has schizophrenia'
Diagnostic labelling as social control [e.g. Laing, 1967; Szasz, 1974]
residual rules [Scheff, 1966]
mental illness vs. problems in living [Szasz, 1962]
middle class values [Becker, 1963]
organic vs. functional psychosis
signs vs. symptoms in general medicine and psychiatry
culture-bound syndromes (CBSs)
Is schizophrenia culture free?
[Berry et al., 1992; Brislin, 1993]
Cultural influences on mental disorder
Research Diagnostic Criteria [Spitzer et al., 1978]
Use of diagnostic criteria
Problems with classification
Rosenhan [1973]
1983 Mental Health Act
Kraepelin [1883]
Classification of mental disorders
ICD-6[1948]
ICD-10 [1992]
DSM I [1952]
DSM II [1968]
DSM-III [1980]
DSM-III-R [1987]
DSM-IV [1994]
DSM-IV-TR [2000]
DSM-IV-TR
ICD-IO
Reliability
inter-rater/ inter-judge reliability
[Cooper et al., 1972; WHO, 1973]
Improving reliability
• through standardised interview schedules
• taking account of cultural factors
Validity
predictive
construct
diagnostic categories = constructs - they're inferred [Davison et al., 2004]
Multi-axial classification
Axis 1: Clinical syndromes
Axis 2: Personality disorders; mental-retardation
Axis 3: General medical conditions
Compulsory
Optional
Axis 4: Psychosocial and environmental problems
Axis 5: Global assessment of functioning
Categories vs. dimensions
Are 'normal' and 'abnormal' qualitatively or quantitatively different?
• organic mental disorders
• schizophrenia and related psychotic disorders
• psychoactive substance use disorders
• mood (affective) disorders
• disorders of infancy, childhood & adolescence
• mental retardation
• personality disorders (disorders of adult personality)
• eating and sleeping disorders
• sexual and gender identity disorders
thought disorder
delusions
hallucinations
passivity experiences
Neurosis and pyschosis
• 'Psychosis' = 'madness' [Frith & Cahill, 1995]
• Psychotic symptoms are outside normal realm of experience
• Schizophrenia = commonest of the psychoses