

**Chapter Eleven:**  
**Personality Disorders**  
**PSY 440: Abnormal Psychology**  
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**Personality Disorders**

◆ **Personality Disorder**

- Excessively rigid patterns of behavior or ways of relating to others
- Prevents people from adjusting to external demands
- Beginnings are present in childhood
- Childhood abuse

**Personality Disorders**

- **Three clusters:**
  - ◆ Cluster A: People who are perceived as odd or eccentric
  - ◆ Cluster B: People whose behavior is overly dramatic, emotional, and erratic
  - ◆ Cluster C: People who appear fearful or anxious

**Personality Disorders Characterized by Odd or Eccentric Behavior**

◆ **Paranoid Personality Disorder**

- **Diagnostic Criteria**
  - ◆ Pervasive suspiciousness
  - ◆ Excessive mistrust of others
  - ◆ No delusional thinking
- **Associated Features**
  - ◆ Overly sensitive to criticism
  - ◆ Easily angered

**Personality Disorders Characterized by Odd or Eccentric Behavior**

- ◆ Hold grudges
- ◆ Unlikely to confide in others
- ◆ Question sincerity and trustfulness of others
- ◆ Suspect infidelity
- ◆ Hypervigilant
- ◆ Deny blame for misdeeds
- ◆ Argumentative

- ♦ Litigious
- ♦ Perceived as aloof, cold, scheming, devious, and humorless

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Odd or Eccentric Behavior**

- Prevalence rate
  - ♦ 0.5-1%
- Etiology
  - ♦ Family Influences
- ♦ **Schizoid Personality Disorder**
  - Diagnostic Criteria
    - ♦ Social isolation
    - ♦ Lacks interest in social relationships
    - ♦ Emotions seem blunted or shallow
  - Associated features
    - ♦ Indifferent to criticism or praise

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Odd or Eccentric Behavior**

- ♦ Wrapped up in abstract ideas
- Usually recognized by early adulthood
- ♦ **Schizotypal Personality Disorder**
  - Diagnostic Criteria
    - ♦ Difficulties forming close relationships
    - ♦ Behavior, mannerisms and thought patterns are odd, but not odd enough to warrant a diagnosis of schizophrenia
    - ♦ Wider range of behaviors, beliefs, and preoccupations than Schizoid PD

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Odd or Eccentric Behavior**

- Associated Features
  - ♦ Anxious in social settings
- Usually evident by early adulthood
- Prevalence rate
- Etiology
  - ♦ genetic

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- ♦ **Antisocial Personality Disorder**
  - Diagnostic Criteria

- ♦ A pattern of irresponsible and antisocial behavior in which the rights of others or major social norms are violated
- ♦ Must be 18 years old and have been diagnosed with Conduct Disorder before the age of 15
- ♦ Aggressive and impulsive behaviors

### **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- ♦ Criminal behavior
- ♦ Lack of emotional commitment
- **Associated Features**
  - ♦ Impulsivity
  - ♦ Lack of empathy, loyalty, & guilt/remorse
  - ♦ Superficial charm
  - ♦ Egocentricity
  - ♦ Manipulative
  - ♦ Callousness toward others

### **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- ♦ Failure to conform
- ♦ Irresponsibility
- ♦ Aimlessness and lack of long-term goals
- ♦ Substance abuse
- ♦ Disregard for the truth
- ♦ Interpret others' behaviors as more threatening than they are
- **Two components:**
  - ♦ Personality
  - ♦ behavior

### **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- **Prevalence**
- **APD and criminal behavior**
- **Etiology**
  - ♦ Learning theories
    - Ullman & Krasner
    - Bandura
  - ♦ Family Perspectives
  - ♦ Cognitive
  - ♦ Genetic

### **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- ♦ **Borderline Personality Disorder**
  - **Diagnostic Criteria**

- ♦ Pervasive pattern of instability of relationships, self-image, and mood, and a lack of control over impulses
- ♦ Uncertain about personal identities
- ♦ Nagging feeling of boredom and emptiness
- ♦ Cannot tolerate being alone

### **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- ♦ Instability of moods
- **Disorder of Emotional Dysregulation**
- **Associated Features**
  - ♦ Impulsive
  - ♦ Self-mutilation
  - ♦ Suicide attempts
  - ♦ Trouble familial relationships
  - ♦ Intense fear of abandonment
  - ♦ View relationships as problematic
  - ♦ Insecure attachment style
  - ♦ Difficult to work with in psychotherapy

### **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- **Prevalence Rate**
- **Etiology**
  - ♦ **Psychodynamic Perspective**
    - Otto Kernberg
  - ♦ **Family Perspective**
  - ♦ **Genetic**
  - ♦ **Trauma**

- **Some argue BPD should be a subset of PTSD**

### **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

#### **♦ Histrionic Personality Disorder**

- **Diagnostic Criteria**
  - ♦ Excessive emotionality and an overwhelming need to be the center of attention
  - ♦ Tendency to be dramatic and emotional
- **Associated Features**
  - ♦ Demand that others meet their need for attention
  - ♦ Self-centered and intolerant

### **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- ♦ Grow restless with routine and crave novelty and stimulation

- ♦ Flirtatious and seductive
- ♦ Use physical appearance as a means of drawing attention to themselves
- ♦ Lack in self-esteem
- **Prevalence Rate**
- **Etiology**
  - ♦ **Learning Perspectives**
    - Theodore Millon

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

### **♦ Narcissistic Personality Disorder**

- **Diagnostic Features**
  - ♦ Inflated or grandiose sense of self and extreme need for admiration
  - ♦ Enjoy basking in the light of adulation
- **Associated Features**
  - ♦ Self-absorbed
  - ♦ Lack empathy

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- ♦ Preoccupied with fantasies of success and power, ideal love, or recognition
- ♦ Gravitate to careers where they can be the center of attention
- ♦ Envious of those who have greater success
- ♦ Insatiable ambition
- ♦ Strained interpersonal relationships
- **Prevalence Rate**

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Dramatic, Emotional, or Erratic Behavior**

- **Etiology**
  - ♦ **Psychodynamic Perspective**
    - Hans Kohut
  - ♦ Family Influences

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Anxious or Fearful Behaviors**

### **♦ Avoidant Personality Disorder**

- **Diagnostic Criteria**
  - ♦ Terrified of rejection and criticism
  - ♦ Unwilling to enter into a relationship unless there are strong reassurances of acceptance

- ◊ Avoid group occupational or recreational activities
- ◊ Prefer to spend time alone

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Anxious or Fearful Behaviors**

- ◊ Have an interest in social relationships but are paralyzed
- **Associated Features**
  - ◊ Social isolation
  - ◊ Fear public embarrassment
  - ◊ Stay with usual routines
- **Prevalence Rate**

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Anxious or Fearful Behaviors**

### **◊ Dependant Personality Disorder**

- **Diagnostic Criteria**
  - ◊ Excessive need to be taken care of by others
  - ◊ Overly submissive
  - ◊ Extremely fearful of separation
- **Associated Features**
  - ◊ Find it difficult to do things on their own
  - ◊ Very reliant on others for support and guidance

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Anxious or Fearful Behaviors**

- ◊ Avoid positions of responsibility
- ◊ Overly sensitive to criticism
- ◊ Preoccupied with fears of rejection and abandonment
- ◊ Higher rate of "oral" behaviors
- **Prevalence Rate**
- **Comorbid Disorders**
  - ◊ Psychological
  - ◊ Physical

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Anxious or Fearful Behaviors**

- **Etiology**
  - ◊ Psychodynamic
  - ◊ Learning
  - ◊ Family
- ◊ **Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder**
  - **Diagnostic Criteria**

- ◆ Excessive degree of orderliness, perfectionism, and rigidity

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Anxious or Fearful Behaviors**

- ◆ Difficulty coping with ambiguity
- ◆ Difficulty expressing feeling
- ◆ Meticulousness in work habits
- ◆ No obsessions or compulsions
- **Associated Features**
  - ◆ Cannot complete things in a timely fashion
  - ◆ Focus on details rather than wholes
  - ◆ Impaired social relationships

## **Personality Disorders Characterized by Anxious or Fearful Behaviors**

- ◆ Do not participate in social or leisure activities
- ◆ Stingy with money
- ◆ Difficulties making decisions
- ◆ Overly rigid in terms of morality
- **Prevalence Rate**
- **Etiology**
  - ◆ Learning
    - Theodore Millon
  - ◆ Family Influences

## **Problems with the Classification of Personality Disorders**

- ◆ Undetermined reliability and validity
- ◆ Problems distinguishing between Axis I and Axis II disorders
- ◆ Overlap among disorders
- ◆ Problems distinguishing between normal and abnormal behavior

## **Problems with the Classification of Personality Disorders**

- ◆ Sexist bias
- ◆ Confusing labels with explanations

## **Treatment**

- ◆ Personality Disorders are difficult to treat
- ◆ Challenges of treatment

- BPD
- ♦ **Psychodynamic Approaches**
  - Help people become more aware of the root of the disorder and deal adaptively with the problem
  - Some success

## Treatment

- ♦ **Behavioral Approach**
  - Focus on changing clients' behaviors, not personality structures
  - CBT has been successful
  - Dialectical Behavioral Therapy also is successful at treating BPD
    - ♦ CBT and supportive therapy combined

## Treatment

- ♦ **Biological Approaches**
  - Not successful

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