

Types of Personality Disorders

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- Personality disorders include 10 diagnosable psychiatric conditions that are recognized and described in the fifth and most recent version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). Each is a distinct mental illness and not, as the name suggests a flaw or quirk in someone's personality but rather are defined by personality styles that can be troubling enough to create problems with relating to other people in healthy, normal ways. Though, that there are many comorbidities between personality disorders, meaning that a person who meets the criteria for one personality disorder will often also meet criteria for one or more additional personality disorders.

- Personality disorders tend to appear in adolescence or early adulthood, continue over many years, and cause a great deal of distress. During that time they can cause enormous conflict with other people, cause relationships to fail or prevent them from developing in the first place, interfere with someone's ability to function appropriately in social situations and get in the way of reaching life goals.

Clusters

The DSM-5 organizes the ten personality disorders into three groups, or clusters, based on shared key features.

Cluster A

These personality disorders are characterized by odd or eccentric behaviour. People with Cluster A personality disorders tend to experience major disruptions in relationships because their behaviour may be perceived as peculiar, suspicious, or detached.

Cluster A personality disorders include:

- Schizotypal personality disorder features odd speech, behaviour, and appearance, as well as strange beliefs and difficulty forming relationships.

- Paranoid personality disorder affects between 1 percent and 2 percent of adults in the U.S. Symptoms include chronic, pervasive distrust of other people; suspicion of being deceived or exploited by others, including friends, family, and partners; angry outbursts in response to deception; and cold, secretive, or jealous behaviour.
- Schizoid personality disorder is characterized by social isolation and indifference toward other people. It affects more men than women. People with this relatively rare disorder often are described as cold or withdrawn, rarely have close relationships with other people and may be preoccupied with introspection and fantasy.

Cluster B

The "Cluster B" personality disorders are characterized by dramatic or erratic behaviour. People who have a personality disorder from this cluster tend to either experience very intense emotions or engage in extremely impulsive, theatrical, promiscuous, or law-breaking behaviours.

Cluster B personality disorders include:

- Borderline personality disorder is characterized by emotional instability, intense interpersonal relationships, and impulsive behaviours.
- Histrionic personality disorder features a need to always be the center of attention that often leads to socially inappropriate behaviour in order to get attention. People with this disorder may have frequent mood swings as well.

- Antisocial personality disorder tends to show up in childhood, unlike most other personality disorders that don't appear until adolescence or young adulthood. Symptoms include a disregard for rules and social norms and a lack of empathy for other people.
- Narcissistic personality disorder is associated with self-centeredness, exaggerated self-image, and lack of empathy for others.

Cluster C

Cluster C personality disorders are characterized by anxiety. Individuals with personality disorders in this cluster tend to experience pervasive anxiety and/or fearfulness.

Cluster C personality disorders include:

- Dependent personality disorder involves fear of being alone and often causes those to have the disorder to do things to try to get other people to take care of them.
- Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder is characterized by a preoccupation with orderliness, perfection, and control of relationships. It's not the same as obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).
- Avoidant personality disorder can show up during childhood. It's characterized by a disregard for rules and lack of empathy and remorse.