

Chapter 19

Disorders of Personality

The Building Blocks of Personality Disorders

- Symptoms of personality disorders can be viewed as maladaptive variations within the domains of traits, emotions, cognitions , motives, and self-concept
- Personality disorders as maladaptive variations or combinations of normal personality traits

The Building Blocks of Personality Disorders

- Several personality disorders involve maladaptive variations on common motives, especially power and intimacy
- Cognitive processes can become distorted in personal disorders
- Several personal disorders include extreme variations in experienced emotion

The Building Blocks of Personality Disorders

- Most personality disorders include distortion of self-concept
- Social relationships, especially interpersonal and sexual behavior, frequently disturbed or involve maladaptive patterns in personality disorders

The Building Blocks of Personality Disorders

- Biology forms a building block of several personality disorders
- Disorders of personality can provide insight into the normal workings of personality

The Concept of Disorder

- Psychological disorder:
- Pattern of behavior or experience that is distressing and painful to the person
- Leads to disability or impairment in important life domains

The Concept of Disorder

- Associated with the increased risk for further suffering, loss of function, death, or confinement
- Abnormal psychology: Study of mental disorders, including thought disorders, emotional disorders, and personality disorders

What Is Abnormal?

- Statistical definition: Whatever is rare, not frequent, and not statistically normal
- Social definition: Whatever society does not tolerate

What Is Abnormal?

- Statistical and social definitions are tied to changing social or cultural norms
- Psychologists thus look within persons, inquiring about subject feelings and thoughts

What Is Abnormal?

- Psychopathology: Study of mental disorders
- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th ed. (DSM-IV): Widely accepted system for diagnosing and describing mental

What is a Personality Disorder?

- Enduring pattern of experience and behavior that differs greatly from expectations of a person's culture
- Disorder is usually manifested in more than one of following areas: Thoughts, feelings, how a person gets along with others, and the ability to control own behavior

What is a Personality Disorder?

- Pattern of behavior is rigid and displayed across a variety of situations, leading to distress in key areas of life such as work and relationships
- Pattern of behavior typically has a long history in a person's life, often back to adolescence or childhood

What is a Personality Disorder?

- Pattern must not be attributable to drug abuse, medication, or other medical condition
- All personality disorders involve impaired social relations

Varieties of Personality Disorder

- DSM-IV lists 10 personality disorders, classified into three groups:
 - Erratic group
 - Eccentric group
 - Anxious group

Erratic group

- Persons with these disorders appear erratic, emotional, and have difficulties getting along with others
- Includes antisocial, borderline, histrionic, and narcissistic personality disorders

Eccentric group

- Persons with these disorders appear odd, eccentric, do not get along well with others
- Includes schizoid, schizotypal, and paranoid personality disorders

Anxious group

- Persons with these disorders appear anxious, fearful, apprehensive, and have trouble with social relationships
- Includes avoidant, dependent, and obsessive-compulsive personality disorders

Categories or dimensions?

- Categorical view
 - Either the person does or does not have personality disorder
 - Disorders are viewed as distinct and qualitatively different from normal extremes on some trait

Categories or dimensions?

- Dimensional view
 - Personality disorder is viewed as a continuum that ranges from normality at one end to severe disability or disturbance at other end

Culture, age, and gender: The effect of context

- Must take into account person's culture, age, gender before defining behavior as revealing personality disorder

Specific Personality Disorders

- The Erratic Cluster: Ways of Being Unpredictable, Violent, or Emotional...

Antisocial personality disorder

- Little concern for others
- Impulse
- Easily irritated and assaultive
- Reckless and irresponsible

Antisocial personality disorder

- Glib or superficial charm
- Callous social attitudes
- Lack of guilt feelings or remorse
- Indifferent to suffering of others

Borderline personality disorder

- Instability of relationships, emotions, and self-image
- Fears of abandonment
- Aggressive
- Prone to self-harm
- Strong emotions

Histrionic personality disorder

- Excessive attention seeking
- Excessive and strong emotions
- Sexually provocative

Histrionic personality disorder

- Opinions are shallow
- Suggestible
- Strong need for attention

Narcissistic personality disorder

- Need to be admired
- Strong sense of self importance
- Lack of insight into other peoples' feelings or needs
- Sense of entitlement

Narcissistic personality disorder

- Feelings of superiority
- Self-esteem appears strong, but is fragile
- Envious of others

The Eccentric Cluster

- Ways of Being Different...

Schizoid personality disorder

- Detached from normal social relationships
- Obtains little pleasure out of life
- Appears inept or socially clumsy
- Passive in the face of unpleasant events

Schizotypal personality disorder

- Anxious in social relations and avoids people
- Appears “different” and does not conform
- Suspicious of others
- Odd or eccentric beliefs, such as in ESP or magic
- Thoughts and speech sometimes disorganized

Paranoid personality disorder

- Distrustful of others
- Misinterprets social events as threatening
- Harbors resentment towards others

Paranoid personality disorder

- Prone to pathological jealousy
- Argumentative and hostile

The Anxious Cluster

- Ways of Being Nervous, Fearful, or Distressed...

Avoidant personality disorder

- Feelings of inadequacy
- Sensitive to criticism
- Restricts activities to avoid embarrassments
- Low self-esteem

Dependent personality disorder

- Excessive need to be taken care of
- Submissive
- Seeks reassurance from others

Dependent personality disorder

- Rarely takes initiative, rarely disagrees with others
- Does not work well independently
- May tolerate abuse from others to obtain support

Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder

- Preoccupied with order
- Strives for perfection
- Devoted to work, seeks little leisure time or friendship

Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder

- Frequently miserly or stingy
- Rigid and inflexible and stubborn

Prevalence of Personality Disorders

- Prevalence refers to total number of cases present in given population during a particular period of time
- Obsessive Compulsive personality disorder most common, with just over 4% prevalence rate

Prevalence of Personality Disorders

- Next most common are Schizotypal, Histrionic, and Dependent personality disorders, about 2% prevalence rate each
- Narcissistic personality disorder least common, with 0.2% prevalence rate

Prevalence of Personality Disorders

- Total prevalence rate for having at least one personality disorder is 13%
- Differential diagnosis

Dimensional Model of Personality Disorders

- Distinctions between normal personality traits and disorders are in terms of extremity, rigidity, maladaptiveness
- Parallel with chemistry: A little of this trait, some of that trait, and amplifying to extremely high (or low) levels, resulting in specific disorder
- Dominant model currently is categorical model (DSM-IV)

Causes of Personality Disorders

- Abnormal psychology and psychopathology are highly descriptive disciplines
- Some theoretical work on causes of personality disorders
- Most work emphasizes either “biological” causes or “social” causes of personality disorders

Summary and Evaluation

- Hallmark of psychological definition of abnormal is anything that prevents a person from having satisfying relationships or from carrying on productive work
- Sigmund Freud taught that the sign of a mature adult personality is the ability to love and to work

Summary and Evaluation

- All of the personality disorders refer to symptoms that cause problems with relationships, work, or both
- Personality disorders refer to enduring patterns of experience and behavior that differ greatly from the norms and expectations of a person's culture

Summary and Evaluation

- Disorder shows up in how a person thinks, feels, gets along with others, and the ability to control own actions
- Pattern is displayed across situations, leading to the distress in self or others in key areas of life such as love and work
- Disorder typically has a long history in a person's life