Personality Disorders Revision

Personality

Personality is a spectrum:
Healthy → some problematic traits → many problematic traits → personality disorder

Personality has 2 broad elements of functioning, self (identity and self-direction) and interpersonal (empathy and intimacy).

For a personality disorder, you need one from self and one from interpersonal to be impaired.

Personality disorders

Personality disorders are enduring patterns of dysfunctional inner experience and behaviours. They are pervasive, problematic and persistent.

APA 1994 – A PD is defined by DSM-IV as an enduring pattern of inner experience and behaviour that deviates markedly from the expectations of the individual's culture, is pervasive and inflexible, has an onset in adolescence or early adulthood, is stable over time, and leads to distressor impairment

A problem with your relationship with yourself and your relationship with others, impacting multiple aspects of life.

Defining features of all personality disorders:

- Distorted thinking patterns – black and white thinking, generalisation/devaluation, perceptual distortions (schizoid/BPD)
- Problematic emotional responses – being highly sensitive and reacting with great emotional response, feeling detached and numb – no inbetween, schizoid might feel emotionally constricted and be indifferent/aloof
- Over or under regulated impulse control – AvPD tend to have over-regulated impulse control through fear of embarrassment, antisocial tends to be under regulated so take risks without thinking them through and without thinking about the consequences
- Interpersonal difficulties – can be conceptualised around issues with power (dominance and submission), people with PDs sometimes struggle to adjust interpersonal manner based on cues that normally direct our behaviour.

Before a diagnosis is made an individual must show significant and enduring impairments in at least 2 of these. There must be functional impairment and subjective distress (distressing to the person)

The DSM 5 general criteria for personality disorder is based on Livesely’s 1998 theoretical model of adaptive failure on three levels: self-system (intrapersonal), interpersonal and societal.

Epidemiology:

- Community studies report ranges from 6-10% (Samuels, 2011)
- 4% of general population ~ 2.5 million people in UK (Coid, 2006)
- Gender differences e.g. Cluster A and Antisocial PD ↑men than women
- Ethnicity? Some evidence suggests lower rates of PD among African American people Asian/Hawaiian 4%, American Indians ~17%
  SR found African American tend to be much lower compared to white people