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Home Illnesses and conditions Mental health Personality disorder Personality disorders are conditions where an individual differs significantly from an average person. This may be related to how they: Changes in how a person feels and distorted beliefs about other people can lead to odd behaviour. This can be distressing and may upset others. Common features of a personality disorder include: Some people may also have difficulty managing negative feelings without self-harming. This can include abusing drugs and alcohol or taking overdoses. In rare cases, it may include threatening other people. People with personality disorders often experience other mental health problems. This includes depression and substance misuse. Symptoms typically get worse with stress. Personality disorders are common mental health problems. They usually emerge in adolescence and continue into adulthood. They may be mild, moderate or severe. People may have periods of “remission” where they function well. Personality disorders may be associated with genetic and family factors. Experiences of distress or fear during childhood, like neglect or abuse, are common. Many people have only mild conditions so only need help at times of stress (such as bereavement). People with more severe problems may need specialist help for longer. There are different types of personality disorders. A person with a paranoid personality disorder is extremely distrustful and suspicious. Other features include: Someone with a schizoid personality disorder may appear cold and detached. They may also avoid making close social contact with others. Other features include: A person with a schizotypal personality disorder is likely to: Other features include: A person may also attach undue and misguided significance to everyday events. For example, thinking newspaper headlines are secret messages to them. A person with an antisocial personality disorder sees other people as vulnerable. This means they may intimidate or bully others without remorse. Symptoms include: A person with borderline personality disorder: A person with a histrionic personality disorder is anxious about being ignored. As a result, they feel an overwhelming urge to be noticed. They also have the urge to be the centre of everyone’s attention. Features include: Symptoms and signs may co-exist with borderline and narcissistic personality disorders. A person with narcissistic personality disorder swings between: They may act as if they have an inflated sense of their own importance. They may also show an intense need for other people to look up to them. Other symptoms include: A person with avoidant personality disorder: Unlike people with schizoid personality disorders, they desire close relationships with others. However, they lack the confidence and ability to form them. A person with dependent personality disorder feels they can’t be independent. They may show an excessive need for others to look after them and are “clingy”. Other features include: A person with obsessive compulsive personality disorder is: They may come across to others as a “control freak”. Other features include: This personality disorder differs from obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).