Personality Disorders – Examples from ABC’s Diner

These extreme character traits go beyond the range found in most people. The deep and inflexible thoughts and behaviors make it hard for the person to function, and they distress other people.

Cluster A
“Odd/Eccentric”
Paranoid, Schizoid, or Schizotypal

Possible examples of Cluster A’s response:
• Sits with back to the wall in café and looks into kitchen whenever door swings open
• Orders food only with home delivery
• Eats with garden utensils

Cluster B
“Dramatic/Erratic”
Borderline, Antisocial, Narcissistic, or Histrionic

Possible examples of Cluster B’s response:
• Throws a drink at someone when angry
• Takes tips left on other tables on the way out
• Expect the best table, sends food back to chef
• Stands by the jukebox and dances dramatically

Cluster C
“Anxious/Fearful”
Avoidant, Dependent, Obsessive-Compulsive

Possible examples of Cluster C’s response:
• Fears talking to waiters, so uses take-out service
• Does anything to please the other person
• Counts and neatly arranges all silverware on nearby tables

Key Concepts for Treatment and Recovery

Therapy is the major form of treatment for Personality Disorders to:
• Remove, change, or decrease the person’s symptoms
• Weaken or change disturbed patterns of behavior
• Promote positive personality growth and development

Personality development—People tend to resist changes and use ego defenses like repression (keeping distressing thoughts out), denial, acting out, or controlling. There may be a fine line between social style and personality disorder.

Controlling emotional expression
• Anger or anxiety management training
• Impulse control training, empathy training
• Social skills training, assertiveness, or role playing
• Problem-solving skills, symptom management, thought stopping

Medication—Antidepressants, mood stabilizers, antipsychotic, anti-anxiety, sleep medications, or stimulants can treat biologic reasons for some of the symptoms