



Moving Beyond the Labels and Seeking Solutions to Personality Disorders

Psychologists have created various labels for people who have problems in social relationships. These include obsessive-compulsive disorder, paranoid personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, and narcissistic personality disorder. These labels are used to describe people who have difficulty creating functional, cooperative, and happy relationships with other people and they are common in modern society. They are reported to affect about 10% of the population.

These labels are considered diagnostic, but they are actually somewhat arbitrary. They're not based on objective data (like lab tests, X-rays, and observable physical symptoms), instead they are applied when enough behaviors from a specified list match. So, instead of helping to understand the source of problematic behaviors they serve to reduce an individual to a simple label. And these labels may actually do more harm than good.

There are several problems with this approach. Personality traits exist on a spectrum. Take narcissism for example, which is related to self-importance. Some people are extremely self-centered (caring almost exclusively about their own needs and wants) and other people are extremely other-centered (caring more about other people's needs and wants than they do about their own). Most people exist somewhere in between these two poles because both ends of the spectrum are equally dysfunctional. But when someone is labeled narcissistic, even if they aren't at the extreme end of the spectrum, it makes it seem like they are.

This leads into the second problem. These labels suggest that a person just *is* a certain way. They *are* obsessive, paranoid, narcissistic, or defiant. When someone accepts such a label, it implies they have no power to change. And the label also serves as a type of judgment for those they associate with, because if they *are* that way, then people around them continue to expect them to *be* that way. This increases the feelings of rejection, isolation, and alienation which is often a contributing factor to behavioral problems.

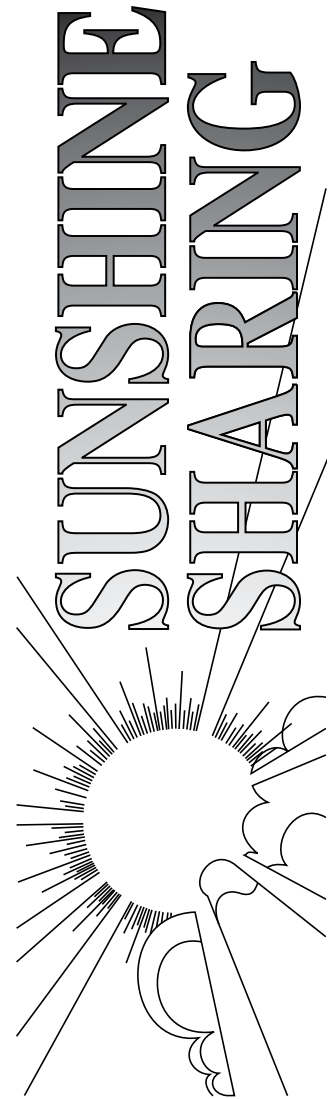
But, the biggest problem with modern psychiatry is the lack of holistic thinking about these problems. There is a tendency to treat the mental and emotional aspects of a person as if they were separate from the physical aspects. Thus society fails to see how poor nutrition, environmental toxins, and physical health issues contribute to mental and emotional problems. Another important aspect that is sometimes overlooked is the way that mental and emotional trauma adversely affects physical health.

Therefore, in this issue of *Sunshine Sharing* we'll be looking beyond the labels to take a holistic approach to behavioral problems. We'll examine several factors which can be root causes of these problems and offer suggestions to help to correct them.

Nutrition and Mental Health

There is some interesting evidence that demonstrates how nutrition affects mental health and behavior. Francis M. Pottenger conducted a ten-year study showing how diet can affect both physical health and behavior in cats. In the study he fed four groups of cats different diets. He fed raw meat and raw milk to one group of cats and they thrived generation after generation. They were strikingly uniform in size and skeletal development for each sex. The animals were also friendly, even-tempered and well-coordinated.

In the other three groups of cats he replaced the raw milk and meat in their diets with either cooked meat, pasteurized milk, or sweetened condensed milk. All three of these groups failed to thrive, but the third group that was fed the sugary condensed milk had the worst problems.



Your guide to better health the natural way

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They developed heavy fat deposits and skeletal deformities and became irritable and nervous. While the cats fed pasteurized milk or cooked meat did better, they still suffered severe signs of degeneration and either became excessively irritable and aggressive or docile and unassertive.

Food Made Mice Physically and Mentally Ill

In her book, *Why Suffer?*, Ann Wigmore relates the experience of a pet shop owner which demonstrates that modern food can make people both physically and mentally ill.

This man raised healthy white mice as pets and sold them by the thousands. He fed them seeds, grass, and various grains, until a friend who ran a boarding house, convinced him that feeding the mice the free table scraps from her kitchen would increase his profits.

He thought he had a great thing going when he made this money-saving change until the mice began to show signs of poor health, with some even dying. Again, they not only showed signs of physical illness, the personality of the mice also changed. They became quarrelsome and fights became commonplace, even to the point of killing and eating each other.

Realizing his mistake, he started feeding the mice their old diet of natural foods. But he found it interesting that these problems weren't due to drugs, ill-treatment, or starvation. They all stemmed from "eating the food human beings ordinarily consume."

Poor Nutrition and Juvenile Delinquency

As further evidence of the link between behavioral problems and nutrition, consider the work of Barbara Reed, a parole officer working with juvenile delinquents. In her book, *Food, Teens and Behavior* she relates her discovery that a huge proportion of the young people she saw who were getting into trouble with the law were "junk-food junkies." And, many also had problems with alcohol.

The connection seemed obvious to her. She thought, "If these young men and women were living on processed foods and snacks, how could they get the nutrients their central nervous system needed to function properly? And, if their brains and nerves were malfunctioning, how could one expect them to behave sanely in society?"

She has had incredible success in rehabilitating young criminals by getting them to adhere to a good nutritional program. Youth who avoided sugar, white flour, sodas, alcohol, and processed snacks in favor of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains never had any further trouble with the law.

It's quite reasonable to assume that nutritional deficiencies could cause problems with the brain that create anti-social behavior. If someone's brain is malnourished and they can't think clearly then counseling, rewards and punishments, and reasoning will not be very effective. If this is the case, it is a mystery why nutritional deficits are so often ignored in working with behavioral disorders.

Toxins and Brain Function



But it's not just deficiencies that can cause the brain to malfunction. There are substances that are toxic to the brain that will also adversely affect behavior. Here are a few specific toxins that contribute to personality disorders.

Lead

Many historians believe that one of the contributing factors to Rome's downfall was its water supply. Although Rome's aqueduct system and its famous public baths were a wonder of the times, they unfortunately used lead pipes. This may have caused neurological disorders that led to the decadent behavior of Rome's ruling class. Lead contaminated drinking water is still a problem and people can be exposed to lead from a variety of other sources. Lead can cause problems with memory, the ability to learn, and mood disorders like anxiety and depression.

Mercury

The mad hatter in the story *Alice in Wonderland* may be based on the fact that hatters used mercury to make felt hats. As a result, their behavior was often a little odd. Mercury adversely affects both the immune and the nervous system. In the nervous system it can cause tremors, mood swings, insomnia, headaches, and impaired thought processes.

Organic Solvents

A solvent is something that dissolves another substance. For example, water is a solvent for many chemicals, but not for fats and oils. There are certain organic (carbon based) solvents that do dissolve fats and oils. These solvents are used in paints, automotive fluids, spot removers, dry cleaning solutions, and many industrial applications. Being fat-soluble they are readily absorbed if they get on your skin, and because many are volatile, they can also be absorbed through inhalation.

The brain and nerves are largely composed of fats, so once these solvents get into the bloodstream they adversely affect nervous system function. Acute exposure can cause temporary symptoms like euphoria, irritability, headache, dizziness, loss of muscle coordination and balance, and sleepiness. Long-term exposure can cause depression, anxiety, difficulty with thinking, delusions, and even dementia. They also help heavy metals, which are normally difficult to absorb, get into the bloodstream and then into the cells. So, these chemicals may also be contributing various personality disorders.

These are just a few examples of chemicals that can adversely affect brain and nerve function. There are many more and avoiding them and detoxifying from them after exposure may be key factors in helping to recover from behavioral disorders.

Trauma and Behavioral Problems

Trauma involves events that trigger a severe fight-flight-or-freeze reaction from which a person has never fully recovered. Many things can traumatize people including accidents, surgery, sexual or physical abuse, and witnessing or participating in war and other



forms of violence. People need emotional support from family or friends to recover naturally from trauma, but often people don't get the support they need. This is especially a problem when the trauma occurs within the family.

Many adults with behavioral disorders are victims of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and these unresolved traumas are a major contributing factor to their social struggles. They have developed these behaviors as coping mechanisms to help them deal with their unresolved trauma.

The psychiatrist, Dr. Peter R. Breggin, M.D. says that the drugs that are sometimes used to treat these disorders only serve to chemically lobotomize the brain and numb the pain these people are experiencing. And even when they aren't taking prescription medications, they are often self-medicating with substances like alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and substances to numb the pain they feel inside. These people are often addicted to sugar as well because ingesting large amounts of refined sugar triggers a dopamine reaction in the brain similar to many addictive drugs.

Seeking Natural Solutions

Nutrition, toxic substances, and trauma can all have an impact on behavioral disorders. With this in mind, let's look at some natural therapies that may help.



Improve Nutrition

It can be difficult to get someone with a personality disorder to change their eating habits. Ideally, they should be eating whole natural foods, especially chemical-free fresh fruits and vegetables, organic animal products, and whole grains, nuts and seeds. These changes may need to be made gradually as the person is willing and able. Meanwhile, improvement can sometimes be made by simply providing them with missing nutrients using herbs and nutritional supplements. Here are a few suggestions.

B-Complex vitamins

B-complex vitamins are critical for a healthy nervous system and metabolism and are depleted by diets high in refined carbohydrates. B-vitamins can reduce feelings of stress, calm down anxious and irritable feelings, and promote clearer thinking. An **Anti-Stress B-Complex Formula** (containing B-vitamins, vitamin C, schisandra, and nervines like hops and passion flower) may also help. A **Methylated B Vitamin Formula** (containing B9 and B12) may help with liver detoxification and methylation, which may be helpful for depression and other mood problems.

Magnesium

Magnesium is important for relaxing muscle tension, extracting energy from food, and building new neural pathways when learning new things. Deficiencies of magnesium are common and show up as excessive emotional sensitivity, muscle tension, insomnia, headaches, and irritability. If these symptoms are part of someone's general health profile adding magnesium may also help their behavioral issues.

Zinc and Copper

Zinc and copper are antagonists in the nervous system. High copper levels will increase levels of norepinephrine and decrease levels of dopamine in the brain. This can cause hyperactivity, high anxiety, sleep problems, and emotional meltdowns.

Zinc, on the other hand, is needed for the synthesis of the neurotransmitters serotonin, dopamine and GABA. Low levels of these neurotransmitters are associated with depression, anxiety, insomnia and difficulty concentrating. For this reason, zinc supplementation is often helpful with behavioral problems. It not only favors the production of neurotransmitters that aid relaxation and motivation, it also helps protect the brain from toxic chemicals.

Amino Acids (Protein)

As suggested in *Food, Teens, and Behavior*, many children and adults with personality disorders are on diets that are high in refined carbohydrates and low in protein. Since neurotransmitters are made from amino acids, the building blocks of protein, this adversely affects brain function. Increasing intake of healthy proteins is important in many cases. If a person doesn't want to eat animal products they should make sure to focus on other healthy sources of protein or at least take a good protein powder. An **Algae Blend** (containing spirulina, blue-green algae, and chlorella) is a great supplement to supply amino acids for brain health. It can also help to reduce sugar cravings.

Essential Fatty Acids

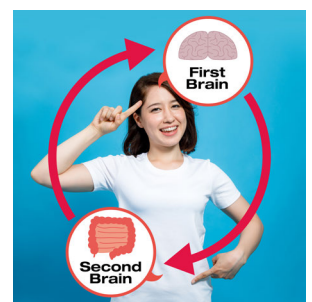
It can also be helpful to supplement with omega-3 essential fatty acids. This can be done with fish liver oil or an omega-3 supplement. It can also be helpful to supplement with DHA, the most prominent fatty acid in the brain. Fat soluble vitamins like A and D can also help protect the brain from toxins.

Alpha Lipoic Acid

Alpha lipoic acid is an antioxidant substance that crosses the blood-brain barrier and protects the brain from damage. It also aids liver detoxification of heavy metals and other toxins. It also helps reduce insulin resistance and lower blood sugar levels.

Heal the Gut

There is a strong link between the health of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract and mental health. Problems like brain fog, anxiety, depression, and irritability have all been linked with gut health and researchers have found that utilizing a gut healing diet, along with appropriate supplements can improve behavioral problems.



Specifically the gut and psychology syndrome (GAPS) diet has been helpful for many children and adults suffering from personality and behavioral problems. The diet focuses on eggs, meats, bone broth or stock, fish, shellfish, fresh vegetables and fruit, nuts seeds, garlic, and olive oil. It eliminates all processed foods and sugary/starchy foods like grains, sugar, potatoes, parsnips, yams and sweet potatoes. Dairy foods are also eliminated temporarily, but some

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dairy foods such as butter, yogurt, sour cream, and kefir can be reintroduced in the diet as the gut heals.

The GAPS program recommends taking probiotics, essential fatty acids, cod liver oil, and digestive enzymes, plus any specific vitamins and minerals necessary to correct nutrient deficiencies. There are many books available that go into depth about this diet and you can also find information on the gapsdiet.com website.

Detoxify

Cleansing the body to get rid of chemicals that may be adversely affecting the nerves can be helpful. Taking a liver cleansing formula like the *Chinese Wood-Decreasing Formula* (containing bupleurum, peony, cinnamon, and hoelen) can help to decongest the liver and reduce feelings of irritability and aggression.



There is also complete detoxification program built around this formula, the *Chinese Balanced Cleansing Program*. In addition to the *Chinese Wood-Decreasing Formula*, the program also contains burdock, black walnut, an herbal laxative formula, and a cellular cleansing formula. It's a good cleanse for helping clear the bowels, liver, kidneys, and lymphatics.

It can also be helpful to do a heavy metal cleanse. Try taking one capsule of a *Heavy Metal Cleansing Formula* (containing cilantro, sodium alginate, N-acetyl cysteine, I-methionine, and alpha-lipoic acid) twice daily along with 3-4 capsules of sodium alginate. Be sure to drink a large glass of water with the supplements and also consume extra water during the day.

If substance abuse is involved, working to get off these addictions should be considered an important part of the detoxification process. It's not possible to behave rationally when one is drinking or smoking excessively, or using legal or illegal drugs to avoid confronting the problems of life. This may require professional assistance, a support group or some form of rehab.

Resolve Previous Trauma

Anyone who is suffering from personality problems who has a history of trauma or abuse, may find some type of counseling or therapy to be helpful. This may also take the form of prayer and spiritual assistance. Flower essences and essential oils may also assist in this process. Here are some emotional remedies that may prove helpful.

The *Shock and Injury Flower Essence Blend* is a good place to start. It contains the five flower essences in *Bach's Rescue Remedy*—star of Bethlehem, rock rose, impatiens, clematis, and cherry plum—plus two more, arnica and red clover. It can help bring a person out of an emotionally reactive state of fear, anger, or anxiety into a more calm, present, and rational frame of mind.

The flower essences of black-eyed susan and golden ear drops can help people access negative memories and emotions and process them. The essential oils of frankincense, myrrh, and amber can also help this process. The flower essence or essential oil of pine can help people heal from toxic shame and guilt. It helps them forgive themselves and move forward.

The essential oil or flower essence of chamomile is helpful for people who are irritable and peevish over small things. Essential oils like bergamot, neroli, and jasmine can be used to help people who are subject to mood swings, including anxiety, depression, and irritability. These are just some of the many remedies available that can be helpful.

Additional Help and Information

For more information about working with personality problems contact the person who gave you this newsletter. You can also consult the following resources:

Strategies for Health by Steven Horne

Natural Remedies for Mental and Emotional Health by Brigitte Mars and Chrystle Fiedler

<https://www.westonaprice.org/health-topics-category/mental-emotional-health/>

<https://www.gapsdiet.com/>

<https://www.fesflowers.com/>