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| Type | Psychopathic |
| General Core theme | <p>Organizing preoccupation getting over on or consciously manipulating others; preoccupied with power for its own sake. Mostly in the borderline-to-psychotic range There are two types: 1) aggressive- actively predatory, often violent 2) Passive/parasitic more dependent, less aggressive, relatively non-violent manipulator, the con-artist</p> |
| Drive, affect, Temperament | <p>Temperament Lower reactivity of autonomic nervous system higher-than-average threshold for pleasurable excitement More basic aggression than others biological substrate for the higher level of affective and predatory aggression Affect Emotional poverty Rage and envy are dominant affects Anxiety they feel it but act out so fast to relieve themselves from such a toxic feeling that the observer has no chance to see it Associate ordinary emotions with weakness and vulnerability; no concept in using language to articulate feelings; use words to manipulate.</p> |
| Defenses | <p>Omnipotent control deliberate syntonetic attempt to use others (diff. from BPD who make others to feel manipulated w/o being aware of the feeling elicited) Projective identification result of their inarticulateness Acting out no experience of the increase in self-esteem that results from control of impulse Dissociation different extents from minor to total amnesia</p> |
| Object relations | <p>Failure of early attachment translated into a basic failure of human attachment Never attached psychologically, incorporate good objects, or identified with caregivers. Identification with a stranger selfobject experienced as predatory. a) Weak, depressed, masochistic mothers/sadistic fathers or b) Indulged materially and deprived emotionally or c) Repeated messages from the caregivers that no limits to the prerogatives of a person so inherently entitled to exert dominance should be posed.</p> |
| Self | <p>Polarized between the desired condition of personal omnipotence (I can make anything happen) and the feared condition of desperate weakness. Aggressive and sadistic acts may stabilize the sense of self by reducing unpleasant arousal and restoring self-esteem. Grandiosity in a child results from upbringing that lack consistency Primitive envy the wish to destroy that which one most desires Those in psychotic range been known to kill what attracts them.</p> |
| Transf/ Countertr | <p>Transference projection of internal predator manipulation/charm to promote personal agenda Countertransference temptation to try to prove helpful Moralistic outrage Unempathic feelings concordant ctr. Complementary countertr. therapist feels under patient's thumb</p> |

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| <p>Therapeutic implications</p> | <p>It is much better to err on the side of inflexibility than to show, in the hope that it will be seen as empathy, what the patient will see as weakness. Not bending at all is the right response to the special needs of the psychopath. Since power is the only quality antisocial people respect, power is the first thing the therapist must demonstrate. Uncompromising honesty: talking straight, keeping promises, making good on threats, and persistently addressing reality. It is useless to invite the expression of assumed feelings of badness since the patient lacks a normal superego and doubtless committed sins in order to feel good (omnipotent) rather than bad (weak). Never show the suspect that it is important to you to get a confession. Rigorous tough-mindedness and rock-bottom respect seems to be the winning combination.</p> |
| <p>Differential diagnosis</p> | <p>Psychopathic vs. Paranoid Significant overlap many have strong tendencies in both directions Both are concerned with issues of power but from different perspectives. Unlike psychopaths, people with essential paranoid structure have profound guilt the analysis of which is critical to their recovery from suffering. Psychopathic vs. Narcissistic Both character types reflect a subjectively empty internal world and a dependence on external events to provide self-esteem. Most sociopathic people do not idealize repetitively, and most narcissistic ones do not depend on omnipotent control. Many people have aspects of both character types, and self-inflation can characterize either one. The differential is very important because treatment considerations are quite different for the two groups (sympathetic mirroring comforts most narcissistic people but antagonizes antisocial ones). Psychopathic vs. Dissociative Sometimes hard to differentiate the basically psychopathic person who uses some dissociative defenses and a multiple personality with one or more antisocial and persecutory alter personalities.</p> |