

Personality disorders

Discussing Patterns Without Reducing Yourself to a Label

Adults | 10 to 15 minutes

A personality disorder diagnosis concerns enduring patterns and difficulties, assessed in context. It is not a description of a person's worth or a way to label someone after a conflict. This page supports a thoughtful conversation about patterns you want help understanding.

Choose a recent, manageable example. Write, draw, or discuss your answers. Skip anything that does not fit; this page is not a diagnostic assessment.

Look for context and variation

Describe a recurring difficulty and a setting where it is less intense. Include relationships, stress, culture, and experiences that shape it. One incident or an online checklist cannot establish a diagnosis.

Choose useful goals

Focus on an outcome that matters: handling disagreement, keeping a boundary, understanding reactions, or building trust. Ask how a clinician will consider alternative explanations and involve you in the assessment.

1. What recurring pattern is causing difficulty, and where have you noticed it?**2. When is the pattern less intense, and what strengths or supports are present?****3. What would you like to understand before accepting a diagnostic explanation?****4. What practical change would make treatment worthwhile to you?****Clinical use and adaptation**

Use longitudinal, contextual assessment and avoid pejorative labels. Consider trauma, mood, neurodevelopmental differences, substances, and cultural norms. This page is neither a personality test nor a tool for diagnosing another person.