Maladaptive schemas

PROGRESS PSYCHOTHERAPY

It is natural for humans to make meaning and have beliefs about ourselves, others and the world. If our core emotional needs aren't met or we have been mistreated (especially in our early years) we will develop maladaptive schema. These can be seen as beliefs about ourselves and our relationship with others that influence how we understand and respond to things, often maladaptively. Psychologists have identified 18 of these that cause issues in 5 categories, connected to unmet needs

Disconnection and rejection schemas- from unmet needs for secure attachment				
Abandonment/ Instability The people that matter to us won't continue to meet our emotional needs. They are unreliable, will leave or will die.	**Mistrust/ abuse** People will hurt us, they might abuse us, neglect us, manipulate, lie, cheat, etc.	**Emotional deprivation** Our emotional needs will not be met. This could be emotional support, empathy or protection.	**Defectiveness/ shame** The belief that we are bad or less than others. This leads to an assumption that we will be "found out" so rejected or criticised.	**Social isolation/ alienation** The belief that we are isolated from others or society.

Impaired autonomy and performance- from unmet needs to feel competent and unique			
Dependence/ incompetence The belief that we cannot cope with things or need others to manage things for us.	**Vulnerability to harm/ illness** This is a belief that we are vulnerable to harm. This could be physical, emotional abuse, illness or catastrophe.	**Enmeshment** Excessive emotional closeness to someone at the expense of your own development. This may result in not unsure what you want, who you are or those being determined by others.	**Failure** The belief that you are especially likely to fail and are not capable of meeting life goals.

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Impaired limits- from unmet needs for limits and self-control	
Entitlement/ Grandiosity Believing that you are better than other people and are entitled to special treatment.	**Low self-control** Feeling that you must have your needs met immediately no matter the consequences for you or others.

Other directedness- from unmet needs for freedom of expression		
Subjugation The belief that you must surrender control of your autonomy, wants and needs to avoid being mistreated, abused or abandoned.	**Self-sacrifice** Where a person feels the need to meet other peoples needs at their own expense. This may be feeling this is moral, to prevent guilt or approval seeking.	**Approval/ recognition seeking** Taking our sense of approval and wellbeing from others praise rather than developing a strong sense of self.

Over vigilance and inhibition- from unmet needs for spontaneity and play			
Negativity/ Pessimism A focus on negative things such as pain, death, illness, sadness, disappointment, problems, mistakes, failures , etc.	**Emotional inhibition** You believe you have to inhibit your thoughts, feelings or behaviours to avoid a negative consequence.	**Unrelenting standards/ Hypercriticalness** A belief that you must meet extremely high standards or not be good enough/ will be judged. The standards are often unfair to you.	**Punitiveness** The belief that people (or you) should be punished or face negative consequences for doing things wrong. This may be harsher than others would think.

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