

Dsm applied on a beautiful mind

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DSM applied on 'A Beautiful Mind' The of the movie is 'A Beautiful Mind', and the character under question is John Nash, Played by Russell Crowe. The story is about a genius student (and later professor) of mathematics and economics, who stays socially aloof being on an intellectually varying frequency than the people around him. His successes in life gradually get marred by his delusions, which create an alternate reality for him. He keeps fighting his condition, with the help of his wife, but does suffer through his psychiatric treatment. Through the decades, he gathers the perseverance and sense to deal with his problem, and ultimately wins accolades for his intellectual feats.

The classic title for his condition would be 'schizophrenia', and under the classification of DSM, this would fall under Axis I. his state of psychosis, in which he imagines people and events, classifies episodes of delusions and hallucinations. Despite being overly intelligent, his ideation could not grasp the known physical reality as such, and was forced to view things in a different way. Thus, going onto Axis II, he may be classified as having a personality disorder, owing to his maladaptive social relations, and lack of interests therein. Theoretically speaking, and basing on the information provided in the movie, there doesn't seem to be a medical condition with him that requires treatment as such. Hence, he may not be technically labeled on Axis III. Although the prolonged psychiatric treatment did affect his functioning, especially with respect to relations to his wife, but these cannot be termed as the primary factor.

On Axis IV, however, there can be multiple considerations. He was a genius, so had a lot of competition to excel from his peers, and had a sense of ego to

prevail above others intellectually. Further, his belief that the secret service was utilizing him, springs out from the complacent sense of being that he was in; he believed that he was the ‘ best natural code breaker’, and so this led to his intellectual demise. All these add up to occupational concerns, which may in turn label him as having problems of a social/environmental basis. Labeling him on Axis V would be rather complex. This is because on one side, his delusions impaired him from doing what was important in his life, and on the other, he constructed economic and mathematical constructs that revolutionized the respective fields in real-time. Therefore, not only that we won’t be able to place him at any one grade on the GAF Scale, but actually, this puts the GAF itself under some criticism.

The specific symptoms which he displays in the movie, are those of delusions and hallucinations. Primarily, he believes that he is working for the secret service to break the codes present in print media. Landside, he constantly sees his best friend and his niece, who keep interrupting him at various junctures in his life. He thinks they are there, he talks to them, and is even afraid of many entities/people even though they do not exist. The difference between the actual and virtual reality surfaces on two major junctures in the movie: firstly, when his wife brings all the undelivered letters that he had been posting (to an imaginary source), and secondly, when he realizes that the niece never grows old (but keeps visiting him through the decades).

The portrayal of this character is commendable, and one does tend to believe that they are viewing the life story of an actual schizophrenic (no wonder he won the Oscar for it!). His domestic and occupational relations, and most importantly, his struggle to maintain contact with reality is by far

one of the greatest representations of schizophrenia on screen. It is probably easier to understand psychosis by viewing the movie, then by going through the DSM. A special mention is due to the character of his wife, who supports him through his problems. How a 'normal' family member copes with a patient in the family, is by far one of the most sentimental and emotional intense areas explored in the movie. Psychologically speaking, this has great connotations into understand what schizophrenia is, and how should the family of a patient go about the disease.

Being this character in real-life would both have a plus and a down side. The down side is obvious – it is a psychological disease, that distorts one's perception of reality. However, the positive side is the intellectual domination and successes which came as a consequence of increased mental activity. Nonetheless, weighing the tangibles, it is not a state that one would like to be in! This is more so due to the fact that the person loses insight into the issue, and is not able to deal with the task at hand.

Consequently, unlike a broken arm or a twisted ankle for which a person can get treatment, schizophrenia dissuades oneself from real-time, hence making it very difficult to cope with life.

The therapeutic technique used was insulin shock therapy, among other psychotic drugs. Given the time (60s onwards), psychiatric treatment was obviously not as well developed as is today. Even now, two practicing psychiatrists may differ on the 'mode' of treatment being given; hence one cannot really criticize the methodology adopted on the subject in question. Since in due course, he was able to identify with life as appropriately as possible, one would term it as the right treatment (as violent as it might

seem in the movie). No addition or subtraction to medication would be advisable to him, as he is already delusional, and it may have additional side-effects. This may ultimately change the end of the story, and one should not take away the Nobel Prize from somebody's life.