

Pathological liar essay



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We have all lied at some time or another in our life. As a child, we may have lied so we would not get in trouble. As adults, we may lie to avoid disagreements with someone, so we can maintain a healthy relationship with that person. We teach children that it is wrong to lie; however lying comes natural for us, and we all lie whenever it is convenient. These kinds of lies are ‘white lies’. They are harmless lies if mentioned with the right purpose. People lie to loved ones more than anyone else. It is easier to lie to a loved one more than anyone else, because telling the truth might be more painful than a lie.

Some people are better liars than others. When a person becomes habituated with lying, it becomes a problem. When Lies are told for no reason at all, it can cause a significant deal of stress in your life. Most of us have heard the words pathological liar which describes a person who is more than just a liar but also extremely dishonest. . Pseudologia fantastica, mythomania, or pathological lying is one of several terms applied by psychiatrists to the behavior of habitual or compulsive lying. (Dike C. C. , Dike).

It’s described first in the medical literature during 1891 by Anton Delbruck. (Dike) The term pathological lying has been widely defined as “ falsification entirely disproportionate to any discernible end in view, engaged in by a person who, at the time of observation, cannot definitely be declared insane, feeble minded, or epileptic. Such lying rarely, if ever, centers about an event; although exhibited in very occasional cases for a short time, it manifests itself most frequently by far over a period of years, or even a life time.

It represents a trait rather than an episode. ” (Healy) Many times the symptoms of a pathological liar can be confused for the symptoms of a compulsive liar. A person who lies for no reason at all and they realize that it is terribly uncomfortable to tell the truth is a Compulsive liar. It becomes a habit for them to lie because they are so used to lying all the time. Most compulsive liars know that they are lying however, they are unable to do anything about it. (Pathological Liar vs Compulsive Liar). A pathological liar does not realize that he is telling lies.

A pathological liar unintentionally lies and believes that he is telling the truth. Based on the C. C. Dike, M. Baranoski, and E. E. H. Griffith’s study, Pathological lying revised, pathological lying can be considered diagnosis when the lying is “ persistent, pervasive, disproportionate, and not motivated primarily by reward or other external factors. ” is compulsive and impulsive by nature (the liar is unable to control the lying). Also, from a psychiatric point of view, behavior is abnormal based on the person’s ability to power over it, and not the behavior’s degree or purpose.

A strong psychiatric morbidity indicator, but not necessary sufficient to establish a disorder, is when the behavior causes more harm than good and when it is supports an irrational reason. Therefore, pathological lying implies an apparent lack of control and “ for pathological lying to exist the individual must lie despite himself, just as someone with and anxiety disorder cannot help feeling anxious. ” (Grubin, Acad). A Pathological liar does not have to have a reason to lie. They will not feel guilty or care about what happens to people due to the lies that they have told.

Pathological liars lie to control and get their own way. It is difficult to determine if the stories of a pathological liar are true or not because they can be highly convincing. An easy way to identify a pathological liar is that they will forget their lies, so they will describe different stories all the time. They will elaborate and lie about nearly everything; however, they will tell the truth about serious ones. They will not admit to telling a lie, and if their story is questioned, they will try to change the subject or can even become violent because they tend to feel threatened when questioned.

They very seldom make an effort to apologize or admit that they are wrong if they have lied. Most people find it difficult to maintain eye contact when they lie; however, a pathological liar can look a person straight in the eye and lie. Pathological liar rarely cares to stay in a relationship. They often get involved in extramarital affairs. It is almost impossible for them to be devoted to one person, because they have a hard time trusting anyone because they believe that they are always right while others are always wrong so it makes it hard for them to trust anyone .

Some of the clearest signs of a pathological liar disorder is that they always try to prove themselves to be better than someone else. (What is a Pathological Liar?) In their mind, no one will ever be better than them. A pathological liar constantly tries to prove that he is greater than other people by putting them down and making them feel guilty. They are not faithful because they do not value honesty so be careful to what is said to them. They will try to make things worse than what they are. Psychologists and psychiatrists fail to account for a definition of pathological lying like a disease.

It can be symptomatic of other conditions, like antisocial personality disorder, and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) (How Is Pathological Lying Treated?). It is not always present in these conditions, so a clear treatment set for pathological lying has not been defined. (How is Pathological Lying Treated?). Often pathological lying masks a problem related to childhood, including trauma, neglect, lack of attention, lack of guidance or failure by parents to set realistic limits. Some Researchers suggest that pathological liars often have parents who are pathological liars and that lying was a part of the family dynamics. (Fries).

A review of the pathological lying cases, concluded in 1988 by King and Ford revealed that 40% of the individuals included in the study displayed brain abnormalities such as epilepsy abnormal EEG (which measures electrical activity of the brain), head trauma, or central nervous infection. Also, the study discovered that the majority of those displaying pathological lying showed significant verbal abilities. (King BH) These observations are being supported by a study conducted years later in 2005 by University of South California that found the first proof of structural brain abnormalities in people who habitually lie, cheat and manipulate.

According to the study, pathological liars have “ significantly more white matter and slightly less gray matter” in the prefrontal area of the brain. The white matter represents the connection between cells within the brain while the gray matter represents the brain cells connected by the white matter. The role of the gray matter is to keep in check the impulse to lie, while the white matter might provide a predisposition towards lies; it represents the “ tools necessary to master the complex art of deceit. The prefrontal cortex is

the area of the brain that enables most people to feel remorse, learn moral behavior, and make moral decisions. An increased amount of white matter creates a greater network within the prefrontal cortex which is associated with greater verbal skills and a greater ability to lie while the reduced amount of gray matter represents less moral restraints and a greater disinhibition when telling a lie. Individuals with less gray matter than normal are “ less likely to care about moral issues or are less likely to be able to process moral issues.

Having more gray matter would keep a check on these activities. ”

(University of Southern California) In order for a person to get the help, they need to realize that they are suffering from a psychological disorder, and they need medical help. They need to accept the fact that they are a pathological liar. Because they believe their lies and they do not see anything wrong with their lying, they can be offended and get angry if it is suggested that they got professional help. The person needs to understand that they need help before visiting a qualified psychiatric.

First the doctor may try to find reasons to what could be causing that person to be a pathological liar. He will then be able to treat the underlying psychological disorder first. The treatment involves medication, psychotherapy and sometimes a combination of both. Medications mostly used in this case include antidepressants or antipsychotic. One of the most effective forms of therapy for many psychiatric disorders, including pathological lying is Cognitive behavioral therapy which is the process of changing your thoughts to change your behavior.

The success in the treatment depends on how well the person participates and follows through the plan. The problem with pathological liars is that they have a difficult time telling the truth in therapy and this can harm them from reaching their goals. Experienced therapists are able to tell when people are not telling the truth, and they are able to help them to realize how their life will be affected by what they are doing. (Pathological Lying-Love to Know Recovery). The decision for me to research the topic of pathological liars was from my experience of living with someone for 12 years that I had suspected of being one.

After researching the topic of a pathological liar and finding out all the symptoms of it, I am amazed by how much it sounded just like him. It took me many years to realize that he was one because I loved him so much that I trusted him. As time went on, it was hard to separate the truth from his lies, which caused many arguments. The arguments led us to separate a little over 3 years ago. We have a lovely son together, and now that I have learned more about the topic of a pathological liar, I can understand more to why he is the way he is.