

# Developmental psychological disorder diagnosis: the effective repair of youth sel...

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## Developmental Psychological Disorder Diagnosis: The Effective Repair of Youth Self-Concept

When creating the DSM-III, psychologists aimed to create a new category, the “ atypical child”. Nevertheless, as a result of the inability for even developmental psychiatrists to define what thoughts, feelings or behaviours the broad label constituted – this concept did not even survive one meeting (Spiegel & Spiegel, 2017). Taking this professional incapacity into account, one could begin to consider the utter disorientation of self that is experienced on behalf of a young person suffering from these symptoms. In today’s society, developmental psychological disorder diagnosis provides a greater purpose than to supply evidence-based intervention and anticipation of future needs (Jutel, 2011). Taking on more internal gains, diagnosis has also proven to be advantageous to the improvement of self-concept; specifically during transformation into adolescence, an integral point of time of develop the self. (O’Connor, Kadianaki, Maunder, & McNicholas, 2018). Through increased self-knowledge, the establishment of disorder legitimacy, and concrete distinctions; the positive development of self-concept sits as a credible result of psychological diagnosis that deserves consideration.

There is no doubt that the initial perceptions and sensations of psychiatric symptoms will cause concern. Although, as a consequence of lack of emotional regulation and understanding among children and youth, these unsettling symptoms result in even further distress. Research shows us that when people lack this insight into their personality and disposition, there can be serious negative outcomes (Carlson, 2013). To avoid these consequences,

youth are able to undergo two shifts in self-concept provided by the diagnostic process. First, the youth can now identify mental illness as the cause for their seemingly unexplainable behaviour. In this sense, diagnosis serves as a pragmatic approach to understand and repair the sense of self through intervention and other therapeutic methods (Mogensen & Mason, 2015). On the other hand, youth are able turn to intrinsic processes. This is essentially a journey a self-understanding for the child having now been diagnosed (O'Connor et al., 2018). Whether through external or internal means, this increase in self-knowledge simply means young people utilize diagnosis as a way to make sense of their thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Koerner, 2019).

Even with minimal knowledge on the topic, it is evident that the practice of psychiatric diagnoses has clear benefits for personal and professional understanding of mental disorders yet, the value of these processes goes beyond these contexts. Today societal views continue to reify diagnosis in the fact that, psychological symptoms must be met with a clinical label to gain legitimacy. While this is often seen as a negative, this label begins to serve as an expression of the authenticity within those suffering (Nolen-Hoeksma & Marroquín, 2017; Houck et al., 2011). Without this diagnostic label, young people are forced to criticize themselves, assuming that psychological challenges are on account of their own actions and choices (Woodgate, 2006). Ultimately, diagnosis enables youth to look at their negative experiences as a 'real disease' that is not their fault, allowing them to move forward with self-esteem.

The final, and potentially most beneficial result of the diagnosis of mental illness, is the distinction this creates between personal identity and disorder. This is often achieved by children identifying positive character traits as distinct from their negative symptoms, implying that their disorder is in fact not their personality (O'Connor et al., 2018). More common in adolescent years, is for youth to create a personal perspective of their diagnosis. After having received a psychological diagnosis, many teens reflect this as beliefs of increased strength, self-value and accomplishment (Elkington, et al., 2009).

When mental disorders remain undiscovered, those suffering are bound to lose sense of themselves; during transitions of adolescence this risk is even more significant. Nevertheless, with the help of mental disorder diagnosis and its inclination to increase knowledge, legitimacy and distinction of psychiatric circumstances, young people are able to more effectively repair their recently harmed self-concept.

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