

Stress and psychiatric disorders associated with Political Correctness

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Overview:

Political correctness has become a significant contributor to stress in the lives of a significant number of people. 85% of the people seeking therapy for stress management are experiencing some high percentage of stress directly associated with living in and working in a politically correct environment. The 15% that do not experience stress related to political correctness feel comfortable in a politically correct environment, and may actually look to perpetuate it.

Symptoms:

Stress associated with political correctness maintains the same physical manifestations as stress not associated with political correctness, hypertension and premature aging are constant. A third stress producing factor uniquely associated with political correctness is the need display behavior that is not normal and natural to their personality, and the constant worry that you may offend someone if non politically correct words or phrases are used.

The symptoms are synonymous with Social Anxiety Disorder (DSM-IV 300.23). The difference between the symptoms and the diagnosis is the person with a true Social Anxiety Disorder perceives the situations and related fallout as genuine even if there is none. The person suffering from stress related to political correctness may suffer genuine negative consequences including loss of employment and public ridicule. In short a person who is suffering from stress related to political correctness must mimic the symptoms of Social Anxiety Disorder to survive in a politically correct environment. Repeated mimicking of a psychiatric disorder may lead to the development of the disorder or other psychological problems.

Description Social anxiety disorder:

The description of social anxiety disorder (DSM-IV 300.23) is a diagnosis within psychiatry and other mental health professions referring to excessive social anxiety (anxiety in social situations) causing abnormally considerable distress and impaired ability to function in at least some areas of daily life. The diagnosis can be of a specific disorder (when only some particular situations are feared) or a generalized disorder. Generalized social anxiety disorder typically involves a persistent, intense, and chronic fear of being judged by others and of potentially being embarrassed or humiliated by one's own actions. These fears can be triggered by perceived or actual scrutiny by others. While the fear of social interaction may be recognized by the person as excessive or unreasonable, considerable difficulty can be encountered overcoming it.

Full text found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_Anxiety_Disorder

Obsessive Political Correctness:

Behavior associated with perpetuating Obsessive Political Correctness exactly matches the description of Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder. The people perpetuating political correctness do not display the symptoms of stress related to political correctness. For them it is actually an area of comfort as they try to make their vision of the perfect world a reality for everyone. In reality they are making the world a much more stressful place causing genuine harm in people.

Because the match is so close, political correctness is a variation of the OCPD psychiatric disorder, or it is a psychiatric disorder yet to be given proper coding. This is the root cause of the stress. Essentially Obsessive political correctness is a psychiatric disorder, of that there is no doubt.

Description Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder:

Those who are experiencing OCPD do not generally feel the need to repeatedly perform ritualistic actions - a common symptom of OCD. Instead, people with OCPD tend to stress perfectionism above all else, and feel anxious when they perceive that things are not "right."

People with OCPD may try to rid themselves of excess energy when anxious or excited by twitching or doing unpredictable things. They may hoard money for future use, keep their home perfectly organized, or be anxious about delegating tasks for fear that they won't be completed correctly. There are four primary areas that cause anxiety for OCPD personalities: time, relationship, uncleanliness, and money. There are few moral 'grey' areas for a person with fully developed OCPD; actions and beliefs are either completely right, or absolutely wrong. As might be expected, interpersonal relationships are difficult because of the excessive demands placed on friends, romantic partners and children. Persons with OCPD often have a negative outlook on life (pessimism).

Full text found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Obsessive-compulsive_personality_disorder

Political Correctness vs Obsessive Political Correctness:

The line is very blurred that defines one from the other. However in general, if a person looks to put in place, or create a new political correctness standard that was non-existent before, or actively seeks out things deemed politically incorrect, then the Obsessive description applies. To just stay within the politically correct guidelines previously established, then that is just being politically correct.

Common expressed feelings and emotions:

Symptoms of stress come together with anger and confusion and despair. The anger comes from the relentless pressure to conform to some unnatural standard and inability to express themselves without consequences. The confusion comes from a logical challenge that questions how people around them have become so emotionally frail in such a short period of time. Other expressions cite political correctness as madness and out of control. The despair comes from only seeing political correctness getting worse and not better. The desire to run away and hide or become withdrawn from society. The desire to run and hide are early signs of Schizoid personality disorder or avoidant personality disorder.

Description Schizoid personality disorder:

Schizoid personality disorder (SPD) is a personality disorder characterized by a lack of interest in social relationships, a tendency towards a solitary lifestyle, secretiveness, and emotional coldness. SPD is reasonably rare compared with other personality disorders. Its prevalence is estimated at less than 1% of the general population.

Full text found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schizoid_personality_disorder

Description Avoidant personality disorder:

Avoidant personality disorder (APD or AvPD) or Anxious personality disorder (APD) is a personality disorder from the DSM handbook, characterized by a pervasive pattern of social inhibition, feelings of inadequacy, extreme sensitivity to negative evaluation and avoidance of social interaction. People with avoidant personality disorder often consider themselves to be socially inept or personally unappealing, and avoid social interaction for fear of being ridiculed, humiliated, rejected or disliked. They typically present themselves as loners and report feeling a sense of alienation from society.

Avoidant personality disorder is usually first noticed in early adulthood, and is associated with perceived or actual rejection by parents or peers during childhood. Whether the feeling of rejection is due to the extreme interpersonal monitoring attributed to people with the disorder is still disputed.

Full text found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avoidant_personality_disorder

Summary:

Political correctness inherently produces stress and prolonged exposure can lead to psychiatric disorders with OCPD being the most likely. The negative effect political correctness produces greatly outweighs any perceived positives if there are any at all. Political correctness tends to over protect people leaving them without coping skills outside of a politically correct environment. That in turn will lead to counseling, therapy and or medication to deal with and to correct that deficit.

It is important for the therapist to understand these solid connections to psychiatric disorders when working with a person experiencing emotional problems associated with prolonged exposure to political correctness. It is important to establish how much stress is directly related to exposure to political correctness in order to select the best counseling/therapy approach. Each person must be treated on a case by case basis. There is no specific course of therapy for dealing with this as the condition can cover a wide range of symptoms. Because of that this can be classified as a syndrome.

If you have any questions please contact the author through his website at www.hypno-therapy.us