

Understanding Sociopathy

Name

Course

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Date

Among all the personality disorders, sociopathy may be the one we all sooner or later might encounter since we all are a part of a society. Martha Stout in her book *The Sociopath Next Door* claims that about 4% of all people are sociopaths. The problem is that it is often difficult to notice that a person is a sociopath. People with such a disorder tend to show their polished better self, which not always reflects the whole personality.

In general, sociopaths are defined as people who have a social personality disorder, which means that they do not wish to comply with the general rules and laws that are set within the society in which they belong. They also lack remorse and empathy, enabling them to treat people like objects in order to reach their personal goals.

Mike Adams, editor of *Natural News*, describes typical signs that a person might be a sociopath:

- They are charming, have charisma, and are able to attract people.
- They often do irrational and bizarre things that other people don't normally do.
- They don't feel shame, guilt, or remorse. They are able to do harm to other people to serve their self-interest.
- They use outrageous lies to convince other people that something is true.
- They do not like to lose and will do anything to win, whether it is a game or an argument.
- They are often very intelligent, but use their intelligence to deceive other people.
- They are incapable of love and are entirely self-serving.
- They are able to speak poetically, making things they say sound intriguing and hypnotic.
- They never apologize, as they are unable to admit they are wrong.
- They are often delusional and believe that what they say becomes truth (Adams).

There are numerous traditional treatments that have proven to be ineffective when trying to change a sociopath's behavior. One is punishment, including imprisonment. Such action presupposes that a wrongdoer will have an opportunity to realize his mistakes. However, punishment has no effect on a sociopath. Another way of changing sociopath's behavior is through

therapy. The problem is that therapy proves to be effective only for those individuals who realize their problems and are willing to cooperate with the therapist to overcome them. In terms of medical treatment, there is no existing medication available for treating sociopathy. It is also impossible to teach these individuals empathy and emotion, since they may be genetically inclined to being callous and to lack emotion.

There is no clear answer as to how to treat an individual for sociopathy, but there are certainly some approaches that may prove to be effective in dealing with sociopathy. First of all, it is important to deal with sociopathy as a complex group of traits and behaviors. Trying to deal with traits separately won't lead to anything. So, after analyzing a sociopath's behavior and defining the main traits, it is important to address those traits all at once and in all the areas of a person's life, including work, relationships, activity, and so forth (Peterson).

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