Current research: Adolescence

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Background
## DSM-5 Section III (AMPD)

### Criterion A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Self-direction: meaningful short-term and life goals; standards of behavior; self-reflection.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Empathy: Comprehension and appreciation of others; tolerance of differing perspectives; understanding impact.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Intimacy: Depth/duration of connection with others; desire/capacity for closeness; mutuality of regard.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Criterion B

- Negative affectivity (Neuroticism)
- Detachment (Introversion)
- Antagonism (Conscientiousness)
- Disinhibition (Extroversion)
- Psychoticism (Openness)
Criterion A = gPD

\[
gPD = \text{BPD}
\]

Criterion A = BPD
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 4: Bifactor Model</th>
<th>Sharp et al. (2015) JAP</th>
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</table>
| **Table 4**  
Exploratory Bifactor Model of Personality Disorder Criteria |
| **Descriptor** | **General** | **ASPD** | **SZTPD** | **NPD** | ~**OCPD** | ~**AVPD** | **Factor 6** |
| BPD5 | Identity disturbance | .74* | .04 | .16 | .11 | .05 | .01 | -.14 | 100%  
| BPD6 | Affective instability | .72* | -.08 | .39 | .05 | -.13 | -.09 | .02 | 78% |
| BPD7 | Em程 | .71 | .11 | -.04 | .12 | .08 | -.18 | .03 | 62.5% |
| BPD4 | Self-harming impulsivity | .68* | -.22 | .14 | .03 | -.17 | -.22 | .02 | |
| BPD2 | Interpersonal instability | .66* | -.10 | .26 | -.08 | .04 | -.07 | -.09 | |
| BPD5 | Suicideality | .66* | -.10 | .26 | -.08 | .04 | -.07 | -.09 | |
| BPD1 | Avoids abandonment | .63* | -.05 | .10 | -.18 | .03 | -.18 | .33 | |
| BPD8 | Intense anger | .69* | .19 | .26 | -.04 | .30 | -.06 | .66 | |
| BPD9 | Transient dissociation | .53* | .00 | .45 | -.04 | .06 | .08 | -.06 | |
| ASPD5 | Irritable, aggressive | .32 | .86* | .06 | .09 | -.06 | .12 | .09 | |
| ASPD7 | Lacks remorse | .24 | .84* | .05 | .20 | -.06 | .04 | .03 | |
| ASPD6 | Irresponsible | .32 | .85* | .01 | .04 | -.01 | .03 | .84 | 100% |
| ASPD5 | Disagreed for safety | .62 | .79* | -.12 | .04 | -.14 | .02 | .02 | |
| ASPD2 | Deceitfulness | .66* | .74* | .01 | .03 | .05 | -.09 | .15 | |
| ASPD3 | Impulsivity | .61* | .74* | -.03 | .08 | .07 | .05 | .05 | |
| SZTPD7 | Odd behavior/apparent | .09 | 1.02* | .04 | .31 | -.41 | .81 | |
| SZTPD4 | Odd thinking/speech | -.15 | .01 | .85* | .02 | .04 | .14 | .02 | |
| SZTPD3 | Odd beliefs | .33 | .31 | .76* | .03 | .01 | -.01 | .17 | |
| SZTPD6 | Construmed affect | .33 | .12 | .71* | .21 | -.05 | .02 | .03 | |
| SZTPD1 | Odd perceptions | .46 | .20 | .56* | .21 | .11 | .45 | .01 | |
| SZTPD5 | Ideas of reference | .31 | .04 | .56 | .04 | .03 | .33 | .08 | |
| SZTPD8 | Lacks close friends | .17 | .22 | .15 | .26 | -.05 | .30 | .35* | |
| SZTPD9 | Social anxiety | .56* | .13 | .22 | -.29 | .47 | .03 | .04 | |
| NPD9 | Arrogant | .29 | .16 | .17 | .75* | 1.13 | .03 | .04 | |
| NPD3 | Believes self is special | .28 | .17 | -.07 | .66* | .02 | .02 | .09 | |
| NPD2 | Needs admiration | .50 | .12 | .03 | .66* | .02 | -.02 | .01 | |
| NPD1 | Grandiose | .31 | .01 | -.05 | .65* | .18 | -.25 | .23 | |
| NPD2 | Preoccupied with fantasies | .29 | -.07 | .16 | .65* | -.14 | .07 | -.26 | |
| NPD6 | Exploitative | .26 | .39 | -.06 | .63* | .11 | .02 | .06 | |
| NPD6 | Entitlement | .40 | .56 | -.10 | .33 | .04 | -.11 | .04 | |
| NPD7 | Lacks empathy | .35 | .39* | .24 | .29 | .02 | .05 | .02 | |
| NPD8 | Envious | .55* | .20 | -.05 | .30 | .03 | .06 | .25 | |
| OCPD7 | Miserly | .09 | -.06 | .86 | .01 | .35 | .25 | .26 | |
| OCPD4 | Moral inflexibility | -.02 | .04 | -.01 | .71* | -.23 | .16 | .26 | |
| OCPD6 | Reluctant to delegate | .46 | -.17 | -.10 | .13 | .43* | .05 | .47 | |
| OCPD3 | Workaholic | .01 | .17 | -.22 | .20 | .40* | .16 | .26 | |
| OCPD8 | Rigidly | .41 | .06 | .15 | .24 | .39 | .01 | .30 | |
| OCPD1 | Orderly | .46 | -.07 | -.03 | .19 | -.04 | .10 | .25 | |
| OCPD5 | Perfectionistic | .35 | .10 | -.02 | .17 | .07 | .35 | .25 | |
| OCPD6 | Hoarding | .26 | -.06 | .12 | .11 | .01 | .05 | .21 | |
| AVPD1 | Avoids social work | .44 | .24 | .05 | -.25 | .05 | .61* | .11 | |
| AVPD4 | Preoccupied with rejection | .63* | -.09 | .00 | .05 | -.02 | .61 | .09 | |
| AVPD2 | Must be liked | .56 | .18 | -.15 | .17 | .07 | .35 | .25 | |
| AVPD3 | Socially isolated | .49 | .08 | -.16 | .06 | .55* | -.22 | .32 | |
| AVPD3 | Restrained in intimacy | .43 | .03 | -.04 | .19 | .49 | .04 | .08 | |
| AVPD6 | Views self as inept | .64 | .00 | -.12 | .26 | .08 | .34 | .30 | |
| AVPD7 | No risks or new activities | .51 | -.04 | .17 | .26 | .25 | .36 | .05 | |

*Correlation coefficients are italicized for significance level .05.
N = 733; CLPS study
AV, BPD, OCPD, SCHZT, MDD-DIPD-IV, NEO, SNAP, LIFE

Wright et al. (2016), JAP
FFM = int/ext spectra
Maladaptive traits = int/ext spectra
Criterion B = int/ext spectra
Developmental research

Sharp & DeClercq (in press)
Sharp, Vanwoerden & Wall (2018)
Sharp (2017)
Sharp & Kalpakci (2015)
Sharp & Fonagy (2015)
Key findings in developmental BPD research

- While maladaptive traits (Criterion B) are observable in pre-adolescence, categorically defined BPD (Criterion A) onsets only in adolescence.
- Maladaptive traits (Criterion B) show a normative increase in adolescence, followed by a normative decline, but a subset of adolescence do not follow the normative decline. They are the ones likely to meet full criteria for BPD (Criterion A).
- BPD (Criterion A), but not maladaptive traits (Criterion B) are distinguishable from internalizing and externalizing spectra in adolescence.
- BPD (Criterion A) is preceded by internalizing and externalizing spectra (Criterion B), but not the other way round.
- BPD (Criterion A) is associated with more longterm functional (severity) outcomes than internalizing/externalizing spectra.

Sharp & DeClercq (in press); Sharp, Vanwoerden & Wall (2018); Sharp (2017); Sharp & Kalpakci (2015); Sharp & Fonagy (2015)
Externalizing

Internalizing

Thought disorder

BPD

Impairment

Sharp & Wall (2017)
Criterion B

Thought disorder

Criterion A

Impairment

Developmental onset

Epidemiology

Persistence

Gendered style

Male

Female

Pre-adolescence

Adolescence

Sharp & Wall (2017)
“Adolescere”: "to ripen" or "to grow up“ -- SELF

• Identity development a key developmental task.
• Agentic, self-determining author of the self emerges in adolescence.
• Pre-adolescence: organization and structure of self constrained by cognitive development.
• The move from self-concept (pre-adolescence) to identity (adolescence) necessitates meaning making of self-concepts – integration of autobiographical past with imagined future in a coherent way.

Sharp, Vanwoerden & Wall (2018); Sharp (in press)
“Adolescere”: "to ripen" or "to grow up“ -- OTHER

- Social reorientation
- Social awareness and concern about others’ perspectives (“imaginary audience”)
- Shared reflection with peers.
- Shared reflection with parents.
- Multiple self-hypotheses.
- Late adolescence: integration.

Sharp, Vanwoerden & Wall (2018); Sharp (in press)
It’s a Fan!

It’s a Spear!

It’s a Wall!

It’s a Rope!

It’s a Tree!

It’s a Snake!
- Use people
- Crave attention
- Emotional
- Worry
- Fear being alone
- Reckless
The developmental lens

• The process of building one’s personality does not come on line in a mature form until adolescence.

• Even though the structure of personality is observable in pre-adolescence.
The developmental lens

• The process of building one’s personality does not come on line in a mature form until adolescence.
  • > Criterion A

• Even though the structure of personality is observable in pre-adolescence.
  • > Criterion B
New research
Background

• Identity = “enables one to move with purpose and direction in life, and with a sense of inner sameness and continuity over time and place” (Kroger, 2017).

• Identity formation is a major developmental task of adolescence
  • A process in which childhood identifications are replaced by, or reinterpreted as one’s own self-defined set of commitments (Erikson, 1950)
  • Process is guided by commitment (choosing alternatives) and exploration (comparing alternatives) (Marcia, 1966): identity achievement, moratorium (exploration in process), foreclosure (commitment without exploration), diffusion (no commitment with little or no exploration).

• DSM-5 Section III Criterion A
  • Maladaptive interpersonal function
    • Intimacy
    • Empathy
  • Maladaptive self function
    • Identity diffusion
    • Self-direction

• While typical identity development has been a focus of interest, maladaptive identity development has not been studied; and not in the context of DSM-5 Criterion A function.
Latent mean differences

$N = 2,381$ adolescents
Switzerland
Community-based; recruited from schools
12-18 ($M = 14.92, SD = 1.94$)
7 age bands with roughly equal numbers in each age band
46% male
Assessment of Identity Diffusion in Adolescents (AIDA)
Latent mean differences
Latent mean differences
Course of borderline features over time

N = 800
T1 = age 9
T2 = 14
T3 = 16
T4 = 22
Latent mean differences
Age-varying associations between borderline personality features and identity disturbance
Conclusions from AIDA study:

• Evidence for a significant increase in identity diffusion after age 12, which remains constant until age 16-17, when it drops to levels consistent of 12-year-olds.

• Identity disturbance is significantly associated with increased borderline personality features, with these constructs becoming more closely associated with increasing age.

• Highlights the overlap between Criterion A dysfunction (identity) and borderline pathology especially with increase in age.

• As maladaptive identity consolidates, the difference between identity disturbance and what we call BPD seems to become negligible.

• Clinical implication: Scaffolding of identity formation especially between ages 12-16/17. If scaffolding does not occur, normative decline in identity diffusion may be arrested.
Study 2
Background

• One way of maintaining a coherent sense of self: mentally travel backward in time to remember one’s personal past → narrative coherence for autobiographical memories

• Those with BPD construct less coherent and more confusing narratives about events compared with HCs and OCPD (Jorgensen et al., 2012; Rasmussen et al., 2017)

• No studies in adolescence

Lind, Vanwoerden, Penner & Sharp (2019), PD:TRT
## Method

### Sample
- N = 70
- 80% female
- Inpatients
- Age 15.37 (SD = 1.37)

### Measure
- Child Attachment Interviews:
  - how adolescents structure and reflect on personal past events
  - how they link it to present self
- Berger and McAdams (1999)
- Narrative coherence is a multidimensional structural characteristic of storytelling:
  - Orientation: degree to which narrative provides reader with sufficient background to understand
  - Structure: extent to which narrative flows logically from one point to another
  - Affect: extent to which narrative uses emotion language to make evaluative point
  - Integration: extent to which episode is being related to who the individual is as a person
## Results

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Narrative coherence</th>
<th>Identity diffusion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BPD features</td>
<td>-.27*</td>
<td>.72**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative coherence</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.17</td>
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</table>

Regression with BPD features as DV and narrative coherence and identity diffusion as predictors: only identity diffusion (β = .68, p < .001) and not narrative coherence (β = .15, p = .082) remained significantly associated with borderline features (F(2, 68) = 39.50, p < .001, Adj. R2 = .53).

Lind, Vanwoerden, Penner & Sharp (2019), PD:TRT
Conclusions

• Both narrative coherence and identity diffusion are associated with BPD

• Identity diffusion may underlie other symptoms of BPD (emptiness, abandonment, relationship problems) (Jorgensen, 2009; Westen et al., 2011).

• Cannot use past experience to learn from and guide behavior forward (epistemic trust).

• Scaffolding of development of narrative identity in adolescence is important.

Lind, Vanwoerden, Penner & Sharp (2019), PD:TRT
Study 2
Background

• Coherent narratives facilitate meaning-making from events (Bruner, 1990; Berger & McAdams, 1999).

• Understanding mental states in self and others (mentalizing) may be a prerequisite for narrative coherence (Reese, 2002).

• Mentalizing capacity increases throughout adolescence and predict more coherent life narratives in adulthood (Kober et al., 2018).

• Life narratives emerge gradually and become more detailed, coherent, emotionally rich and meaningfully connected through adolescence and into early adulthood (Habermas & Bluck, 2000).

• Until adolescence narratives do not resemble adult narratives, but begin to so in adolescence.

• No research on the development of maladaptive narrative coherence despite relevance for adolescent period and personality disorder.

• Attachment and mentalizing?

Lind, Vanwoerden, Penner & Sharp (2019), JPA
## Method

### Sample
- N = 70
- 80% female
- Inpatients
- Age 15.37 (SD = 1.37)

### Measure
- Child Attachment Interview
  - Berger and McAdams (1999)
- Child Attachment Interview:
  - Attachment coherence (CAI coherence subscale)
- Reflective Function Questionnaire for Youths (RFQY)
- YSR
Results

Table 2. Correlations between main study variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<th>8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Narrative coherence</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.57</td>
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<td>.45**</td>
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<td>.27*</td>
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<td>2. Attachment coherence</td>
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<td>—</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<td>3. Reflective function Scale A</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>.55</td>
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<td>—</td>
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<td>.16</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td>4. Reflective function Scale B</td>
<td>4.29</td>
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<td>—</td>
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<td>5. Externalizing</td>
<td>58.57</td>
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<td>.27*</td>
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<td>.17</td>
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<td>6. Internalizing</td>
<td>67.60</td>
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<td>—</td>
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<td>7. CAI word count</td>
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<td>8. Participant age</td>
<td>15.37</td>
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<td>—</td>
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Lind, Vanwoerden, Penner & Sharp (2019), JPA
Conclusions

• Attachment coherence and narrative coherence are related, but likely independent constructs evidenced by medium effect size.

• Narrative coherence and RF are related, but likely independent constructs.

• Confirms prior research that mentalizing contributes to narrative coherence.

• Mentalization may be the reflective meta-cognitive capacity that helps tailor a structured and reflective narrative of the past. Narrative coherence requires additional integration component of past and present self.

Lind, Vanwoerden, Penner & Sharp (2019), JPA
Implications for theoretical extension of MBT

- MBTs – especially those focusing caregivers and children, or adolescents, stimulate mentalizing where it is lost -- to ultimately scaffold personality development, of which narrative identity forms a key part.

- In adolescence, narrative identity begins to coalesce into “sophisticated meaning making strategies” (McAdams & McLean, 2013, p. 233). It is also in adolescence that vulnerability for sustained identity diffusion increases.

- Integrated sense of disparate experiences, chapters, themes, characters and ideological settings of the whole life provides foundation for navigating new experiences through meaning-making (McAdams, 2001).

- Narrative identity is the key to considering the self (vs. caregiver or therapist) as agent for opening up the epistemic highway.

- MBT theory and practice may consider explicit integration of narrative identity, since narrative identity distinguishes itself from other domains of personality by virtue of its integrative function (Syed & McLean, 2016).
Thank you!
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