



SA Federation for  
Mental Health

## PERSONALITY DISORDERS

### SCHIZOID PERSONALITY DISORDER

#### What it is:

Schizoid personality disorder is characterised by a persistent detachment from social relationships, and a restricted range of emotional expression in social settings. Individuals with this disorder appear to have no desire for intimacy, and they may not be interested in forming new relationships, or appear to get much pleasure from being part of a social or family group. These individuals will almost always prefer to spend time on their own rather than with others. Typically individuals with this disorder will also appear to find little enjoyment in most activities. This can include sensory, bodily or interpersonal experiences, such as having sex. Individuals with this disorder often seem indifferent to what others think of them, and they may appear to be oblivious to social cues giving the impression that they are socially inept. Generally they will not display many facial expressions, such as smiling or nodding, and their expressions may seem bland and emotionless. Individuals with this disorder have also claimed not to experience strong emotions such as joy or anger.

A diagnosis of schizoid personality disorder should not be made if this behaviour only occurs during the course of schizophrenia, or other mental disorders such as bipolar or depressive disorder with psychotic symptoms, autism spectrum disorder, or if it can be attributable to neurological or other medical conditions.

#### Common symptoms:

1. The individual shows no desire or pleasure in close relationships, which can include being part of a family
2. The individual always chooses solitary activities when possible
3. The individual has little, if any, interest in having sexual relations with another person
4. The individual seems to take pleasure in few, if any, activities, even hobbies or activities most people find pleasure in
5. The individual has no close friends or confidants, with the possible exception of first degree relatives
6. The individual appears to be indifferent to the praise or criticism of others
7. The individual shows emotional coldness or detachment, they may even appear to have no emotions

8. The individual has a flat or expressionless facial expression, and does not often show facial expressions such as smiling, nodding or frowning
9. The individual has difficulty expressing emotions, such as anger or joy



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### **Causes:**

There are genetic and physiological factors that can contribute to the development of schizoid personality disorder. There may be an increased prevalence of the disorder in individuals who have close relatives with either schizophrenia or schizotypal personality disorder.