

## Condition:



# Paranoid Personality Disorder

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## What is Paranoid Personality Disorder?

Paranoid Personality Disorder (PPD) is defined by a distrust of others and a continuous suspicion of their intentions. The individual lives in a hostile world and possesses a core belief that others have sinister motives that are threatening or demeaning, but lacks evidence or reasonable grounds for believing that this is the case.

## Paranoid Personality Disorder and Work

Paranoid Personality Disorder can make it difficult to keep and sustain employment. There may be interpersonal issues with managers and colleagues. Your perceptions of people and situations at work may be very different from those of others, which may cause conflict and stress.

It is your decision to disclose your PPD to your employer which can be a difficult choice to make. If you choose to disclose your personality disorder to your employer, it may be helpful to discuss your symptoms with them in order to assess whether any reasonable adjustments can be made to support you in work. Some of these can be:

- Flexible working including changing your working hours, working from home or changing your duties.
- Allowing for reasonable time off for appointments and treatment
- More frequent and/or longer breaks
- Your employer providing a quiet place for you to take your breaks or work

If you feel that these issues have affected you in the past and could potentially derail your chances of finding and keeping work, speak to your GP.

## What does Paranoid Personality Disorder Feel Like?

Paranoid Personality Disorder is commonly identified by the persistent recurrence of the following personality traits, typically lasting for six months or more.

### Suspicion

#### Poor sense of humour

You are concerned with people's hidden motives or agenda

Belief that one has been exploited by others and that this will continue

### Social isolation

#### Hostility

Persistently bearing grudges

Rigid, critical and unable to collaborate with others

## What causes Paranoid Personality Disorder?

Paranoid Personality Disorder can result from negative childhood experiences fostered by a threatening domestic atmosphere. It is prompted by extreme and unfounded parental rage and/or condescending parental influence that lead to profound childhood insecurities.

## Talking to Your GP or Health Professional

Personality disorders such as Paranoid Personality Disorder are typically diagnosed by a trained mental health professional, such as a psychotherapist or psychiatrist. Family physicians and general practitioners are generally not trained or well-equipped to make this type of psychological diagnosis.

## Treatments

Treatment of Paranoid Personality Disorder typically involves long-term psychotherapy with a mental health specialist that has experience in treating this kind of personality disorder. Medications may also be prescribed to help with specific troubling and debilitating symptoms.

**A therapist will set certain treatment goals in relation to paranoid personality to be worked in in therapy sessions, which may include the following:**

- To become more trusting of others.
- To work towards stopping unfounded questioning friends' loyalty.
- To work towards no longer reading hidden, demeaning, or threatening meanings into benign events.
- To become more forgiving of others.
- To not react with anger to perceived insults.

# Self-Management

Self-management is usually very difficult to implement unless the underlying causes have been addressed in consultation with a mental health professional. However, several wellness strategies have been known to be useful to manage symptoms and work well in conjunction with psychotherapy.

Many of the strategies below come under the Five ways to Wellbeing. A set of simple actions that fall into five broad headings which are easy to remember. There are some suggestions, based on the five categories.



## Take notice

Try mindfulness and relaxation. This could help you to feel calmer and manage unhelpful thoughts.



## Keep Learning

Stoicism is an ancient Greek philosophy that teaches people how to cope with the ups and downs of life without being excessively perturbed by events.



## Be active

Do regular exercise. Physical activities can distract you from your current mood, and help get rid of anxious or angry energy.



## Give Back

Try volunteering. This is a great way to reduce social isolation and work collaboratively towards shared goals.



## Keep a mood diary

This could help you identify things or situations that trigger a change in your mood. You can then use that information to learn how to cope with triggering situations in future.



## Eat a healthy diet

This can help you have the right nutrients and energy to cope with things when you're having a difficult time.



## Sleep

Get enough sleep. This can help you have the energy to cope with difficult feelings and experiences.

## Useful links

