



Case of Nathan James

SCHIZOTYPAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

Nathan James is a 35-year-old single Caucasian male who has been in outpatient treatment since early childhood. He is currently in an outpatient clinic at a university medical center. He is now in his eighth year of treatment. Prior to the current treatment, he had been diagnosed with a range of disorders, including schizophrenia. However, he denied having hallucinations and delusions. He did, however, report that when he was younger, he claimed to be having hallucinations to avoid going to school. At present, he is living at home with his mother and is unemployed despite a high intelligence. Although he desired intimate relationships with women, he has never had this experience. He also has no long-term friends.

Mr. James has also never held a job for more than a few days before being fired. This included volunteer work for which he was fired after a few days because he came across as odd. He would often say competitive and derogatory things toward others. He volunteered for a political campaign where he had many ideas that were different than those of the campaign. He told others that this low-level volunteer position was one of great responsibility. He has a hard time reading the emotions of others and thought at times others were jealous of him. He has little insight into how his behavior influences others. He is currently receiving disability for his mental illness.

Several years ago, he was reevaluated since there were questions concerning his diagnosis of schizophrenia.

After the evaluation, it was determined he met criteria for schizotypal personality disorder and not schizophrenia. During treatment, he reported that he wanted to be working at a high-level job that was consistent with his intelligence. He interviewed for a number of high-level jobs. Many of these were beyond his level of training and degrees achieved. He became upset when he received feedback from employment interviewers that he was not qualified for a high-level position such as CEO of a major television company. He was an avid TV watcher and president of a fan club for a girl act, which he thought qualified him for understanding television production. He would dress for these interviews in unconventional clothing such as a cowboy hat although he lived in a major East Coast city. He would blame not getting the job on being late to the meeting and in turn blaming that on public transportation. He would then write letters to public officials complaining about the delay of public transit. He sees himself as a victim who is not involved in the events that happen to him.

Following 3 years of therapy, he showed much progress. He moved from his mother's house to an apartment of his own. He was also able to obtain a job more consistent with his abilities. He became a good salesperson and was nominated for a management training program. He also met a woman, and they formed a positive relationship.

Clinical vignette provided by Kenneth Levy, PhD