

Kelly Saylor

Counseling & Consulting Services

ALL JOY. PEACE IN BELIEVING. ABOUNDING IN HOPE.

Avoidant Personality Disorder Overview

Links

[Avoidant Personality Disorder: Symptoms & Treatment \(clevelandclinic.org\)](https://www.clevelandclinic.org/health/condition/avoidant-personality-disorder)

[Avoidant PD vs Autism \(neurodivergentinsights.com\)](https://www.neurodivergentinsights.com/avoidant-personality-disorder-vs-autism/)

[Avoidant Personality Disorder - StatPearls - NCBI Bookshelf \(nih.gov\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28111111/)

[Avoidant Personality Disorder: 12 Signs, Causes, Coping Tips \(mind.help\)](https://www.mind.help.org/avoidant-personality-disorder/)

[Avoidant Personality Disorder \(AVPD\) - HelpGuide.org](https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-disorders/avoidant-personality-disorder-avpd.htm)

Avoidant Personality Disorder
Some signs and behaviors of avoidant personality disorder include:

- Choosing isolation over social situations.** (Illustration: A person sitting alone in a cage.)
- Hypersensitive to criticism.** (Illustration: A person sitting on the floor, looking down, surrounded by silhouettes of people.)
- Fear of being embarrassed.** (Illustration: A person standing in a crowd, looking away.)
- Poor self-image.** (Illustration: A person looking at their reflection in a mirror, appearing dissatisfied.)

Cleveland Clinic

Two types:

Avoidant Conflicted – avoids others due to fears of criticism, feels confused, unsettled, fear of embarrassment, etc.

Treatment – resolve ambivalence about approaching vs avoiding others

Reduce fears of ruminations regarding rejection and humiliation

Avoidant Hypersensitive – intensely wary and suspicious, alternates b/t being panicky/terrified, and thin-skinned/high strung, tends to be brooding and edgy, feels poorly understood

Treatment – reduce social withdrawal, wariness, and suspiciousness, increase ability to self-soothe, self-regulate emotions (more positive than terror)

Differential Diagnosis

*Social anxiety is triggered/ Avoidant PD is enduring

*Dependent PD seeks care and nurturance

*Schizotypal/schizoid is ego-syntonic, content with isolation

*Paranoid PD worries about the use of information, hostile motives, rather than avoiding being embarrassed, criticized or rejected

Overview for diagnosis (must have 4):

Diagnostic criteria for avoidant personality disorder involve a persistent pattern of at least four of the following behaviors:

- Avoiding job-related activities that involve working with others because they fear others will criticize or reject them.
- Being unwilling to get involved with others unless they're sure others will like them.
- Being passive or reserved in close relationships because they fear ridicule or humiliation.
- Extreme worry about others criticizing or rejecting them in regular social situations.
- Feeling self-conscious in new social situations because they feel inadequate.
- Assessing themselves as socially unskilled, unappealing or inferior to others.
- Being reluctant to take personal risks or try new activities because they may feel embarrassed.

Key Reminders

*Cluster C – involves personality disorders with anxious and fearful characteristics. These include avoidant personality disorder, dependent personality disorder, and obsessive-compulsive personality

disorder. Individuals within this cluster tend to experience significant anxiety, fear of abandonment, and an excessive need for control or perfectionism

Resources

*Recommend “The Personality Disorders” Treatment Planner – Wiley – 2nd Ed.

*Michael Nash – Personality Disorders training.

***Next month Dependent Personality Disorder (Cluster C)**

*Cluster A – Autonomous – (Teacher-Student) Not good with empathy

*Cluster B – Poorly Formed – Increase safety for them to admit

*Cluster C – Inadequate or incompetent – Journaling – attend to the world outside of themselves and facts about the world