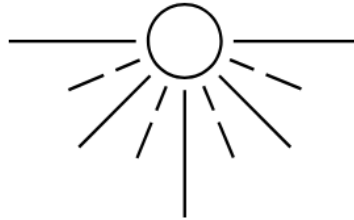




THE HOLISTIC COUNSELOR PODCAST



From the Mic to the Community

What is the DSM?

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

Understand the diagnostic manual and ask about your care.



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A little clarity.

Understand the topic. Find words for your questions.

A diagnosis can help name a pattern and open a door to care. It does not describe every part of who you are. Let's look at the manual clinicians may use.

1 A shared clinical language

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders helps clinicians diagnose mental health conditions. The American Psychiatric Association publishes it. DSM-5-TR means Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision. That edition name tells you which version a provider is using.

2 A diagnosis needs context

An assessment looks at symptoms, their effect on your life, and your history. A clinician also checks for other causes. Reading a list online is not the same as having an assessment. A diagnosis cannot tell your whole story.

3 A manual is not a treatment plan

Ask why a diagnosis fits, whether it is provisional, and how it affects care. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases are related systems, but their categories are not identical.

Research & perspective

The American Psychiatric Association explains the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders's purpose and relationship to the International Classification of Diseases. This guide does not reproduce its copyrighted diagnostic criteria or provide a self-diagnosis checklist.

General education for adults. This is not therapy, diagnosis, or an individual treatment plan. Sources and helpful links are on page 4.

Let's pause and reflect.

Your answers can stay private. Take this at your own pace.

Choose one question or explore all three. Skip anything that feels like too much. You do not need to revisit painful details to use this guide.

1 What do I hope a diagnosis would help me understand?

2 What concerns do I have about a label?

3 What part of my experience might a short label leave out?

One next step

Ask your clinician to explain any diagnosis in plain language. You can request time to discuss what it means to you.

If reflection brings up too much, pause. Reach out to someone you trust or a qualified professional. You do not have to do all of this today.

Continue the conversation.

Bring your questions. Learn more. Reach for support.

QUESTIONS TO ASK A PROFESSIONAL

- ☐ Why does this diagnosis fit, and what alternatives did you consider?
- ☐ Is it provisional or established?
- ☐ How will it affect treatment, records, or insurance?

Listen with curiosity

Episode 85 - Explore one diagnosis, obsessive-compulsive personality disorder, through a focused podcast conversation.

Selected conversations are starting points, not an exhaustive list or treatment recommendations. Guests share their own perspectives.

Sources & useful resources

American Psychiatric Association: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders questions

National Institute of Mental Health: Understanding psychotherapy

Confirm services, credentials, location eligibility, and fees directly. Linked organizations operate independently.

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United States and territories: the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline supports people in emotional distress or a suicidal crisis. [Call 988](#) · [Text 988](#) · [Chat online](#)

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