

# Ms. Z. Muses

Metacognition, Aphantasia...maybe other cool stuff too!

# Why the DSM?

- Describe a disorder (need a name and description to study it)
- Predict its future course
- Imply appropriate treatment
- Stimulate research into its causes, but NOT presume to explain the cause
  
- Against: “‘diagnosing’ people’s problems in terms of their ‘symptoms’ presumes a mental ‘illness.’”
  - Myers, David G. *Psychology* 8<sup>th</sup> ed, 644.

# DSM Diagnosis

When making a diagnosis, some of the following questions are considered:

1) Is a *clinical syndrome* present?

- Disorders diagnosed in youth, cognitive, mental, substance-related, psychotic, mood, anxiety, somatoform, factitious, dissociative, eating, sexual and gender identity, sleep, impulse-control, and adjustment disorders, as well as “other conditions that may be a focus of clinical attention”

2) Is a *personality disorder* or *intellectual disability* present?

3) Is a *another medical condition* also present?

4) Are *psychosocial* or *environmental problems* also present?

5) Is a disability present? (WHODAS 2.0)

# Label yourself

- Thinker
- Doer
- Dreamer
- Talker
- Squirmer
- Introvert / Extrovert/ Ambivert

- What do these labels tell us? Do they help us? Can they hurt?

Ex: my daughter's labels (autism, moderate-severe mental retardation [now modified to moderate-severe intellectual disability]) mean that she gets extra funding. Therefore, she gets a full CEA, and much of her medical equipment is covered by the Provincial government.

# Who is Mrs. Z. (and why does it matter?)

- Introvert (who occasionally performs, prefers 1:1)
- Thinker (thinking almost non stop...thinking is being...)
- Known traits: intelligent, metacognitive, kind, empathetic, creative, quiet, outdoorsy, positive, diplomatic
- Sometimes external labels are limiting (ex: shy librarian)
- Sometimes there are things happening in our head that no one knows about or very few people would understand (ex: aphantasia)

# What if you have no mind's eye?

- \* In 2015 this condition was given the term “Aphantasia”
  - \* Phantasia is a Greek word meaning “the process by which all images are presented to us” (commonly referred to as imagination)
  - \* Aphantasmics have imaginations and are creative BUT cannot “see” anything in their “mind’s eye.” Many of us HATE this term because of it.
  - \* Many aphantasmics cannot imagine other senses either (ex: imagine how the sun feels on your skin, or the taste of an apple pie).
  - \* Aphantasmics can be just as empathetic as others!

# Aphantasia

My Story

# Further Reading on Aphantasia

- \* [“This Man Had No Idea His Mind is ‘Blind’ Until Last Week”](#) *BBC*
- \* [“My Mind’s Eye is Blind, So What’s Going On in My Brain,”](#) *New Scientist*, April 2016 Feature *online*
- \* [“Blind in the Mind”](#) *New Scientist*, April 23 2016 p34-37
- \* [“Aphantasia: How it Feels to be Blind in Your Mind”](#) Blake Ross, April 22 2016, Facebook (you can Google it)
- \* Additional resources can be found on the Library Learning Commons website under “Teacher” → McConnell → Aphantasia

# Mini-Assignment / Discussion\*

- \* What would you have to learn / research in order to accurately catalogue it beyond a vague “condition?”
  - fMRI, PET, case studies, what would be the baseline? The control?
- \* How might it be qualified?
  - \* Could it be considered a disability?
  - \* Could it be a spectrum disorder like Autism?
  - \* Could it be a disease like Alzheimer’s?
  - \* What are the pros/ cons of research? Labels?

# Decision time

- \* With a partner, decide whether or not Aphantasia is a condition that could eventually become part of the DSM.
  - \* Yes / No
  - \* 2+ reasons to support your stance
  - \* 1 question you'd ask someone who identifies as aphantasmic.

Are any of you curious if you might be aphantasmic? Do you wonder how your ability to imagine stacks up against others? Let's try some things!

# What is Metacognition?

- \* Thinking about Thinking
- \* Knowing about Knowing
- \* Understanding when and how to use strategies for learning, problem solving, physical activities...
- \* Living with more awareness and purpose because you are more CONSCIOUS as you go about your life and make decisions
- \* What I do (ex: running, working)

# What's Your Learning Style

- \* **Visual:** these learners prefer to see things. Look for pictures, charts, diagrams, graphic organizers, videos...
- \* **Auditory:** these learners tend to like words, so learn best by listening to people talk (yes, even lecture), talking it out with another person, listening to music, or through reading and writing.
- \* **Kinesthetic:** these learners retain more information when they use the “hands-on” approach. Kinesthetic learners tend to like labs and demonstrations, projects where you are physically doing something, or assignments with manipulatives / crafting.

# Test it out—what is your strongest learning style?

- \* Visual—visualization exercises

- \* Auditory—sounds exercise, [Kllr Bs](#), jumble...

It's Prttey fnuny how we can raed tihs einrte snetnece wtih all tehse ltters all out of palce, and we can cnotniue to keep raednig and sitll meka snese of waht we are raeding. No mttar how mnay tmies you raed tihs oevr and oevr you can sitll mkae snese of it. How is tihs pssoible?

- \* Kinesthetic—head and tummy, rhythm...

# So... who has a blind mind's eye?

- \* Raise your hand if
- \* You were able to easily visualize.
- \* You were able to easily hear things that weren't there.
- \* You can imagine smells.
- \* You can imagine emotions/ feelings.
- \* You can imagine tastes.
- \* You or someone you know may have aphantasia.