



## Diagnosis Day - Case Studies



**Directions:** Identify the primary symptoms confronting each individual and then diagnose each. Your choices for diagnoses are in the table below. Every disorder is NOT used and they may be used more than once.

### DISORDER OPTIONS:

Anxiety Disorders	Schizophrenic Disorders	Somatoform Disorders	Dissociative Disorders	Personality Disorders	Mood Disorders
Generalized Anxiety Disorder	Paranoid Schizophrenia	Conversion Disorder	Dissociative Identity Disorder	Antisocial	Major Depression
Phobia	Disorganized Schizophrenia	Hypochondriasis	Dissociative Amnesia	Narcissistic	Bipolar Disorder
Panic Disorder	Catatonic Schizophrenia	Body Dysmorphic Disorder*	Dissociative Fugue	Borderline	Cyclothymic Disorder
OCD	Undifferentiated Schizophrenia	*see master list of disorders		Histrionic	Dysthymic Disorder
PTSD	Residual Schizophrenia				

**Case 1:** Leonard has a fear of going more than a few blocks away from his home and the university. For years, his fear kept him a virtual prisoner in this small geographical area. Although he knew of his fear, he did not know its underlying cause. During the course of psychoanalysis he was able to remember a frightening incident in his childhood. He had wandered away from his home and gone over to the railroad tracks, and a passing train scalded him with steam. This incident was the origin of his fear. His real motive for staying home was the fear acquired in this incident. The fear was so powerful that it dominated his whole life. It was never completely eradicated even though he recognized its source and could be objective enough to write a book about it.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case 2:** Betty, a girl of 15, was apprehended for stealing dresses from a department store. When her room at home was searched, it contained several dozen dresses, all stolen from the department stores in her city. Every dress was much too large for her to wear. Further investigation disclosed that she came from a well to do family, and had ample spending money for her age. She could have just about anything she asked her parents for, and had no need to steal anything. Questioned about her thefts, she admitted having no reason to steal. She merely explained that she frequently had an uncontrollable urge to steal large dresses.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case 3:** Ellen danced into the party and immediately became the center of attention. With sweeping gestures of her arms and dramatic displays of emotion, she boasted about her career as an actress in a local theater group. During a private conversation, a friend inquired about the rumors that she was having some difficulties in her marriage. In an outburst of anger, she denied any problems and claimed that her marriage was "as wonderful and charming as ever." Shortly thereafter, while drinking her third martini, she fainted and had to be taken home.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case 4:** A young man believed that he was destined to become Emperor of the United States. "I could do a lot for the world," he said, "The U.S. has Presidents, but will it ever have an emperor?" I'll bet you think I'm nuts to ask about that. I must have the morning paper to keep track of world affairs. If the people of the United States want me to rule them, I'm willing to do so; but no one has been to see me and tell me. I'll be glad to lead them." Later he spoke of hearing public announcements that he was to be crowned emperor. "It's been heard all over the country...The world is in chaos. Thousands will be killed. I'm not a god or a devil, but I'm a supernatural being!" All national will be under his rule but Egypt. Along with these delusional convictions, the patient believed that attempts to kill him were repeatedly being made so that he lived, like Damocles, in constant danger.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case 5:** A workman was thrown to the ground by a "shock" while attempting to throw an electrical switch. Shortly thereafter he discovered that he could not use his right leg. He was bedridden for several months and later could move about only with the aid of crutches and a brace. A suit for a large sum was brought against the company for which he had been working at the time of the accident. In the course of the trial, evidence was presented indicating that the switch had been carrying a much lower voltage than the workman had supposed it carried. Furthermore, the switch was so constructed that it seemed almost impossible for anyone to receive a shock from it. A medical examination showed that there was no nerve injury as the main claimed and that no damage had been done to the muscles of the leg. Nevertheless, the man was unable to use his leg and so was unable to earn a living for his family. The court allowed the man some compensation, though not nearly as much as he had demanded. The case was closed. Within a short time thereafter all symptoms of paralysis disappeared. The man was able to perform his duties as well as ever.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case 6:** Donald (age 22) attended college at night while working to support his forty-five year old mother. He was in love with a girl whom he hoped to marry. Donald's mother, however, did not like the girl and tried to break them up. The girl could see that Donald could never be able to support her and his mother. She also knew that the three of them could never get along together under the same roof. She gave Donald a month to decide what to do about it. A week before the deadline, he suddenly disappeared. He was found two weeks later in another state, completely unable to say who he was, where he was, or what he was planning to do. He could not recall, or even recognize, the name of either his mother or his girlfriend. Obviously this was his solution to the conflict. This behavior was not inconsistent with his previous history. In his earlier school days, he had frequently forgotten his homework and been absent minded. Forgetting things was already a convenient habit for him.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 7:** A man had fear of the number thirteen. At first he controlled his fear by staying in bed on the thirteenth of each month, thus avoiding contact with the calendar and newspaper dates. One day he realized that the word twenty-seventh had thirteen letters, and he began spending two days a month in bed. Later he avoided passing a sign which had thirteen letters in it that hung on his normal route to work; he began to hop over the thirteenth step in each flight of stairs. Finally all his actions revolved around his fear.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 8:** Mr. D. is a married man, 30 years of age. He had a severe anxiety attack and after became chronically and so intensely anxious that he was admitted to the hospital. He seemed perpetually afraid and complained that he had the feeling that something terrible was going to happen. Over and over again he would repeat, "I'm afraid of something happening, and I don't know just what." He was always tense, irritable, and restless. He had difficulty getting to sleep. He had headaches and sweated excessively. His appetite was poor.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 9:** Shelly paraded into the party drunk and continued to drink throughout the night. Laughing and giggling, she flirted with many of the men and to two of them expressed her "deep affection." Twice during the evening she disappeared for almost half an hour, each time with a different man. After a violent argument with one of them, because he took "too long" to get her a drink, she locked herself into the bathroom and attempted to swallow a bottle of aspirin. Her friends encouraged her to go home, but she was afraid to be alone in her apartment.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 10:** Mr. S. would spend most of his time sitting on a chair by the side of his bed, moaning and wringing his hands. His facial expression was one of the deepest dejection and his eyes were reddened from weeping. As a rule, Mr. S. would not speak unless spoken to, but occasionally he would address another patient or a member of the ward staff. At such times he would usually blame himself in the harshest terms for having "ruined my family," saying that he did not deserve to live.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 11:** A brilliant student, Clarence suffered a severe breakdown during his third year of college and was admitted to a mental hospital. While he was in the hospital Clarence heard voices and often talked of a machine to control human thoughts. Once the therapist approached him on the hospital grounds and called his name but was unable to get his attention. Clarence was staring into space, the tip of his index finger pressed against his lips. The therapist found it difficult to move the finger but finally succeeded in raising Clarence's arm above his head. There it remained in the awkward position in which the therapist had placed it. The therapist pinched Clarence and stuck him with a pin, but Clarence did not move an eyelid. He remained silent and motionless and had to be forcibly fed for 10 days. Then suddenly he emerged from this state, exclaiming, "I have been born again."

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 12:** A man married against his family's wishes. He lost his job and was forced to appeal to his family for support. An uncle gave him some money, but warned him he would get no more unless he divorced his wife. On the way home, the patient was held up and his money taken from him. He decided to jump into the river. But on the way to the river, he forgot who he was and where he lived and that he was married; nor could he account for his being in the locality. He became perplexed and alarmed and asked a policeman for help. He was taken to a hospital and one day later, recovered his memory of these incidents and his identity under hypnosis.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 13:** “This is not my shape or face Mary has given me her glass eye and she has my noise. Bob Hope, Crooken Mouth Peter Lin Hayes, has given me his lopsided shoulder and terrible mans figure. He sold his shape to Mr. Albright, I want my own things. Frances, Pinky tongue. She has my noise. Cathy Crosby has most of my things I want them. I have little Reds Kork leg from the hotel he lives most of the time and a few other bad features I can’t mention he gave me. I guess knowing him you must know what it is. Delores club finger and two other fingers she had smashed in a defense plant Ruth. Peggy or Hildegard has my hands and has gave me her large lump in the back of the neck and her large head. Ida Jeanette has my eyes and hair and other things so make her give them back. I don’t want these things anymore the Contest is over. I want my own things back and also my daughter. Doctor Cameron has Patricia and I want her back immediately I’m going to the police. I know all hers and my pictures with my attorney.”

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 14:** John, a patient at the state mental hospital, appears to be happy and elated. He frequently makes humorous remarks, laughs at them himself, and is successful in making others laugh too. In expressing his thoughts he jumps from one topic to another without following any particular course. If, while he is talking about his family, the psychologist suddenly interjects a comment about the weather, John immediately switches his conversation to the weather or any other topic the psychologist introduces. Furthermore, he is hyperactive. He is either drumming with his fingers, playing with a pencil, or engaging others with his rapid talk. His present illness will probably be followed by several years of “normal” behavior.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 15:** Rocky went to college only because of pressure from his older brother. Unfortunately, he got into several courses he hated, so that the entire school day seemed difficult and dull. Shortly before midterms, Rocky developed a thought that he had not set his alarm clock. He would lean out of bed to check, but it was always set. Sometimes, he would wake up in the middle of the night with the terrible feeling that the alarm was not set, but it always was. Still he continued to go through this alarm checking ritual at least once every night and often more frequently. Finally, his counselor helped him realize that his recurring thought was based on his unconscious desire to sleep through his morning classes, and that the behavior was unconscious method of counter-acting these unrecognized feelings. After his talk with the counselor, his behavior began to fade away.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 16:** William spent most of the time talking about his trip to Europe, his new Mercedes, and his favorite French restaurants. People seemed bored being around him, but he kept right on talking. When he made a critical remark about how one of the women was dressed-and hurt her feelings-he could not apologize for his obvious blunder. He tried to talk his way around it, and even seemed to be blaming her for being upset.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Case Study 17:** A woman believed that her son-in-law planned to sexually assault and kill her. Her reaction to this idea was expressed in many letters sent to friends and relatives, mailed surreptitiously, and causing the daughter and son-in-law much embarrassment. She believed her daughter’s husband to be a reincarnation of a lover from her youth. She brought out old pictures to verify the resemblance and then launched into longer stories about the man to whom she had been engaged as a girl.

**Primary Symptoms:**

**Diagnosis:**