Chapter 13 Psychological Disorders

People with narcissistic personality disorder have an inflated or grandiose sense of self. Those with paranoid personality disorder show an extreme degree of suspiciousness or mistrust of others. Those with schizoid personality disorder have little if any interest in social relationships, display a limited range of emotional expression, and are perceived as distant and aloof. And those with borderline personality disorder tend to have stormy relationships with others, dramatic mood swings, and an unstable self-image. In all, the DSM identifies ten personality disorders (see Concept Chart 13.6). The most widely studied of these is antisocial personality disorder (APD), which is the focus of our attention here.

Symptoms of Antisocial Personality Disorder

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People with antisocial personalities (sometimes called psychopaths or sociopaths) show a flagrant disregard for the rules of society and a lack of concern for the welfare of others. They are not psychotic; they maintain contact with reality. But they tend to act on impulse—doing what they want, when they want. They are typically irresponsible and take advantage of other people for their own needs or personal gain. They lack remorse for their misdeeds or mistreatment of others and appear to be untroubled by anxiety or undeterred by the threat of punishment or by punishment itself.

Some people with antisocial personalities engage in criminal behavior, but most are law-abiding (Robins, Tipp, & Przybeck, 1991). They may display a high