

## Kleptomania

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### ABSTRACT

Kleptomania is defined by the following diagnostic criteria such as recurrent failure to resist impulses to steal objects that are not required for personal use or for their monetary value; elevating sense of tension immediately before committing the theft; pleasure, gratification, or relief at the time of committing the theft; the stealing is not committed to express anger or vengeance and is not in response to a delusion or a hallucination; the stealing is not

not better accounted for by conduct disorder, a manic episode, or antisocial personality disorder. Kleptomania is also characterized by an anxiety driven urge to perform an act that is pleasurable in the moment but causes significant distress and dysfunction. Kleptomania has been thought-out to be an anti-depressive behavior because of its high rate of comorbidity with depression. Kleptomania can be seen as a subject's mis-adaptation to a depressive mood state and, as such, the disorder could be context dependent.

**Key Words:** *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder, 5th Edition; Impulse; Kleptomania; Stealing*

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### INTRODUCTION

Kleptomania can be defined as the impulse to steal objects not required for personal use or their monetary value, the inability to control that impulse, repetitive behaviour and impaired inhibition [1]. According to the recent Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-IV); kleptomania can be characterized by a recurrent failure to resist an impulse to steal objects that are not required for personal use or their monetary value; an elevating sense of tension immediately before committing the theft; an experience of pleasure, gratification or release at the time of committing the theft; and stealing that is not performed due to anger, vengeance, psychotic symptomatology, mania, or antisocial personality disorder [2]. Kleptomania is also characterized by recurrent episodes of compulsive stealing. Stealing can be frequently occurring in the form of shoplifting. The items included are often of trivial value and are not required by the individual stealing them. The compulsions to steal are ego-dystonic and upsetting to the patient. Kleptomania can be recently categorized in the disruptive, impulse control, and conduct disorders section of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition [3, 4]. Kleptomania is considered to be more common in females. Impulsivity, a major psychopathological construct, is a key feature of several psychiatric disorders, including kleptomania [5]. Failure in controlling behaviours and emotions that violate the rights of others are the blueprint characteristic of disorders of kleptomania. Frequently the person experiences an elevating sense of tension before committing the act, relief while committing it and, not rarely, feelings of guilt or self-reproach afterwards [6].

Kleptomania has been thought-out to be an anti-depressive behaviour because of its high rate of comorbidity with depression. Kleptomania can be seen as a subject's mis-adaptation to a depressive mood state and as such the disorder could be context-dependent [7]. Individuals with kleptomania observed that the objects stolen often are of little value and affordable. After stealing the items, the individual will then typically discard, hoard, secretly return, or give them away. Individuals may avoid stealing when an immediate arrest is probably, but the chances of apprehension are often not fully taken into account; although a sense of pleasure, gratification or relief is experienced at the time of the theft, individuals will describe a feeling of guilt, remorse or depression soon afterwards [8, 9]. Rates of substance use disorders are elevated among family members of individuals with kleptomania, proposing both disorders may share common risk factors. Dysfunction in the dopamine reward pathway has also been implicated in the development of both kleptomania and substance use disorders [10]. Kleptomania could be correlated with significant clinical impairment in both men and women; and, men and women would differ in clinical course, phenomenology, and co-occurring disorders (particularly eating, bipolar spectrum, and impulse control disorders like compulsive sexual behaviours) [11].

### CONCLUSION

The recent diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, 5th edition; diagnostic criteria for kleptomania reflect the urge-driven quality of the behaviour: such as recurrent failure to resist an impulse to steal unneeded objects; an elevating sense of tension before

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committing the theft; an experience of pleasure, gratification or release at the time of committing the theft; and the stealing is not performed out of anger, vengeance, or due to psychosis. Kleptomania is a rare disorder that occurs in 0.3%–0.6% of the population and is defined as “the recurrent failure to resist impulses to steal items even though the items are not needed for personal use or their monetary value”. Kleptomania is considered to be more common in females. Impulsivity, a major psychopathological construct, is a key feature of several psychiatric disorders, including kleptomania. Failure in controlling behaviours and emotions that violate the rights of others is the hallmark characteristic of disorders of kleptomania.

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