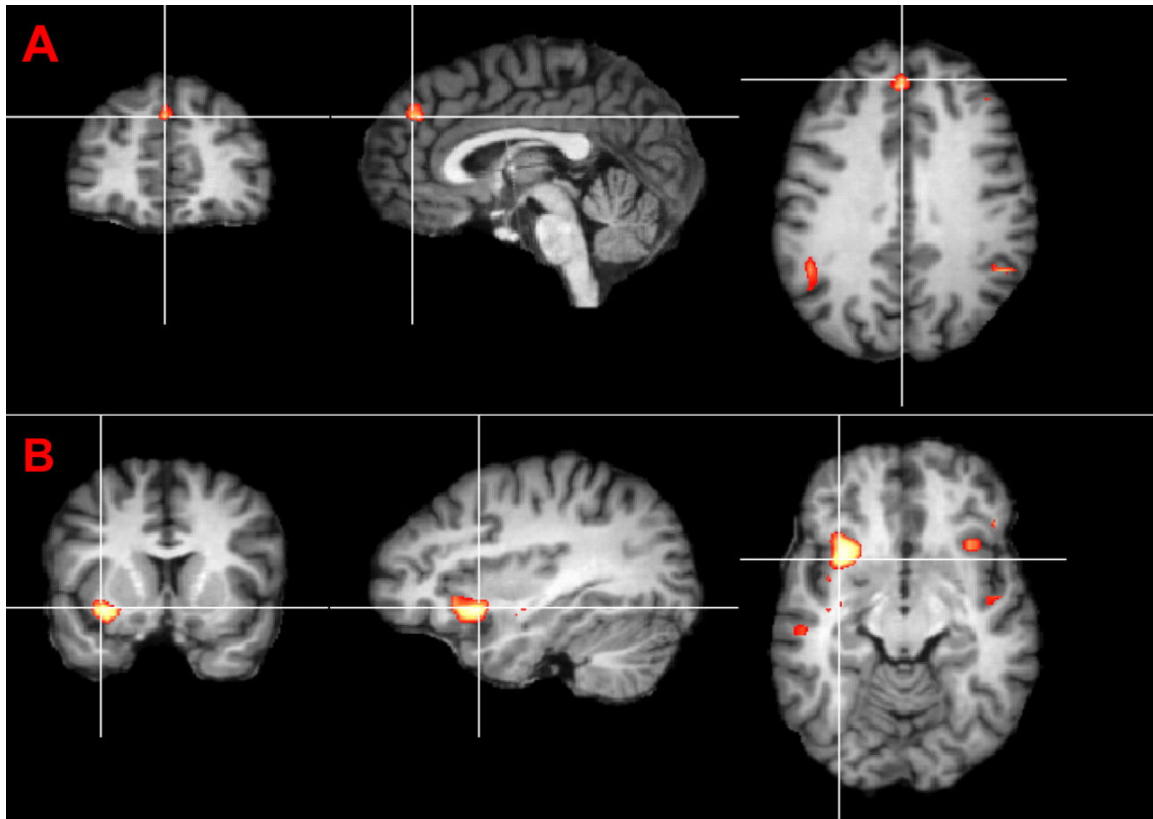# Pathotronics

One way of getting useful mental states is to "borrow" from mental disorders. Mental disorders represent typical failure modes of the human brain, and are hence easy to recreate. With the right psychosurgery or ego editing parts of the symptoms can be recreated without the big drawbacks.

Insertion works just like all other psychosurgery, but with a +20 bonus since it exploits natural faultmodes of the brain. A downside is that if the person suffers trauma or a derangement while having this kind of mindware in their minds they are likely to get the condition for real.

Many of these ones are also found in various forms of petals, especially the religious themes, depersonalisation, derealisation and pronoia.

>   **Depressive realism**: depressed people have a more correct estimate of the likelihood of bad things happening to others (and an overestimation of the risks to them) than normal people, who are generally overconfident. This modification reduces optimism bias without the emotional effects of depression. Users become level-headed, realistic and (to non-treated outsiders) somewhat pessimistic. SV: 1d10/2 [Cost: Moderate]

>   **Monomania**: a deliberate focus on one issue, making it (temporarily) the One True Goal of one's life. Monomanias can be broad topics or compulsions towards a particular project.

There are regular rumours that hypercorps, lunar citystates or ideological groups use this kind of treatment to get a loyal, obsessive workforce. SV: 1d10/2 [Cost: Moderate]

Pronoia: Just like paranoids have delusions that outside powers are trying to harm them, pronoids believe there is a conspiracy to help them. While still as delusional it provides security and happiness, and a surprising number of people have deliberately tweaked themselves with pronoia to avoid depression. SV: 1d10 [Cost: Low]

Clang association: A form of thought disorder where sound matters in associations, making sound-alike words be alike. As a modification clanging makes people speak (and think) in rhyming, punning ways without impairing thinking (much). This is very popular among some scum barge performers. SV: 1d10/2 [Cost: Low]

Hypervigilance: A slight re-tuning of the arousal systems a la PTSD, but with some mood modification to avoid anxiety. The result is that the person is constantly scanning the environment for threats, easily startled and ready for anything. Gives a +20 bonus to detect ambushes and react quickly to them (+10 initiative). SV: 1d10 [Cost: Low]

Phobic speedup reflex: Phobics can detect the presence of what they are afraid of very rapidly by using a low-level visual system-amygdala link. This modification borrows the link but does not connect it to fear, but rather other pre-planned responses. For example, on seeing a certain kind of weapon the spontaneous reaction is to start a pre-trained evasion or disarmament kata. +50 initiative, but only on the pre-defined action. An enemy ready for it has a +30 to defend. SV: 1 [Cost: Moderate]

Emergency persona: An alternate personality is imprinted, to be activated under certain extreme circumstances. This personality has the same skills and knowledge as the "real" person, but different motivation, mood and psychology (and quite possibly even different positive or negative traits). Usually intended to ensure that in a real crisis the person will take the necessary actions to save themselves - or save others and go down with the ship. SV: 1d10 [Cost: Moderate]

Religious tuning: By creating semi-epileptic foci in the temporal lobe, disinhibiting agency detectors, change the level of serotonin binding or other manipulations a person can become more likely to have religious feelings and experiences. These range from a mild increase in self-transcendence with the serotonin tuning ("zen serotonin") to intermittent religious ecstasies (the "Dostoevsky Map"). Even if the person is not religious it can be enjoyable to experience the state. These days religious tuning is more done with petals than psychosurgery. SV: 1d10/2 [Cost: Low]

Positive hypomania: Hypomania with the positive mood and energy, but without the irritability. Essentially tuning into hyperthymia on a semi-permanent basis. SV: 1d10/2 [Cost: Low]

Exercise bulimia: A tuned-down version of the disorder, giving the user a strong urge to exercise (but not excessively). Another method of doing this is "beneficial addiction" that

essentially makes the user addicted to something useful (e.g. cross-checking the flight logs, updating software security). SV: 1d10/2 [Cost: Moderate]

Narcissism: A personality tuning that increases the level of self-centeredness, need for admiration, interest in power and prestige, and reduces empathy. While not as severe as real narcissistic personality disorder, it is basically a diluted version. Popular among a certain type of ambitious people who think they are held back by a "wussy" emotional background. Similar tunings can provide increased levels of antisocial personality with no increased impulsiveness or lowered frustration threshold. SV: 1d10 [Cost: Low]

Schizoid introversion: Some transhumans need to work far away from company. By taking traits from schizoid personality disorder they can be tuned to not care much about the outside world. They do not desire or enjoy close relationships, including being part of a family or having sexual relations. The tuning usually tries to avoid the reduction of pleasure seen in real personality disorder, but sometimes a flattening of affect, detachment and coldness is desired. SV: 1d10 [Cost: Low]

Multiple personalities: While it is entirely possible to run multiple forks at the same time, sometimes it is useful to bring out the differences in order to maximize problem-solving diversity. With this tuning some aspects of a persons personality (or hidden 'eigenpersonas' inside them) are brought to the foreground. Very successful tuning (critical successes) can bring forward extreme aspects with special traits not truly found in the full personality, like a sociopatic side with improved manipulation or an aesthetic personality with impeccable taste. SV: 1d10 [Cost: Moderate]

On-demand depersonalisation: Sometimes it is useful to have an out-of-body experience or think that one's pain is somebody else's problem. This modification makes it possible for a person to zone out, becoming quite detached from themselves and what happens to them. Very useful for agents who might be captured or people worried about ending forks of themselves. Gives a +30 bonus to resist torture or other influences while activated. SV: 1d10 [Cost: Moderate]

Derealization: Sometimes it is practical to not experience the world as real, for example when going up against TITAN-constructed horrors or having to do necessary but dirty wetwork. When this tuning is activated it is as if the outside world was seen from behind a pane of glass, or that it is just a simspace. This gives a +30 bonus to resist psychological stress - but the disconnect tends to add 1 SV per week kept running (It will last until deactivated by psychosurgery). SV: 1d10 [Cost: Low]