Am I Delusional?

1. Background
Delusions are a significant feature of mental illnesses and can occur in many clinical conditions (Maher, 2001).
- The standard clinical definition (American Psychiatric Association. DSM-5 Task Force, 2013) is highly contentious.
- Much of the literature holds elements such as bizarreness of content and incorrigibility of belief as defining factors of delusion.
- On closer inspection, delusions are not so easy to pin down.

2. Objective
- Highlight some of the difficulties associated with the definition of delusion
- Clarify the phenomenology.

3. Methodology
- Examination of some of the philosophical, psychological and psychiatric literature with regard to the definition of delusion.
- Examination of first person descriptions of the experience.
- Consideration of my experience of my own mental activity and experiences from my therapeutic work.
- Identify areas for empirical research

4. Questions
Are delusions one kind of thing?
Are delusions a heterogeneous group?
Are we comparing oranges with armchairs?
What are the external characteristics of delusion?
Can we measure them?

5. Findings
**Extraneous Characteristics of Delusional include:**
- Distress
- Pervasiveness
- Impact on behaviour
- Impairment on functioning
- Affect at onset
- Emotional salience
- Rationality
- Pseudology

Some of these characteristics might be measurable by the subjective experiencing them and/or a third party observer.

6. Being slantly (sub-clinically) delusional might be good for your mental health

7. More Questions
**Different kinds?**
Do the different characteristics at onset and during maintenance tell us something about different kinds of delusions?

**Embodied, Extended, Enactive, Embedded:**
What place might there be for a 4E framework?

8. Next Steps:
More analysis of the literature

References:
All life is problem-solving / Karl Popper
Am I Delusional? / Jennifer Rosen
"...we are all capable of having convictions and it is a universal human characteristic to hold on to our own mistaken judgements." (Jaspers (1913), 1963, p.63)
References:


