Mental health as "queered" coherence: A metaphysical toolkit for disordering psychology

The paper criticises two aspects that define mental health training, arguing that they produce a "colonization" of the human psyche, and proposes a conceptual framework that counters them. Whether acquired in Schools of Psychology or Medicine, mental health expertise consists in identifying disorders, using psychological tests that measure dysfunction, and applying theories, methods, interventions or pharmacology to treat the diagnosed conditions. Thus, what makes a mental health specialist is knowledge about disorders, and this leads to a binary conceptualisation of the mental reality: as either "normal" or "abnormal". Health is not construed as a personal, experiential, atypical, creatively constructed reality. Drawing on insights from the neurodiversity movement and the practices of neuroqueering, I offer a philosophical toolkit that could train students and practicing clinicians to feel comfortable with dis-order and unstandardized personal ways of creating health. The metaphysical tools consist in different descriptions (definitions) of "what things are" that eliminate the borders of binaries concerning the psychological reality: e.g. boundaries between positivity of typical mental health and negativity of disorder; irrationality and meaning; health and disrupted experience; disorder and person. The toolkit is intended to disorder the "rationality" of psychology and is illustrated with testimonies of experts by experience.