

Family Support Group Discussion of:  
**Borderline Personality Disorder**

Thursday September 5, 2013

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**The Goals for Tonight's Presentation**

*To better understand:*

1. The definition of Borderline Personality Disorder
2. The challenges faced by individuals suffering from Borderline Personality Disorder
3. The role of family in Recovery

**What is Borderline Personality Disorder?**

1. Borderline Personality Disorder, or BPD, is a serious mental illness.
2. Borderline Personality Disorder is a *Diagnosis, or description*, pertaining to this mental illness.

**When and Why was Borderline Personality Disorder identified as a mental illness?**

1. **When:** "Borderline Personality Disorder", was officially recognized and given a name by the mental health professional community in **1980**.
2. **Why:** The purpose of this formal designation was to help promote **effective treatment and recovery** for those suffering from specific symptoms related to this mental illness.

**What does it mean?  
Borderline Personality Disorder**

1. **Borderline Personality Disorder** was originally thought to be on the **spectrum, or "border"** of mental illness between psychotic and neurotic behavior.
2. The term and diagnosis, **Borderline Personality Disorder**, is still used, but the concept of somewhere on the **"border"** between psychotic and neurotic behavior is **no longer** considered relevant.

**What does it look like?:  
Borderline Personality Disorder**

*Borderline Personality Disorder is a serious mental illness characterized by a **PERSISTENT** and **ONGOING** pattern of the following:*

1. Unstable Mood
2. Unstable and Intense Relationships
3. Unstable Self-Image and Identity Confusion
4. Unstable Behaviors

**How and Why is someone diagnosed Borderline Personality Disorder?**

1. People with Borderline Personality Disorder have at least five (5) of nine (9) symptoms.
2. The symptoms are considered persistent and ongoing.
3. The symptoms often interfere with everyday levels of functioning and existence.
4. A psychiatric professional will diagnosis the symptoms to help in treatment and the recovery process.

**What are the 9 Symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder?**

**Symptoms 1-3:**

1. Unstable and Intense Relationships
2. Impulsive acts with a high risk of harm (such as spending, sex, reckless driving, substance use, shoplifting, or binge eating)
3. Rapid shifts from a normal mood to depression, irritability or anxiety

**Continued: What are the 9 Symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder?**

**Symptoms 4-6:**

4. Inappropriate, intense anger or lack of control of anger
5. Suicide threats, thoughts, or behaviors, or self-mutilation
6. Persistent identity confusion, including self-image, sexual orientation, long-term goals or career choice, choice of friends, or values

**Continued: What are the 9 Symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder?**

**Symptoms 7-9:**

7. Chronic feelings of emptiness
8. Frantic efforts to avoid real or imagined abandonment
9. Brief, stress-related paranoia or loss of touch with reality

**What "Causes" Borderline Personality Disorder?**

- **Biological and Biochemical Factors:** There is some evidence that inheritance and other biological or biochemical factors may be involved.
- **Psychological Factors:** Childhood trauma, such as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect, or prolonged separation is far more common in people with this disorder than in the general population.

**The Course of the Illness**

1. The course of this illness is variable and often prolonged
2. It is more common in women
3. It usually surfaces in teen years or young adulthood
4. Symptoms usually emerge at a time of significant change or separation
5. All individuals with this disorder experience upheaval, chaos and pain

### What Happens to People who have Borderline Personality Disorder?

- Sometimes individuals with this illness can be managed with outpatient treatment.
- Sometimes individuals with this illness require periodic brief hospitalizations when symptoms are intense.
- Sometimes individuals with this illness require longer inpatient treatment to provide safety while they learn healthier patterns of behavior.
- Most individuals with this illness make a reasonable work and social adjustment.

### What does Treatment Include?

*Treatment for those suffering from BPD may include the following:*

1. Inpatient or day hospitalization when symptoms make individuals a danger to self or others.
2. Individual, group and family therapy, support and education
3. Medicines
4. Cognitive and Behavioral Modification
5. Healthy Communication, Social and Coping Skills Training
6. Limit-Setting, Increased Structure and Consistent Rules

### What is DBT?

- Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) was invented by Marsha Linehan, a psychologist, who modified traditional cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for the treatment of chronically suicidal and self-injurious individuals with borderline personality disorder (BPD).
- Dr. Linehan recently revealed her own struggles with BPD and how her own insights from living successfully with the condition contributed to developing this novel and creative therapy.

### What helps those suffering from Borderline Personality Disorder?

*Advice from people who have successfully managed their illness includes:*

1. Setting clear, realistic goals
2. Learning to be patient with oneself
3. Developing individual methods to manage specific problems
4. Avoiding alcohol and street drugs
5. Learning to identify and express feelings directly and appropriately
6. Accepting responsibility for managing one's illness
7. Making a commitment to therapy and treatment, including taking medication if prescribed
8. Choosing healthy role models and life- styles

### How Can I Help? Know the stressors...

*For individuals suffering from BPD, certain life events can be especially stressful and increase the risk of relapse.*

1. Change in significant relationships
2. Birthdays, Holidays and Anniversary Dates
3. Change in physical health, including pregnancy, abortion, trauma or illness
4. Discharge from hospital or program

***Can you think of more???***

### The Role of Family

1. Parents, spouses and children bear a significant burden
2. Family involvement in treatment of individuals suffering from BPD is considered an important part of the recovery process.
3. Continue to learn about the Borderline Diagnosis, symptoms and treatment expectations to support the recovery process.
3. Learn the specific treatment techniques and supports that work for ***your*** loved one
4. Identify ***your*** supports, resources and outlets that keep ***you*** healthy and strong!

### Resource Contact Information

**National Alliance on Mental Illness**

Information Helpline: (800) 950-NAMI

Website: [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

Seek out literature, professionals and support groups in your community to help yourself-so you can best help your loved one!

### Resource Contact Information

- [www.bpdfamily.com](http://www.bpdfamily.com)
- [www.bpdrecovery.com](http://www.bpdrecovery.com)
- [www.bpdrecovery.com](http://www.bpdrecovery.com)
- [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)
- [www.bpdworld.org](http://www.bpdworld.org)
- [outofthefog.net](http://outofthefog.net)
- [www.bpddemystified.com](http://www.bpddemystified.com)