



BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

What is Borderline Personality Disorder?

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is a complex and long-lasting mental illness that is characterized by difficulty handling emotions and controlling impulses. Individuals with BPD are highly sensitive to their environment, and often experience intense episodes of anger, depression, and anxiety which may last anywhere from a few hours to days.

Signs and symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder include:

- Efforts to avoid real or imagined abandonment
- Feelings of emptiness
- Impulsive and often dangerous behaviours
- Feelings of dissociation
- Self-harm
- Distorted or unstable sense of self
- Suicidal thoughts

Who can have Borderline Personality Disorder?

While there is no clear cause for BPD, biological, psychological, as well as environmental factors all play a role in the development of this illness. BPD is more common among individuals who have relatives with the disorder, as well as those who have had a history of sexual or physical abuse.

Should I be concerned?

The severity of the symptoms experienced by individuals with BPD can make this illness extremely debilitating as it has potential to cause extreme harm to the individual. When the person's symptoms start to interfere with their relationships, or cause harm to themselves and/or others, support is likely needed. Those with BPD are also more likely to have a co-occurring disorder such as Depression, Eating Disorders, Bipolar Disorder, or a Substance Use Disorder.



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How can I help?

If you know someone who is experiencing signs and/or symptoms of BPD, try your best to support them by being patient with the highs and lows that they may be experiencing. Try to listen to the person in order to understand how they are feeling and the things that they are thinking about. You may also refer them to community or online resources if they are not already getting the treatment and professional support that they need.

Resources

- <http://www.amhs-kfla.ca>
- TALK (Listening Support – Kingston) 613-544-1771
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/groups/borderline-personality/ontario>
- <http://on-bpd.ca>
- <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Borderline-Personality-Disorder/Support>