

Borderline Support UK CIC Factsheet

What is Borderline Personality Disorder?

Many people have never heard of borderline personality disorder, or BPD, until they, or a loved one, are diagnosed. You might be diagnosed with borderline personality disorder if you have difficulties with how you think and feel about yourself and other people, and are having problems in your life as a result. BPD is one of ten recognised personality disorders, and is classed as a mood disorder. It affects around 2% of people in the UK.

As people are different, it may be that you have different symptoms to someone else with BPD. You may have only a few symptoms while somebody else has them all.

There are four main 'groups' of symptoms you may have:

- emotional instability – the psychological term for this is affective dysregulation
- disturbed patterns of thinking or perception – cognitive distortions or perceptual distortions
- impulsive behaviour
- intense but unstable relationships with others

Many people with BPD have abandonment issues, which can affect their relationships, their self esteem, or how they perceive others to feel about them.

What causes BPD?

It's unknown what causes BPD. Many people with BPD have lived through some form of trauma in their lives, so it is debated that this may be a factor, but there is no defining evidence as to what causes the illness.

How is it diagnosed?

Diagnosis usually starts with a visit to your GP, where they will discuss your symptoms and how they are affecting your life. They may also do some medical tests, to ensure there is no medical reason for your symptoms. They may then refer you to a community mental health team, a psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse.

They may also offer you some counselling, which can help with things such as anxiety, depression, trauma or things such as hyper-vigilance or night terrors. The psychiatrist will assess your symptoms and how they affect you, and may require more sessions before being able to make a diagnosis. It is important to be as honest as possible with medical staff – they are there to help you and will listen to what you have to say in confidence and without judgment.

Borderline Support UK CIC

Registered office address: 483 Green Lanes, London, N13 4BS

www.borderlinesupport.org.uk | info@borderlinesupport.org.uk

How is it treated?

BPD is usually treated by a combination of medications and therapy. They may prescribe:

- mood stabilisers, to help deal with mania or depressive moods – these can also help with impulsive or reckless behaviours
- an anti-depressant, which can help alongside the mood stabiliser to manage low moods
- anti-anxiety medication to help calm you down when your anxiety becomes too much to handle – these can also be used to help nightmares

Are there other things to consider?

Some people with BPD also suffer from other problems or conditions such as:

- alcohol or drug misuse
- eating disorders
- OCD
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- another personality disorder

As part of a treatment plan, if you have another condition (sometimes referred to as a 'co-morbid' condition), this should be addressed also. BPD can be a serious risk, and some people may struggle with self-harm or suicidal ideation. There is help available.

With proper ongoing treatment and support, people with BPD can go on to live normal, happy and full lives in recovery.

Borderline Support UK CIC

Registered office address: 483 Green Lanes, London, N13 4BS

www.borderlinesupport.org.uk | info@borderlinesupport.org.uk

Borderline Support UK Ltd is a Community Interest Company, registration number 13094238.

© Borderline Support 2020-2023