



**BORDERLINE
PERSONALITY
DISORDER**

**AWARENESS
WEEK 2022**

SEE THE PERSON

1 - 7 OCTOBER 2022

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH PERSONALITY DISORDERS

Be compassionate. Demonstrate empathy.

Listen to the person's current experience.

Validate the person's current emotions.

Take the person's experience seriously.

Maintain a non-judgemental approach.

Stay calm and respectful. Remain caring.

Engage in open communication. Allow strong

emotions to be freely expressed. Be clear,

consistent, and reliable. Remember

behaviours are often linked to survival.

Convey encouragement and hope always.

BPD CAN SOMETIMES BE:

Not being sure who and how you are in the world. Feeling empty and isolated. Wanting to connect with people but struggling to do so. Fear of people you love leaving you. Trouble understanding what is needed or wanted within your relationships. A desire to hurt or harm yourself to express pain and fear. Believing the world is better off without you. Feeling like nothing will get better. Thinking that you are broken. Emotions coming in huge tidal waves. Struggling to find the right words to explain big feelings. Trouble feeling calm. A very busy loud brain. Trouble connecting with the present moment.

BPD and the brain: **Amygdala**

**Tells us when to be scared, anxious,
shameful or guilty.**



- **For those with BPD: Is smaller, more reactive and can struggle to "check the facts".**
- **Needs to: feel safe and soothed. Loves repetitive movement, activities it finds safe, and familiar quiet spaces.**

Note: Our infographics are informed by expert researchers at Project Air Strategy, University of Wollongong. Research into the neurobiology of BPD is ongoing and current findings are based on developing research on the brain. Our insights and understandings might change with further studies.

BPD and the brain: **Precuneus**

Part of the system relevant for understanding identity, who and how we are in the world



- **For those with BPD:** might struggle making sense of and letting go of negative experiences and accepting and holding on to positive experiences
- **Needs to:** learn skills to communicate in ways that are diverse, make sense and are related to both facts and emotions.

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BPD and the brain: **TPJ (Temporo Parietal Junction)**

**A hub for making sense of the world
around us and understanding others**



- **For those with BPD:** may increase empathy towards others with similar experiences and decrease connection to those who have different worldviews
- **Needs to:** learn skills to communicate in ways that are diverse, make sense and are related to both facts and emotions.

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PEOPLE WITH BPD TOLD US WHAT THEY NEED:

EDUCATION support for carers
shorter waiting lists
Resources for treatment
AWARE
EASY RECOVERY LANGUAGE
EXPLANATIONS compassion
OF BPD CHANGE OF LANGUAGE
Funding for long term treatment
LIVED SKILLS FOR CLINICIANS
EXPERIENCE SEE THE **calm** ACCESS TO
STORIES INDIVIDUAL reactions TREATMENT

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EXPAND YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

PSYCHOTHERAPISTS DOCTORS

ART & RECOVERY SOCIAL
MUSIC COACHES WORKERS

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS TEACHERS

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS COUNSELLORS

RESEARCHERS PEER &

NURSES ADVOCATES
LIVED EXPERIENCE

PSYCHOLOGISTS WORKERS

instead of saying
“unstable”
try using..

**UNABLE TO CONTROL
THEIR EMOTIONS**

**HIGHLY OVERWHELMED
DISTRESSED UNABLE
TO SELF
FEELING UNSAFE SOOTHE**

**WITH THEIR EMOTIONS EMOTIONALLY
DISREGULATED**

HAVING CHALLENGING EMOTIONS

**STRUGGLING TO
TOLERATE DISTRESS**

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instead of saying
“over sensitive”
try using..

GIVING
CARING **KIND**
GENTLE **GENEROUS**
CONNECTED
EMPATHETIC **PERCEPTIVE**
COMPASSIONATE
THOUGHTFUL
AWARE
INSIGHTFUL

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Together, we are
stronger
than stigma.

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**We are
experts in our own lives
and experiences.**

**When you truly listen to, and
collaboratively work with
people living with BPD
our relationship is likely to be
much more supportive.**

**Nastasha Swingler
2022 BPD Awareness
Week Ambassador**



Everyone is unique.
Your experiences may look
very different to someone
else's and that is okay.

**LIVED EXPERIENCE
PROJECT PARTICIPANT**

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**Mental health professionals
should be working
alongside you.
Don't be afraid to
ask them questions.**

**LIVED EXPERIENCE
PROJECT PARTICIPANT**

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**Your right to
choose matters.**
A diagnosis can guide you
to effective treatment, but
what works is up to you.

**LIVED EXPERIENCE
PROJECT PARTICIPANT**

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**One of the most
important things
to ask is:**

**“Do you need
comfort or
solutions
right now?”**

MAHLIE

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“Living with BPD has its challenges,
I focus on **my strengths;**
adaptability,
creativity and
tenacity.”

Lorraine



I need to start
embracing what I can do.
I've realised that I've got
so much more
potential
than I thought.

Greg

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**BPD for me was a
journey of discovery,
learning about myself
and those around me.**

CHLOE / 35 / VIC

“Knowing and
understanding
how your loved one
sees the world makes
living compatibility
with them so
much easier”

JEN / 53 / VIC

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**“You will grow
in ways that make you
a better person and
a master communicator.
Strong and loving
boundaries
are needed.”**

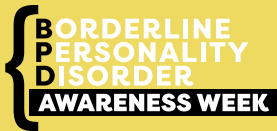
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CARLIE / 40 / VIC

**You live with BPD,
You're not BPD.**

**Never forget that you are
a person before any label.
rediscover yourself,
to live your life happy and healthy**

NYSSA / 30 / NSW



You are worthy.
Never give up.
you are human and
deserve respect
and dignity.

SARAH / 30 / VIC



Peer support groups
have been valuable in
**connecting with
others who
understand me.**

SAMANTHA / 45 / WA

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**“People diagnosed with BPD
deserve to be
treated with dignity.**

**Listen to our experiences
and remember BPD is
different for everyone.”**

MILES / 23 / SA



Everyone with BPD
is unique and
everyone deserves
support tailored
to their particular
set of needs.

LAUREN / 27 / VIC



“Stigma towards those living with BPD is simply prejudice against people who are genuinely struggling and deserve compassion”

Professor Brin Grenyer
Director, Project Air Strategy



**We see real activism
by people experiencing BPD,
their families and
groups of clinicians
who are prepared to
support the journey that
people [with BPD] need to undertake**

Professor Ian Hickie
Co-Director, Brain & Mind Centre
University of Sydney



take it one day at a time. reach out and connect with safe people. practice being mindful in nature. be creative. listen to music. talk to your loved ones. focus on acheiving small goals. read for fun. watch movies or tv. write letters to friends. spend time with pets. go for a long drive. take time to breathe. find something that makes you laugh. get enough sleep. be kind to yourself.



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co-ordinated by:



Australian BPD
Foundation Limited

Support Promote Advocate
for Borderline Personality Disorder