

# Borderline Derbyshire

Newsletter of the  
Derbyshire Borderline Personality Disorder  
Support Group



For anyone affected by  
Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)  
also known as  
Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder (EUPD)



For those in Derbyshire and beyond!



SUPPORT



Group

News



Our face to face  
groups are back!

Our zoom  
meetings have  
gone international



Welcome!

India



Shambhavi

Switzerland



Nano

Croatia



Dinja

Mexico



Rosan

## Would you like to visit a Human Library?



In Denmark, there are libraries where you can borrow a person instead of a book to listen to their life story for 30 minutes. The goal is to fight prejudice. Each person has a title - "unemployed," "refugee," "bipolar," and etc. - but listening to their story you realize how much you shouldn't "judge a book by its cover." This innovative project is active in 85+ countries. It is called The Human Library.

Facebook @humanlibraryuk

## Who we are...



**Sue**



**Vicky**



**John**



**Jodie**



**Ryan**

We all have a connection with BPD

## What we do...

**Our aim is simple...we want everyone who is affected by BPD to have a safe space in which they can come together to relax, chat, swap stories and discuss coping skills. An official diagnosis is not necessary.**

**Our meetings are also open to those who would like to know more about BPD, including students and support workers.**

**You do not have to live in Derbyshire to join our support groups**

## **What we offer...**

### ***ZOOM Meetings***

BPD - every other Sunday @ 4pm

Parent/Carer – monthly

### ***Face to Face Meetings***

(Monthly on Mondays)

Matlock 1-3pm

Chesterfield 7-9pm

### ***Therapy***

Group DBT Sessions  
with a private therapist  
at a reduced cost

### ***WhatsApp***

BPD chat group

Positivity group





**Expand your list:** Do you tend to always use one or two specific words when identifying your emotions? Time to expand that mental health vernacular! If you have a 'default' emotion (i.e., you tend to use the same one all the time), then you need to add some words to your language. It helps you, and it will help family and friends when you talk with them. For example, after your friend cancels on you are you simply angry, or more betrayed?

**Once you've identified your feelings...** So, now what? For starters, don't pack it all away. It's important to understand which feelings you experience and why, but it's also important to sit with feelings and not run from them or get distracted. Labelling feelings (from the wheel, for example), journaling about them (to explore them in more detail) and understanding what made things better or worse are all helpful. Your emotions are connected to your thoughts and behaviours in a way that researchers continue to study. One thing we do know: they are related in powerful ways. For example, you tend to remember emotional events more clearly because emotions can enhance your memory. So, it's worth your time to be as specific as you can. Once you can identify your feelings, it may be helpful to understand two things: first, what caused them, and second, what made them better. Keep in mind, you'll learn these things in therapy, too. Good therapy helps people identify their feelings and reactions.

Source: KEVIN GILLILAND, PSY.D, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

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# BPD and Triggers

## Understanding Triggers

We know that with BPD, symptoms are often made worse by certain situations, people, or events. These are known as triggers, and can be either external, happening in the world around you, or internal, occurring only in your thoughts. The things that trigger you will depend on your history. For example, if you experienced abuse as a child, things that could bring those memories to the forefront might include a news report of child abuse, an article in the paper, or even a movie. Many people find their symptoms are triggered by criticism from loved ones, or reminders of traumatic events. Specific BPD triggers vary from person to person but there are some that are more common. For example, for some the real, or perceived, episodes of abandonment or rejection can be a trigger. These memories or actions can bring on symptoms of BPD, such as extreme emotional reactions and poor impulse control.

## Identifying Your Triggers

Try to think of times in the recent past when you felt intense emotion, impulsivity, or felt a desire to self-harm. Then look back to the events that preceded the emotion. Therapists often recommend writing down a list of triggers, followed by the emotion they triggered, and the reaction you had to that emotion.

## How to Avoid Triggers With BPD

It may help to design your life in a way in which you can minimise triggers. Some people find that they need to eliminate watching the news from their day, and possibly eliminate many forms of media in general. If there are people in your life who trigger you, you may need to go low contact or no contact while you work through the stages of your BPD. There are some triggers that you may need to continue to avoid even later into your diagnosis. If a certain movie scene reminds you of a traumatic childhood event, there's no point in watching it or forcing yourself through it; it will only cause unnecessary pain. From movies to sad songs, these are the types of small triggers you can avoid without disrupting your life.

## Coping with Triggers

Avoiding triggers is only one option for your recovery and not a long-term solution for every trigger. There are some triggers that are not possible, or even advisable, to avoid. Avoiding them can be very useful when the trigger you are avoiding is predictable and avoiding it doesn't limit your life in significant ways. But if the trigger is unpredictable or involves very large parts of your life, avoiding it isn't realistic or sustainable. Therefore, learning other ways to cope with them is important as well.

For example, many people with BPD are triggered by conflict in their relationships. The only way to avoid conflict in relationships completely, however, is to have no relationships at all, since conflict is an inevitable part of all relationships. Unfortunately, many people with BPD find themselves pushing away loved ones for this very reason; they may become avoidant of relationships altogether in order to avoid exacerbating their symptoms. This strategy doesn't work. It only makes feelings of rejection and loneliness worse, bringing on severe symptoms.

## Deciding How to Handle Triggers

It's important to work out whether or not it's practical to avoid them. If avoiding a trigger will disrupt your life in some way, such as keeping you from going to work or ignoring your partner, avoidance isn't a viable option for you. You need to find another way to coping, such as developing a trigger action plan, also known as a **BPD Safety Plan**.

Source: [verywellmind.com](https://www.verywellmind.com)

Next issue: How to develop a BPD Safety Plan



What colour do you identify with?

# Colour Meaning

## PURPLE

*Visionary, ambitious, purposeful, authentic, spiritual, mystical, majestic, truthful, luxurious*

## BLUE

*Intelligent, logical, calm, efficient, cool, serene, clear, peaceful, loyal, trustworthy, reliable, secure*

## TURQUOISE

*Inspirational, innovative, creative, efficient, healing, demanding, calming, sophisticated, spiritual*

## GREEN

*Balanced, harmonious, fresh, healing, organic, earthy, abundant, restful, restorative, fertility*

## YELLOW

*Self-confident, optimistic, happy, friendly, needy, bright, energetic, warm, creative, promising, sunny*

## ORANGE

*Abundant, positive, confident, successful, playful, sociable, creative, passionate, energetic*

## RED

*Strong, assertive, warm, determined, motivated, loving, powerful, dramatic, dynamic, passionate, courageous*

## PINK

*Feminine, compassionate, nurturing, tranquil, kind, romantic, intimate, naive, sweet, soft, playful, intuitive, hopeful*

## BROWN

*Stable, grounded, reliable, friendly, conservative, honest, aspirational, balanced, organised, confident, earthy, modest*

## BLACK

*Classy, dramatic, safe, powerful, glamorous, serious, sophisticated, luxurious, dynamic, mysterious, in control*

## GREY

*Glamorous, solid, tech, intelligent, secure, sleek, modern, substance, sophisticated*

## WHITE

*Pure, clear, fresh, easy, innocent, good, simple, uncompromising, hygienic, illuminating, ethereal, sophisticated*



[www.gunameldere.com](http://www.gunameldere.com)

What colour would you like to identify with?



## IAPTs

(Improving Access to Psychological Therapies)

### **Self-referral for depression and/or anxiety**

Derbyshire

*Those with BPD (or traits of) will not be turned away immediately. They will be offered an assessment and, if it is thought appropriate, they will be treated for their symptoms of depression and/or anxiety. If it is found inappropriate to offer them treatment, they will be referred to somewhere more suitable.*

Will Galloway-Grant, Mental Health Commissioning Manager  
28 September 2021

Talking Mental Health	Tel: 01332 623751
Trent PTS	Tel: 01332 265659
Vita Minds	Tel: 0333 0153496
Insight Healthcare	Tel: 0300 3000033

IAPTs are a national service and each county will have it's own providers

# Unmet Childhood Attachment Needs

Childhood Experience	Unmet Attachment Need	How it Can Show Up in Your Relationship
Being shamed when you messed up or did something wrong	The need to feel worthy and lovable as a person, even when you mess up	Being overly defensive from real or perceived criticism from partner
Having adult responsibilities at too young an age	The need to have caretakers who were willing to protect you emotionally, and put your needs first	Being overly independent; controlling your partner; over care-taking your partner
Parent who gave you the silent treatment as a punishment	The need to feel emotionally safe, and that you won't be abandoned when you make a mistake	Difficulty allowing your partner space when there is conflict; panic over conflict
Caretaker who took it personally when you misbehaved	The need to learn and grow from childhood mistakes, instead of learning to "be good" to keep your caretaker ok	Feeling the need to control your partner's feelings by hiding your thoughts, feelings and/or behaviors
Being physically, sexually, or severely emotionally abused.	The need to be able to trust your caretaker is safe and won't harm you	Inability to fully trust your partner; staying in abusive relationships; dysregulating during conflict
Being praised for your accomplishments with little curiosity about your inner-experiences	The need to feel you are valuable for your whole self, not just how you look or perform	Difficulty emotionally connecting; placing too much emphasis on appearance and achievement

## Looking back...

On 4 September 2020, I delivered a speech at the Supreme Court in London. It was for the *Empowering Women, Transforming Lives* conference, organised by the Prison Reform Trust, in partnership with NHS England & Improvement and the Centre for Mental Health. The audience included Lucy Frazer QC MP, Minister of State for Prisons and Probation; Sophie Linden, London's Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime; and Lord Keith Bradley, author of the Bradley Report, 2009. Others included practitioners, politicians and policy makers from health, social care and criminal justice.

I was there to talk about my experience as a resident in a UK women's prison. I spoke about how my mental health condition soon deteriorated and how my ways of coping led me to spend five months in segregation, alone for 23 hours a day. There was no understanding, whatsoever, of my condition (Borderline Personality Disorder) within either prison staff or health workers. I, like most in segregation, was treated with derision by the officers and they were quick to use physical restraint. On one occasion, I cut my wrist and wrote on the walls with the blood. A very senior officer came into my cell and told me to wash it off. When I refused, he pushed my head into the blood, which lay congealed on the table. I tried to stop him but some of the blood got on his shirt. I was subsequently charged with endangering the officer's health and given more time in segregation.

This was just one incident among several experienced by me, and many others, most of whom suffered from poor mental health. It is inhumane and serves no purpose, except to worsen the women's health and well-being. I am grateful for the chance to bring awareness of this to high level and influential decision-makers, but there is still much more to do. Fortunately, there are many people who are committed to bringing positive change for women in prison and, equally important, to prevent women going to prison in the first place.

When I sit and reflect on the events leading up to my time in prison, I can see how easily it could have been avoided. After being let down by a psychiatrist, who had promised to put me on a waiting list for therapy, only to find out a year later, that there never had been such a referral, my mental health deteriorated. I felt helpless and desperate. My behaviour led to a wrongful accusation of attempted murder\*, serving to make the whole situation hopeless. I then offended; a relatively minor offence, but because mental health services and probation services refused to treat/monitor me in the community, I was given a custodial sentence, thereby 'forcing' the Probation Service to monitor me, once released. There are so many things wrong with this whole story, that I know is being repeated in some form or other on a daily basis. But this is what drives me, and many others, to carry on doing the work we do.

\*I was never charged with this and the case was eventually dropped.



**Supported by...**

**Public Health**

**North Derbyshire CCG**

**Derbyshire County Council**

**Derbyshire Dales District Council**

**Foundation Derbyshire**

**Derbyshire Recovery and Peer Support Service**

**Derbyshire Voluntary Action**

**Lloyds Bank**

**We welcome ex-offenders, and are proud to be a member of...**

