

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

New attachment sub-group

One of the most distressing symptoms of BPD/EUPD is a severe and debilitating attachment to others. Recognising that there are few services addressing this condition, we have decided to start a separate support group. Everyone is welcome to join, whether they have BPD/EUPD or not. More about this on page 8.

xxxxx

Sue's new book

If you would like to know what it's like to spend time in prison, with a diagnosis of BPD, you may be interested in this. More details are given on page 7.



Vicky was a co-founder of the group and my soulmate of 36 years. Sadly, she passed away just before Christmas 2021.

Sleep tight darling!

Sue xxx



Some of the ways in which our members contribute to improving the lives of people with mental health issues

5 members...

have helped clinical psychologist Liam Ennis with his project investigating how services for people with a personality disorder can be improved

*Thank
YOU*

2 members...

are helping clinical psychologist Dave Woods and Living Well with improving Derbyshire's pathway for people with complex emotional needs

2 members...

regularly take part in panel interviews for prospective nursing students, on behalf of Community Chesterfield and Derby University

4 members...

have joined the management group of the Derbyshire BPD Support Group and are involved in shaping it's future



Who we are...



Sue



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.

XX

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

XX

You do not have to live in Derbyshire to join

What we offer...

ZOOM Meetings

BPD - first Sunday of the month @ 4pm

Parent/Carer – monthly

Activities

Monthly visits to a bowling alley

Ilkeston, Derby, Chesterfield, Nottingham



WhatsApp

BPD chat group & Parent/Carer group

If you prefer not to have audible notifications, you can mute them in your settings. On the BPD chat group page, just click on the three dots at the top right. Then click on 'mute notifications'.



Website:

derbyshireborderlinepersonalitydisordersupportgroup.com

Our BPD/EUPD Crisis Card

A few years ago, we produced a crisis card for our members to keep with them in case they needed help, but couldn't explain why. The card explains the symptoms of BPD/EUPD and how it affects them.

Group member Steve describes how it has helped him...

So, there I was alone and out for a stroll around Nottingham City Centre when I felt that something didn't feel right with me mentally (I have a diagnosis of Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder).

My head felt like it was in a spin, wanting to explode and I felt like I was beginning to feel unstable and wanting to act on impulse, (which could be very harmful for me to do so).

I approached a Community Officer in the city centre, told him my name and showed him my crisis card and explained that I may be going into a mental health crisis. He replied with his name and said that he had seen these crisis cards before and that he wanted to help me. We went for a walk together and engaged in general chat, asking me where I am from and what are my plans whilst in the city, and how am I getting back home and how was I feeling.

For me just walking and talking to him helped me a lot and it helped ease the situation that I was in. As we approached the bus stop where I catch my bus I said that I am wanting to return home now to feel safe. He asked how I felt, and I replied that thanks to bumping into you I was beginning to feel better. We shook hands and I thanked him for being there for me and helping me.

From the first day I received my crisis card it has always been with me.

Steve



Thank you to Steve for sharing his story, and to the community officer who helped him

Sue's new book.....

Pushing the Boundaries: struggling to comply in a women's prison

At the age of 54, Sue Wheatcroft was arrested for attempted murder. Although never charged, the fallout from the experience, along with poor mental health, led her to spending over a year in prison.

In this book, Sue describes the circumstances surrounding the arrest, but mostly she talks about her experiences in prison. She presents an incredibly candid account of how her personality changed from being placid and somewhat introverted, to someone who was confrontational, belligerent, and extroverted.

The book examines the relationships between prisoners as well as their interactions with officers, managers/governors, and healthcare staff. Also discussed are issues such as bullying,

loneliness, boredom, anger, violence, and desperation, as well as friendship, compassion, community, and loyalty.

There is more and more evidence of people with lived experience becoming involved in policy making with regards to both prison reform and mental health. This book is a timely addition to that evidence.



Available on Amazon

*It's compelling reading and makes me
feel that I'm there with you.*

Jenny Talbot, Prison Reform Trust

Attachment Group

We have started an attachment group for people who develop severe attachments to other people. These can be people who are close, such as friends, family members and partners, or someone whose job it is to help the individual. This could be a doctor, nurse, CPN, probation officer, support worker, etc. The common factor is that the object of the attachment will display qualities of nurturing, something that the individual will have lacked in childhood.



Abandonment issues often contribute to the development of attachments.

The group will be run along the lines of an email correspondence scheme. There will be a monthly zoom meeting offering additional support, along with a members' WhatsApp group.



The aim of the group is to understand why we develop attachment disorder, to discuss the ways in which it manifests, and to find ways to manage it.



Members of the attachment group do not need to be part of the BPD group

Anyone interested in joining the attachment group should email Sue at:
derbyshireborderlinepd@gmail.com

Updated Group Values & Behaviours

We are a voluntary led peer group offering support through shared experiences. We do not give advice to others. We do, however, signpost, where possible, to other agencies, services or organisations that can offer help, advice. We welcome and support all members. We maintain a non-judgemental environment where members are open minded and encouraging.

We appreciate that whilst we may share similar experiences, there will still be differences in our situations; we are all unique and each member is responsible for their own decisions. We recognise that every member is important who will be listened to with respect no matter what gender, sexuality, age, race, religion, or disability.

We try to make sure everyone is able to have their say but do not pressurise anyone to speak or join in activities. We ask that you be mindful when sharing your experiences as the content may be a trigger to others. Please add the letters TW (trigger warning) ahead of any potentially triggering content when using WhatsApp or when typing in Zoom chat. If you are speaking on Zoom, please verbally advise the rest of the group that what you are about to share may be triggering.

We respect confidentiality. What is said in the group, stays in the group. However, if anyone indicates that they are a risk to themselves, or others, then information may be passed on, as in accordance to safeguarding policy, to the relevant people/ organisations, including emergency services.

We demonstrate respect for one another; ensuring that all members refrain from using inappropriate language and behaviour. No bullying, intimidating, violent, aggressive, or threatening behaviour and no discriminatory or stereotypical remarks or behaviour will be accepted.

Anyone who disregards group values and behaviours or may be a harm to themselves or others will be asked to leave the meeting, WhatsApp chat or any other group activity they are engaged in.

We recognise that we are all different and may at times disagree with another person's point of view. Please ensure that you disagree with the point and not the person and still value everyone's contribution. We recognise that members personal information is confidential – it is up to members what information they share about themselves.

No posting of personal information or photos of other group members without the consent of those concerned. Respect your fellow members right to privacy.

When meeting in person or on Zoom, members must not attend while under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol and must adhere to the venues smoking and Covid policies.

Additional online specific values

To maintain privacy, where members have others in their home at the time of the meeting, members will, where possible, wear headphones and use a private space so other members feel safe and comfortable. The conversation is not suitable for children; please ensure that they are out of earshot where possible.

Members will not share logon details or group meeting details with others without the express permission of the group coordinator.

Members will use a suitable screen background, if necessary, to avoid the accidental sharing of information.

Members will provide coordinators with an emergency contact telephone number of someone who has details of their location in the event they become unwell while online and assistance is needed.

Members are asked to mute themselves when not speaking to reduce background noise.

Additional messaging specific values including WhatsApp Groups

Members do sometimes send messages to the WhatsApp group during unsociable hours. If you would like some quiet time without turning your phone off the notifications can be silenced. To do this, press on the group in your WhatsApp notifications until a box pops up and select mute. This allows you to mute the group for 8 hours, 1 week or always, and can be reversed the same way at any time.

Members will respect their fellow members privacy and not text or call them outside the designated WhatsApp group unless it has been agreed with them in advance. Members will not share the contact numbers or e-mail addresses of group members without their express permission to do so.

When messaging the WhatsApp group please remember that the group members all have other commitments and may not be able to reply promptly. There can be lots of posts to the WhatsApp group and occasionally some messages get lost in all the traffic. Please know that this is accidental and not personal.

The group coordinator volunteers her time to facilitate this group. Whilst she may post from time to time, she will not be aware of all conversations.

By being an active member of this group, you are agreeing to uphold these values.

Thank you in advance.

Why Self-Awareness Is Important

The term “self-awareness” seems self-explanatory—it’s an awareness of the self. But what does that even mean? And why would so many self-help gurus need to preach about the importance of such an obvious concept? Simple as it may be, self-awareness is something that many (if not most) of us lack. Yet, it’s the one thing that can help us achieve both self-improvement and self-acceptance.



What is Self-Awareness?

Simply put, self-awareness is the conscious knowledge of one’s own character and feelings. That sounds simple. But the truth is, many of us float through our days with little awareness of what we’re doing or why we’re doing it. And that’s not necessarily a bad thing—our lives are much easier when we don’t have to think about the little things, like brushing our teeth or driving to work. The danger arises when we stop noticing some of our more significant behaviours, like how we react to or deal with problems. Our minds are pretty good at forming blueprints of emotional responses, so it doesn’t take long before certain responses become habits. Self-awareness means being conscious of this conditioning so we can have more control over our emotional responses (especially the ones that might not be so healthy). Self-awareness can be understood on several different levels. At the surface, it’s simply being aware of your actions. At a deeper level, it’s recognizing the problems that you create for yourself and finding strategies to fix them.



Awareness of Actions

The first level of self-awareness includes being aware of your actions, but also (and maybe more importantly) your distractions. How often do you reach for your phone, thinking you’ll just scan your newsfeed for a few minutes, but by the time you look up an hour or two has passed? To distract ourselves from the pain or dullness of our everyday lives, we often engage in mindless entertainment or passive activities without any realisation of our actions. That’s not to say that all distractions are bad—many really do make us happy and help us fill our days without going insane. The key is to not let your distractions control you. Choosing to spend half an hour on social media is one thing—it’s another if reaching for your phone becomes an automatic response. Once you become aware of your compulsions, you’ve already won half the battle.

Awareness of Feelings

Like our actions, you’d think it would be easy to know how you’re feeling—but many of us really don’t know until we eliminate our distractions. Once you stop using your distractions as a crutch, you’ll come face to face with some feelings that you’ve probably been forcing down for a while—these could include anger, resentment, or perhaps shame. Becoming aware of these emotions is important because it will allow you to question their root causes and perhaps find a solution. This is where practicing mindfulness can be extremely helpful. Once you’ve identified a certain feeling—whether it’s anxiety or sadness or anger—ask yourself what’s making you feel that way. Are you really snapping at your partner because they’re chewing too loudly, or is it because you’re feeling anxious about something going on at work? Once you identify an origin, make a note of it, take a deep breath, and then move on. Next time you experience that feeling, you’ll understand why and it won’t affect you as deeply.



Why is Self-Awareness Important?

It’s impossible to better yourself or improve any aspect of your life without self-awareness. Without a starting point, how can you measure how far you’ve come or how far you still need to go? Perhaps that’s why so many of us cling to those distractions that we examined earlier. If you stay too busy to acknowledge your weaknesses, then you have no reason to work toward improvement. You can carry on and continue to ignore your deeply rooted issues, fears, and feelings, because hey, you’ve gotten this far and it’s not that terrible yet. But becoming more self-aware can help you to proactively manage your thoughts, emotions, and behaviours, rather than allowing them to manage you. Self-awareness is the first step to setting goals. If you’re self-aware enough to know your strengths and weaknesses, you’ll know which goals you need to set and the strategies that will help you achieve them. Furthermore, this consciousness of your own actions and feelings will help you to better understand others and you’ll develop healthier relationships. Self-awareness won’t fix all of your problems, but it is a big step toward improvement.

Source: *The Importance of Being Self Aware* - (newroadtreatment.org)

How to Become More Self-Aware

Here are a few simple things you can do to achieve greater self-awareness every day:

1. Make time for yourself.

Setting aside some time for ourselves is something many of us struggle with. Life is so busy, and it seems selfish to schedule time just for us. But if you don't make time for yourself, you won't be able to give your all when it comes to work or family obligations. You also won't get to know yourself. Try setting aside 30–60 minutes each day when you can be alone and away from any distractions (especially digital ones). Read, write, meditate—do whatever you need to get in touch with your thoughts and feelings.

2. Practice mindfulness.

Mindfulness is a simple type of meditation that requires focusing on the here and now. You'll notice that certain thoughts and feelings will arise as you try to focus only on your environment and the present moment. You shouldn't try to block those feelings out—instead, simply take note of them. If you get an anxious thought about an exam, tell yourself, "I'm feeling anxious about my exam tomorrow" without judging your thoughts. Then, gently pull your mind back to the present. This exercise will help you to identify your thoughts and feelings, while also teaching you how to manage them calmly.

3. Keep a journal.

Writing is a great way to process thoughts and think through problems. By keeping a log of your thoughts and feelings, you'll also be able to track your growth. Try writing a few sentences each day about how you feel in that moment. If you have feelings of fear, happiness, anxiety, or tranquillity, document them. This will help you become more in tune with your thoughts, and you'll put yourself on a path to greater self-awareness.

4. Listen.

Try to be a better listener for friends, family, and colleagues. This means being fully present and paying attention to the speaker's words, emotions, and even body language, without making judgments or drifting off into your own world. By learning to lend an ear to others, you'll also become a better listener to your inner voice.

Self-Awareness Matters

Becoming self-aware is a starting point for self-improvement. By getting to know your strengths, weaknesses, feelings, and emotions, you can start living actively rather than passively. You'll experience better relationships, formulate better strategies for improvement, and find greater peace with yourself. You can start practicing with mindfulness exercises, journaling, and scheduling time for yourself.

Source: [*Why Self-Awareness Is Important: Benefits, Tips, and Examples - TCK Publishing*](#)

In short:

Develop a conscious knowledge
of your own character and
feelings.

The process can be painful
but it leads to greater
self-awareness.



Rugby World Cup: Wales prop Donna Rose on life with BPD - 'People thought I was naughty'

Wales and Saracens star Donna Rose once kept her condition hidden, but now wants to use the rugby platform to help others struggling; turning professional has given former carpenter and chef confidence to be open and honest about condition. "People thought I was on the wrong side of everything, or just naughty", Wales and Saracens prop Donna Rose says matter-of-factly. "It took everything inside of me to come out with it."



The 31-year-old hasn't always been comfortable talking about her BPD condition, the mental health illness that impacts an individual's ability to regulate their emotions. "I don't shout about it," Rose tells Sky Sports. "I like to be treated like a normal human being. If I'm sad, I don't want people running over to me and being over-caring. I'm quite good at getting myself back from that."

"It's been hard, and I didn't admit it when I was first diagnosed. I was turned off from it. People thought I was naughty, so I didn't admit it and wanted to hide it." Rose was in her early 20s when she was diagnosed with BPD having spent time in and out of hospital having regular tests and spending sessions with a counsellor.

However, it wasn't until a few years later that she felt comfortable and confident to open up about her condition and help others struggling with their mental health. "One minute I can be really happy, dancing around and be the life and soul of the party," she explains. "The next moment I can be sitting in a corner feeling really depressed thinking that I shouldn't be here. Some days I could wake up feeling like 'wow I'm in New Zealand, at the World Cup'. Other days I thought that I don't deserve it and talk myself down. The next minute I could run into the team room, making funny faces, it's very up and down. It's very hard to deal with, but I have a very good support network."

The rugby community has been a strength of support since she revealed her condition. Rose joined Saracens in 2019 and earlier this year was one of just 12 Wales players to be handed a historic professional deal. Before turning full-time, Rose worked as a carpenter, a profession she didn't take up until the age of 25 but one she admits was great at helping with interacting with people. Previous to that, she worked as a chef, but the unsociable hours weren't conducive to her passion for rugby and fitting in training.

Her sporting career has blossomed later in life. That is thanks in part to Saracens head coach Alex Austerberry who persuaded her to switch from No 8 to become prop. Sport has allowed her to feel comfortable and honest about her condition as well as providing the outlet to help with her rising anxiety levels. "Sport calms



you down," she says. "Lucky enough in rugby you can hit pads, get tackled and stuff that releases the tension in a big way. But playing sport definitely helps me. In the past, when I've not been playing because of it being the end of the season, that would be when it would get really bad. My mum would be able to tell if I wasn't playing rugby, because I would get quite ill."

Continued...

As she has got older, Rose has recognised the importance of being open about her illness. "When I was younger, being diagnosed didn't really matter to me, I chucked it to the back of my head. Now becoming a professional and moving on with life, it's something that has helped me knowing because I have had a lot of help, Wales have helped me a lot. "I'm an ambassador for Brave Mind (a community making a positive and lasting difference to the rugby community's mental health and wellbeing) and they wanted me to go into schools and talk about it and help individuals, so I'm honoured to do that. Because that's what I've wanted all my life since I sat down and realised what I have. It's to use this to help others and let other people know that it is OK."

Turning professional has given Rose more time to focus on supporting others. Only last month, Vodafone agreed a multi-year partnership with the Welsh Rugby Union to become the Founding Principal of women and girls' rugby with the aim of reaching over 10,000 female players in Wales by 2026. The deal will see Vodafone sponsor the Wales Women shirts for a bespoke kit for this spring's 2023 Six Nations.

Inspiring the next generation will also be on the players' minds as they turn their attention toward facing one of the most daunting tasks in women's rugby - taking on five-time World Cup winners New Zealand.

"I want girls to think of me if they're having a bad day and then think 'I can just go and do it'. That's my aim in this. I want to do the best I can for my country and everything and be the best rugby player I can be, but I would also like to help people as well."

Source: [Rugby World Cup: Wales prop Donna Rose on life with borderline personality disorder - 'People thought I was naughty' | Rugby Union News | Sky Sports](#)

Qualities of people with BPD

Resilience: People with BPD have struggles like drug and alcohol addictions, self-harm, suicidal behaviour, and eating disorders, the survivors of this disorder are extremely resilient and tolerant, and they have true strength of character.

Empathy and Compassion: Individuals who have suffered from BPD have also experienced greater internal and external turmoil, which can sometimes make them very receptive, and this gives them the unique ability to recognize more insight for others in similar situations. They may be capable of sharing stories of their own experiences and they may be able to encourage others to open up.

Curiosity: People with BPD also tend to be extra sensitive and they may have very fluctuating emotions, but this makes them sense their surroundings with greater curiosity.

Bold: The individual with BPD has an impulsive streak that is usually problematic but sometimes makes them bold, courageous and gives them the ability to speak one's mind.

Creative: BPD does not mean that the person does not have talents or skills, and these individuals may often be very talented in terms of creative endeavours and put all their emotional expression into music, art, performance and writing, which may be why so many famous people with BPD make good actors and entertainers.

Intuition: People with BPD can also be highly intuitive because they are so attuned to emotions of self and others.

Passionate and Emotional: Just because they are usually very emotionally reactive does not mean that someone with BPD cannot be capable of liveliness and wittiness, which are qualities that may come through once they have learned to manage their emotions better.

The parents of a woman who died in a psychiatric facility believe with different treatment she could have avoided hospital altogether.

Laura Davis, 22, from Cheltenham, took her own life at Arbury Court in Warrington on 20 February, 2017. Ms Davis, who had borderline personality disorder, was previously at Wotton Lawn hospital in Gloucester. Her parents say *if she could have had psychotherapy in the community, she might not have needed inpatient care.*



On Wednesday, a jury at Cheshire Coroner's Court returned a conclusion of suicide in an inquest into Ms Davis' death. The jury highlighted failures in communication and record keeping at both hospitals, particularly regarding items that posed a suicide risk for Ms Davis. Both hospital trusts expressed their condolences and said lessons had been learned since Ms Davis' death. Speaking after the jury's decision, Ms Davis' mother Joanna Davis said her daughter had never received structured therapy. She said lack of treatment both in the community and in hospitals was trapping people in a "revolving door" cycle of inpatient admissions.

BPD, also known as emotionally unstable personality disorder (EUPD), is characterised by intense emotions that can change very quickly, fear of abandonment, deep feelings of insecurity, paranoia and difficulty building and maintaining stable relationships.

'Fear of aggression'

Those with the condition may act impulsively or engage in behaviours that can harm them such as drug and alcohol abuse, binge eating or risk taking. Using self-harm to manage their feelings and suicidal ideation is also common among people with BPD. Joanna said there was a misconception that people with BPD are violent, and that staff are trained not to show any emotion around these patients "because of the fear of aggression". She said her daughter had not been offered emotional support through talking-based therapy while in hospital. While in Wotton Lawn between June and November 2016, Ms Davis was admitted to A&E 48 times due to self-inflicted injuries.

The spokeswoman said all learning had been "incorporated into our trust's policies and procedures and we are committed to ensuring that we do everything we can to prevent such an event taking place again".

Joanna spent 17 years as a mental health coordinator - helping people find accommodation and access services after discharge from psychiatric hospitals.

But she said the majority of this support has now been cut. "I am just sad that services like that are not available anymore," she said.

Continued...

'Negative bias'

Ms Davis' stepfather Darren Watts said research had shown people with a diagnosis of BPD faced "negative bias" from clinicians treating them.

"Clinicians have a tendency, out of frustration at patients not getting better, to 'blame the patient' rather than looking at whether they are getting the right support," he said. "The lack of structured therapy means they are not giving the patient the opportunity to step out of that psychiatric hospital environment," Mr Watts said.

Ms Davis was treated at Wotton Lawn psychiatric hospital before being transferred elsewhere. Joanna said in future, she hoped mental health workers would be given more training in EUPD. "It is about understanding BPD is not a dangerous diagnosis - it is not a diagnosis where you don't give people emotional support," she said. Joanna continued: "It is not down to people who are actually doing the job on the ground, that is down to the training that the leadership decide they have. "I would go and find training if I felt I didn't have the resources to do my job. But people are so stretched and pushed, they just don't have the opportunity. They would love to learn, I am sure."

'Important lessons'

Elysium Healthcare - the private provider which runs Arbury Court - said it "apologised unreservedly" for the shortcomings in Ms Davis's care identified during the inquest. It said "important lessons" had been learned and implemented since her death to improve communication between providers. Following the inquest, a spokeswoman for Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, which runs Wotton Lawn, said it had conducted its own investigation into Ms Davis's death, as well as cooperating with other inquiries.

End

What are the barriers to successful treatment and support for people with BPD/EUPD?

Misunderstanding
(lack of training)

Ignorance
(lack of knowledge)

Risk aversion

Fear
due to poor press
&
Sensationalism

STIGMA
&
Prejudice/Bias

Stress

How to spot it and what to do about it

If someone is drowning, it's well understood that people don't necessarily thrash around, survival instinct kicks in, and they can look calm to an untrained eye. Yet, when we're metaphorically drowning in life, we forget to apply that principle. If we could learn to spot subtle signs of drowning in stress, we could really change our relationship with it, and how we can be there to help each other. While we're familiar with the terms fight and flight, there are actually five 'fs': fight, flight, freeze, flop, and fawn.

Fight

In fight mode, you're tackling things head-on. Full of adrenaline, your thoughts take a back seat as your heart rate increases, pumping blood throughout your body. You might take more risks, like running into a road to save a child. This can feel primal. Be aware of what's happening in your body and remember to take a breath. It will be important for you to take time out after a period of stress to let your body settle and recover.

Flight

Problems don't feel like challenges to be tackled, but obstacles to be avoided. You feel vulnerable, tight in your chest and gut, and instinctively want to avoid, run away, or retreat. You might be very aware of the exit signs in an enclosed space and may even figure out your escape routes in advance. If your pattern is to flee, place your feet on the ground and breathe deeply and slowly. Stick with your discomfort and allow it to pass. This will give you time to explore your options. What do you need to make this situation less stressful?

Freeze

You're like a rabbit in headlights, and your feet feel stuck to the ground. This can happen when escape isn't possible because running may lead to a chase, or fighting back invites more attacks. In this state, it is difficult to make any decisions, and sometimes you can't ask for help because you don't know what to ask for. It can also feel like all your senses are blocked, and all your energy is locked inside your body with no way out. If this happens to you, let the blankness in for a while; let it be and don't try to change it. Paradoxically, this will make it pass. This can be helpful if you're performing on stage, and your mind goes blank.

Flop

You might faint, feel dizzy, or dissociate – disconnecting from your thoughts, feelings, or sense of self to cope with the stress. This can be short-lived or last a long time. If you know you're liable to black out or faint, try letting people know in advance so they're aware to look out for you. If you spot someone in a predicament and they appear in a state of flop, let them know you're there, they're safe, and place your hand out so that they can take it if they wish to, giving them agency.

Fawn

This happens when you move closer to the threat causing you stress, because this is what's keeping you safe. Sometimes, this can serve you well; other times, you can enter into scenarios you'd rather not be in. For example, making you bite off more than you can chew at work, or you befriend somebody you intuitively feel uncomfortable around out of fear of displeasing them. It can be helpful to ask yourself this question in advance: what penalty do you picture for saying no? What can you deduce from this?

We aren't always in control of how our stress and responses to threats show up but understanding that it's your body's innate way of keeping you safe will help you cope with it better.

PLEASE TALK

@thehappynewspaper

If you need somebody to talk to about your own mental health please seek the advice and support of your GP.

Below are the details of other services and organisations who can offer help and support:

SAMARITANS: 116 123 / samaritans.org

CALM: (for men) 0800 58 58 58 / thecalmzone.net

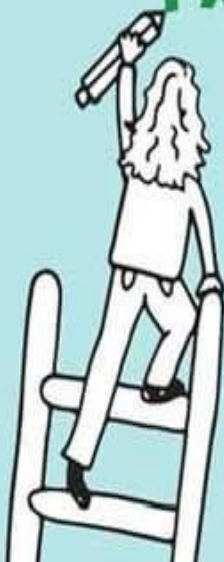
RETHINK MENTAL ILLNESS: (For practical advice on therapy, medication, money, your rights under the Mental Health Act) 0300 5000 927

PAPYRUS: (Prevention of Young Suicide)
0800 068 41 41 / papyrus-uk.org

MIND: 0300 123 3393 / mind.org.uk

SANE: 0300 304 7000 / sane.org.uk

BEFRIENDERS: befrienders.org
(For support outside the UK)



Are you in a relationship with someone who has BPD/EUPD?

A few tips:

1. Learn all you can about the disorder by reading up on symptoms, triggers, possible causes, and treatments.
2. Suggest that your significant other seek some kind of treatment. Take steps to help them find a psychiatrist or psychologist with experience in treating BPD.
3. Find a counsellor for yourself who understands the disorder and who can help you cope during times of crisis with your partner.

When you move past just dating and are living with someone with BPD/EUPD, following these suggestions may help you both in your relationship:

1. **Do what you say you'll do.** Whatever you've told your significant other you'll do, do it. If you've told them you won't do something, don't do it. It's that simple. Staying consistent and predictable will help assuage their intense and excessive fear of abandonment. The best rule of thumb here is to keep your word.
2. **Give honest, gentle feedback.** If they come home and tell you about how their boss or co-worker treated them unfairly at work, don't affirm their beliefs unless you believe their perception is accurate. People with BPD/EUPD sometimes struggle to see how their behaviour impacts on others. So, give honest feedback. You might say something like, "I know it sucks to get passed over for a promotion. I'm so sorry it made you feel so awful." That's a true statement and remains true regardless of what really happened. It does suck to get passed over!
3. **Don't play the rescuer.** Encourage your loved one to take responsibility for their choices and actions. If they overspend and now can't afford that outing with friends, don't give up your money to pay for it.
4. **Don't play into arguments.** Since people with BPD/EUPD have trouble with self-identity and self-awareness, they also frequently think comments are pointed at them, when, in fact, they are not. Bring home flowers, and they may wonder if you're cheating. Give a compliment about something they did, and they may say you're secretly making fun of their efforts. If your loved one misinterprets something you've said, you may bear the brunt of a raging fit about how disgusting and judgmental you are. Don't get involved. Explain your true intentions and stay calm.

It sounds exhausting and sometimes the struggle leaves you feeling powerless and defeated. When you feel this way, focus on the positive aspects and good days. Making the relationship work may not be easy, but it *will be worth it in the end*.



FILM AND BOOK REVIEWS by Mark (group member)

Film: The Whale (2022)

Despite the fact that *The Whale* has seemingly generated a Marmite response amongst critics and the general public alike, I really enjoyed the film. The way the director Darren Aronofsky truthfully and candidly explores morbid obesity and the impact that it has on both the sufferer and those closest to them is remarkable and cannot fail to make a person more empathetic and understanding of the issues that come with this difficult condition.

Along with a fantastic comeback performance from Brendan Fraser, who plays Charlie, the film is also remarkable in that Aronofsky manages to keep you entertained and intrigued despite never actually filming anywhere other than the restricted confines of Charlie's flat and the porch at the front of the property. Though a similar lack of creative options found itself thrust upon Danny Boyle when he directed *127 Hours*, Aronofsky excelled himself in making the most of the creative outlets at his disposal.

My favourite part of the film was where Charlie and his estranged daughter Ellie, played by Sadie Sink, manage to reconcile their differences in what is an incredibly emotional and touching account of how schisms and resentment can be reversed with mutual work.

Overall, this is a brilliant and heart warming piece of filmmaking, and I would highly recommend it to you all!

Score: 8.5/10



Book: Can't Hurt Me, by David Goggins

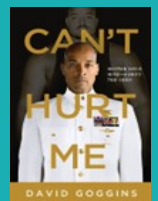
Goggins elicits the same kind of Marmite response as *The Whale*, but I also really liked this book. The author guides you through his disjointed youth, from being domestically and racially abused to being a Navy SEAL and Army Ranger. His journey led him to become a successful entrepreneur, ultra runner, author and motivational speaker, and has seen a cult-like online following form around him.

Though Goggins pulls no punches and is beyond what we would call direct, I like the honesty and gritty realism that he has used in order to write a true, self-published account of his life, what he went through and how he ultimately turned his life around through suffering, self-discipline and unwavering determination to be uncommon.

My favourite parts of the books are where Goggins details how he had to overcome three separate stints in the notorious Hell Week, an extremely gruelling part of selection to be a US Navy SEAL, and the parts where he mentions the various useful strategies for increasing personal accountability and fleshing out and overcoming our most difficult insecurities. He also went through selection for Delta Force, the special operations branch of the US Armed Services. Each chapter ends with exercises and strategies that I have found transformative.

Although self-help books tend to attract disdain and a rolling of the eyes, this is probably the best book that I have read in the genre and shows us all that we have the ability to overcome adversity and build a continuously better life.

Score: 9/10



Mark

Casualty, BBC1, 25 February 2023

With *Casualty*'s level of success you would think they would treat each illness or condition respectfully. In a recent episode there was a character called Eloise, who presented with EUPD/BPD. I found the language used by one of the main doctors to be disrespectful and offensive. How can we educate people on the seriousness of this condition if we are hearing words such as 'crazy' and 'bunny boiler' on primetime TV? Eloise eventually received compassion, not because of an understanding of her symptoms, but because she was being gaslit by another character. This was an opportunity missed. *Casualty* could have done so much good, but they have merely contributed to the ignorance and misunderstanding surrounding EUPD/BPD. Maybe *Casualty* has had its day. Maybe it's time the show was cancelled.

Sue

Supported by...

Derbyshire Recovery and Peer Support Service

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



**Supporting the voluntary sector
working in the criminal justice system**