

# Beyond the Border:

## Using Curricula & Personal Experiences to Overcome Stigma and Recover from BPD

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**Alternatives Conference 2005**

# *Overview of BPD*

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# ***Borderline Personality Disorder***

## **Diagnostic criteria for DSM-IV 301.83:**

**A pervasive pattern of instability of interpersonal relationships, self-image, and affects, and marked impulsivity beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts, as indicated by five (or more) of the following:**

# *Defining BPD Cont'*

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- 1. Frantic efforts to avoid real or imagined abandonment.**
- 2. A pattern of unstable and intense interpersonal relationships characterized by alternating between extremes of idealization and devaluation.**
- 3. Identity disturbance: markedly and persistently unstable self-image or sense of self.**
- 4. Impulsivity in at least two areas that are potentially self-damaging (e.g., spending, sex, Substance Abuse, reckless driving, binge eating).**

# *Defining BPD Cont'*

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5. **Recurrent suicidal behavior, gestures, or threats, or self-mutilating behavior.**
6. **Affective instability due to a marked reactivity of mood (e.g., intense episodic dysphoria, irritability, or anxiety usually lasting a few hours and only rarely more.**
7. **Chronic feelings of emptiness.**
8. **Inappropriate, intense anger or difficulty controlling anger (e.g., frequent displays of temper, constant anger, recurrent physical fights).**
9. **Transient, stress-related paranoid ideation or severe dissociative symptoms.**

# *Overview of Recovery*

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# *Defining Recovery*

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- **ODMH defines recovery as “The process of overcoming the negative impact of a psychiatric disability despite its continued presence.”**
- **Recovery is “a deeply personal, unique process of changing one’s attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills, and/or roles (Anthony, 1993).”**
- **Removing the negative from mental illness (anon)**

# *Stages of Recovery\**

Dependent/Unaware	Consumer relies on others and is not aware of his/her own status or needs.
Dependent/Aware	Consumer relies on others but is aware of his/her status and needs.
Independent/Aware	Consumer relies on self and is aware of his/her status and needs.
Interdependent/Aware	Consumer relies on self and others in a mutual exchange of beneficial support, services and resources.

\* Ohio Department of Mental Health (1999). Emerging Best Practices in Mental Health Recovery Process.

# *Stages of Recovery Cont'*

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## **ODMH:**

- **Dependent/Unaware**
- **Dependent/Aware**
- **Independent/Aware**
- **Interdependent/Aware**

## **The Village:**

- **Hope**
- **Empowerment**
- **Self-Responsibility**
- **Meaningful role in society**

# ***The Goal: Becoming Mentally Healthy***

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**Mentally Healthy People Show these characteristics 95% of the time:**

- 1. Try to enjoy life to the fullest.**
- 2. Do not waste time and energy worrying.**
- 3. Consider what others feel and have to say, but take actions according to their own convictions.**
- 4. Do not feel distressed when others don't like them.**
- 5. Organize their lives functionally so that important things get done on time.**
- 6. Can love other people easily and without fear.**

# *Goal: Mentally Healthy Cont'*

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- 7. Can find inner peace and strength when they need it.**
- 8. Laugh a lot, and are able to find humor in most situations.**
- 9. Look for solutions instead of complaining about the problems.**
- 10. Act out of their own self-interest.**
- 11. Have a strong and consistent set of values.**
- 12. Face new ideas with an open-minded skepticism.**

**Heller, Leland, MD (1999). *Life at the Border: Understanding and Recovering from the Borderline Personality Disorder*. Okeechobee, FL: Dyslimbia Press, INC.**

# *Process of Recovery from BPD*

- **HOPE**
- **Empowerment**
- **Self-Responsibility**
- **Meaningful Role**
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- **Recovered**



# *Hope*

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## **I. Becoming rational thinkers**

- **hope is basically an attitude (influenced by thought)**
- **those of us with BPD tend to struggle a great deal with irrational thought patterns (black...white, exaggeration, etc.).**

*To obtain and maintain a sense of hope, we have to change (control) our thoughts...*

*...we have to become rational thinkers!*

# *Hope Con't*

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## ○ **Helpful Coping Skills/Techniques:**

- **Support from a trusted, third party observer**
- **Journaling**
- **mood logs**
- **Positive self-talk and/or affirmations**
- **medications**

## ○ **Barriers:**

- **Stigma & discrimination from having a mental illness**
  - **“We’re difficult, manipulative, and nobody wants to work with us because we’re so bad off - - how can we have hope when the system has no hope for us?”**
- **Fears (change, abandonment, emotions, etc.)**

# *Empowerment*

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## ○ **Becoming Knowledgeable**

- **know your illness & yourself**
  - learn to distinguish between symptoms and you
  - warning signs
  - triggers
  - rights

## ○ **Utilizing Support**

- **Professional**
- **Peer**
- **Friends/family**

## ○ **Become active in your treatment**

- **Medications alone will not improve your life**
- **Your treatment providers cannot fix you**

# *Empowerment Con't*

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- **Helpful Coping Skills/Techniques:**
  - **Continue using skills from previous stage**
  - **Read, read, read**
  - **Self-Assessment**
    - strengths, weaknesses, needs, wants, goals, etc.
  - **Let people help**
  - **Exercise....pursue hobbies**
  
- **Barriers:**
  - **Stigma**
  - **Triangulation**
  - **Fear of abandonment**
  - **Trust**

# *Self-Responsibility*

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- **Changing Behaviors/Regulating Emotions**
  - **Advanced recovery**
    - **critical stage where we shift from an external to internal locus of control**
    - **taking responsibility for our lives...being willing to do whatever it takes to get better**
      - **for some, progress in recovery stops here**
  - **Anger is not the only emotion we have**
    - **taking on responsibility for our well-being opens the door to feeling the positive emotions**
  - **Creating a positive lifestyle**
    - **change, change, change**
    - **risks, risks, risks**

# *Self-Responsibility Con't*

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- **Helpful Coping Skills/Techniques:**
  - **Continue previous skills as appropriate**
  - **Identify the problems as well as reasonable solutions...then, develop a plan to implement the solutions**
    - **Physical**
    - **Thought/Emotional**
    - **Relationships**
  
- **Barriers:**
  - **Self-sabotage (fear of success)**
  - **Fear of failure**
  - **Low self-esteem & poor social skills**

# *Meaningful Role*

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- **Integrated life in the community**
  - **Life extends beyond mental illness and the mental health system**
  - **Valued Role in the community**
    - **Employment/volunteering**
    - **Faith community**
    - **Family**
    - **Friendships/relationships**
    - **Community organizations**
    - **Giving back**
  - **Pursuit of interests/hobbies (outside of MH)**

# *Meaningful Role Con't*

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## ○ **Helpful Coping Skills/Techniques:**

- **Keep doing what's worked**
- **Try new things**
- **Give back**

## ○ **Barriers:**

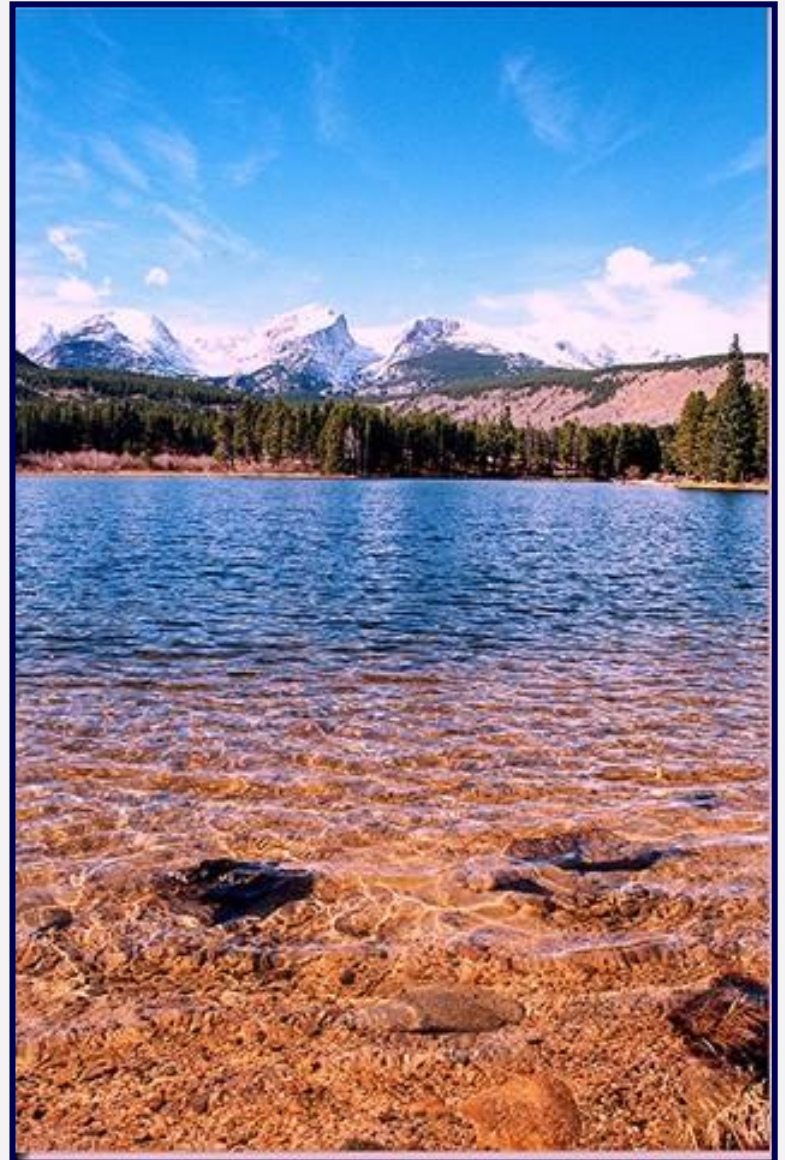
- **Old habits are hard to break**
- **returning to the comfort zone**
- **Self**

# *Recovered*

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## **Seven Characteristics of a Person Who has Recovered from Mental Illness:**

**By Daniel Fisher, MD, PhD;  
Executive Director,  
National Empowerment Center**



# *Recovered*

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- 1. Makes their own decisions in collaboration with other supportive people outside the mental health system**
- 2. Has a meaningful and fulfilling network of friends outside the mental health professionals**
- 3. Has achieved a major social role/identity other than consumer (such as student, parent, worker)**
- 4. Medication is one tool among many freely chosen by the individual to assist in their day to day life (used as the chronically “normals” use medication)**

# *Recovered Cont'*

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5. **Capable of expressing and understanding emotions to such a degree that the person can cope with severe emotional distress without it interrupting their social role and without them being labeled symptoms**
6. **A Global Assessment of Functioning Scale score of greater than 61: “functioning pretty well, some meaningful interpersonal relationships and ‘most untrained people would not consider him sick’ ”**
7. **Sense of self is defined by oneself through life experience and interaction with peers**

**By Daniel Fisher, MD, PhD;  
Executive Director, National Empowerment Center**

# *Overcoming Stigma*

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- **Stigma from others (external)**
  - **Mental Health System**
    - Providers
    - Peers
  - **Community (family, friends, neighbors, etc.)**
- **Self-stigma (internal)**
  - **Serenity Prayer**
  - **Self-Esteem**
  - **Empowerment**

# *Co-dependence & BPD*

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**"Codependence is about giving away power over our self-esteem." (Burney, Robert)**

**It is this lack of a "self" that leads the person with BPD to continually set and re-set themselves up as victims. (Mahari, A.J., 2000).**

Robert Burney From his Column "Codependence vs Interdependence"-- In an article by A.J. Mahari (2000) titled: *"Co-dependence: Where Borderlines and Non-Borderlines Often Meet."*

[www.borderlinepersonality.ca/bordercodepdance.htm](http://www.borderlinepersonality.ca/bordercodepdance.htm)

# *Codependence Cont'*

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## ○ Recovery from co-dependence

- is about knowing that you want and deserve healthier relational reality...It's about meeting your own needs!

## ○ Recovery from BPD

- involves seeking an active recovery from co-dependence...
- One must become fully emotionally adult, take personal responsibility for themselves, build his/her own sense of self (identity), self-esteem and self-worth.

## ○ If you are co-dependent

- you **NEED** to learn to validate yourself from the inside out and you must stop seeking others to define you and or to meet your needs for you (Mahari, A.J., 2000).

# *Tools for Recovery*

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- **MH Services**
- **Support/Self-Help**
- **Books**
- **Websites**





# *Mental Health Services*

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- Dialectical Behavior Therapy
- Cognitive Therapy
- Medication
- Group therapy
- Vocational/psychosocial programs



# *Support/Self-help*

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- Peer Support
- Peer-to-peer education
- Workbooks
- Mood logs/other tools

# *Books*

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- I Hate You, Don't Leave Me
  - Kreisman, Jerold
- Managing Intense Emotions and Overcoming Self-Destructive Habits: A Self-Help Manual
  - Bell, Lorraine
- The Angry Heart: Overcoming Borderline and Addictive Disorders : An Interactive Self-Help Guide
  - Santoro and Cohen
- Life at the Border: Understanding and Recovering from the Borderline Personality Disorder
  - Heller, Leland M.D.

# *Books Con't*

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- Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder.
  - Linehan, Marsha M.
  
- Eclipses: Behind the Borderline Personality Disorder
  - Ford Thornton, Melissa
  
- The Feeling Good Handbook
  - Burns, David M.D.
  
- Pathways to Recovery: A Strengths Recovery Self-Help Workbook
  - Ridgway, Priscilla; McDiarmid, Diane; Davidson, Lori; Bayes, Julie and Ratzlaff, Sarah

# Websites

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## ○ **Borderline Personality Disorder**

- <http://www.bpdresources.com/index.html>
- <http://www.bpdcentral.com>
- <http://www.bpdresourcecenter.org/>
- <http://www.mhsanctuary.com/borderline/>
- <http://www.laurapaxton.com/>
- <http://www.biologicalunhappiness.com/>

## ○ **General Recovery Websites**

- <http://www.mhrecovery.com>
- <http://www.adultrecoverynetwork.org>
- <http://power2u.org>

# *Q & A and Contact Info.*

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**Change is inevitable...progress is optional.\***  
**Choose Progress!**

\* Dr. Hogan, Director, Ohio Department of Mental Health

# *Contact Info.*

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