

Understanding And Treating Bipolar Disorders

UNDERSTANDING AND TREATING BIPOLAR DISORDERS

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Understanding Bipolar To Get Help

Most individuals that suffer from bipolar have one goal. That goal is to live a life that is as normal as can be. To get through today without having any emotional problems, to make it through the big meeting at work without having people wonder what is wrong with you and to simply be able to enjoy your daughter's graduation are all additional goals that you may have.

Before you can fully learn to cope with bipolar, you need to fully understand your condition. You need to know what things happen, as best that you can, so that you can then trigger your coping mechanisms to work for you.

There is no 100 percent sure way of stopping these things from happening to you. But, there are countless things you can learn to do to help you to improve your outlook.

To get to that point, we will start by giving you all of the information you need about your condition so that you can better understand what is happening to you. If you are a family member who just wants to help someone that has bipolar, then by all means, you too can learn all that you need to in order to deliver the help that you can give to them.

Bipolar is a condition in which there are extremes in moods and life experiences. There is no doubt that bipolar is a health condition that is serious and disabling to those that have it. It is a mental illness and it does require necessary treatment.

You may have heard bipolar called Manic Depression or that a person suffering from it has a manic depressive condition. But, what scientists have come to learn is that manic style behavior is only one extreme of this condition. The other part of it is that of depression. Both of these conditions are vitally serious to your well being and even to your life span and must be treated.

While doctors do not have a cause for bipolar, they are working on finding one. Along with that, you can be sure that there are many scientists looking for a way to cure the condition. Yet, until that happens, we need to examine what we do know about bipolar and what it does to the person that you are.

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For most people bipolar starts when they are just in their teens. Some believe that it is triggered by puberty. Others will not develop this condition until they are in their early adult years. Bipolar can last your life time, too.

For most individuals, bipolar is a condition that doesn't happen all of the time. You don't go in and out of moods or other experiences within seconds and you don't do this all of the time either. For example, some people will have bouts that last for several weeks. Others will have them for a few months at a time. Although it is possible to have bipolar in which your symptoms flare all of the time, this is really the rare case.

If you don't get help for bipolar, your condition is likely to continue to worsen. There is no doubt that depression itself is a killer. Therefore, not getting help is simply not an option. But, the good news is that there are medications, treatments and therapies that can help to reduce the symptoms and help you to cope with your condition.

Why Should I Get Help Anyway?

Bipolar is a mental illness. It is not like a cold that will go away. It is not like a broken leg which will heal on its own. Without the attention of a professional, your bipolar can and will get worse.

What happens to you will be unique. There is no way of knowing if your condition will worsen quickly or at all. But, research shows that those that do not seek help for their condition will find complications do exist for them and for their family members.

If you have bipolar, other conditions can make it even worse. For example, if you are trying to deal with anxiety, you will have a hard time doing so because of bipolar. In conditions where this is life threatening, for example if you are suffering from alcoholism, this can be a very serious problem.

If you can't keep yourself off of alcohol, then your life may be in danger. Not only will the alcohol cause problems for your health, but bipolar can make you think irrationally and you could put yourself in dangerous situations. For this reason, seeking help is a must.

For some, the length of time between depressive symptoms and mania symptoms can be very short. You could move from one symptom to the next quickly, leading to confusion and even health scares. This rapid cycling in itself will cause you quite a bit of grief.

It can get even worse, too. It is possible, believe it or not, to be in a state of depression as well as in mania at the same time. When this happens, the end result is that your mind and emotions are completely wrapped in each other. You are agitated and annoyed. You are unable to sleep or eat. You can't get your thoughts to be organized.

Even worse, when this happens, people are more likely to think about suicide. This can be very dangerous because people in this state of mind are not thinking rationally at all and can make the wrong decision.

Another problem is that of psychosis. Bipolar symptoms that combine both mania and depression symptoms can lead to psychosis. This is a very serious mental illness in which your personality is completely disorganized. You are impaired with what is real and what is not. You

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are hallucinating and you are delusional. Even those that very strongly believe in things can end up making decisions the other way.

Even beyond the physical risks that you place yourself under when you face bipolar, there are the just as devastating effects that it has on your relationships.

Many people with bipolar will have trouble holding onto relationships. They may move from one person to the next quickly because of the mood swings that they deal with. In addition, those that are suffering from bipolar often times make mistakes with dealing with others. They simply are confused as to what the true emotion is supposed to be during any such situations.

Why So Many Struggle With Treatment

Although medication and psychotherapy are methods for dealing with bipolar disorder, many times individuals simply will not take them. They stop. They give up. They simply can not stand the entire process of fighting their bodies and minds. They just give up.

As you can probably imagine, this is simply not the best route for you to take when it comes to caring for your condition. Yet, a vast number of bipolar disorder patients will experience this feeling at some time or another. Why is that?

Those that take antipsychotic medications and mood stabilizers are often the types of medications with the most side effects and therefore the most commonly stopped by the patient.

Yet, those that just stop taking these medications against their doctor's recommendations often face a huge problem. They relapse in their symptoms. They are often hospitalized. They end up homeless, victims, and even are more commonly involved in various types of crime. Either in jail or in a hospital, those that do not have the medications they need end up in trouble.

When a patient stops taking their medication, this is called noncompliance or sometimes it is called nonadherence. It is not just those that suffer from bipolar disorder and take these medications that face this problem.

In fact, those that are told they need to take medications for long periods of time often go through a bout of not wanting to do so any longer. Those that suffer from epilepsy, hypertension and even asthma often face this feeling of wanting to stop the medications.

One thing to understand is that you don't have to stop taking all of your medications to face a problem. Some individuals only stop taking some of them; perhaps those that they still have pills available for, and stop others. Partial noncompliance is just as problematic as those that face cutting off all medications all together.

Nevertheless, this doesn't answer our question of why this happens. Unfortunately, there are a number of different reasons why it will happen.

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The first and most common reason that this happens is simply because patients don't understand the illness that they are up against. In fact, some 10 out of 14 patients will stop taking medications because they don't realize just how important they are to their illness.

Many patients, up to 80 percent, will take medications only because their doctor's tell them to. Many don't realize why they need to take the medications that they do, but simply do so because their doctor tells them to. Because people do this, it is hard to understand just how aware they are of their illness.

One of the most important things that you can do, then, is to truly understand your condition. If your loved one has bipolar disorder, then help them to stay informed about their condition. It is essential that you provide this information because without it, they may not realize the importance of taking those pills each day. With this education, though, protection can be significant from these problems.

Learning To Cope With Bipolar Disorder

One of the biggest messages you need to take from this e-book is the fact that you can improve your condition if you make some changes in your lifestyle. You can learn to cope with bipolar disorder.

You may sit there and think to yourself that you just don't want to deal with this. You may want to be able to write it off as an "Oh well." But, in fact, you've seen reasons why you can do that. Now, that you realize that, take the time to realize what changes you can make in your life to actually improve your overall quality of life.

Don't try to make all of these changes today. Give yourself time and patience to work through each one. Doing so will give you more ability to actually be successful with coping with bipolar disorder.

Believe it or not, the way that you sleep plays a significant role in your bipolar condition. What's important to remember here is that when you sleep in a normal pattern, there are chemical changes in the brain that are beneficial to your condition.

To improve this condition, simply get enough sleep each night, but do this by going to bed about the same time each night and get up about the same time each morning. Creating a pattern like this will improve your bipolar symptoms.

If you work a job that has you sleeping strange times of the day, you need to try to work out a schedule so that even when you are not working, you are still sleeping the same times of the day. This is essential to your coping skills. It also gives your mind the time that it needs to clear and to wake up refreshed.

In fact, when you do need to make changes in your sleep pattern that are drastic, such as a new time zone, talk to your doctor about the best way to do this without causing problems for yourself.

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We've talked a lot about taking the medications that you need to take and the reasons for doing so. But, you can also learn to cope with this process to make it that much more successful for you.

Take your medications even if you feel great. Do what your doctor tells you to do in regards to taking them even when you have no symptoms. Even if you feel really good, that's your medication talking and working! By stopping the consumption of them, you simply allow the symptoms to begin all over again.

To make the entire process of medication taking easy plan out your schedule so as to include your dosing. For example, when you wake up in the morning, have your breakfast and take your morning pills. If you take a second pill later in the day, do so after dinner, for example. By pairing medication taking with meals, for example, you keep yourself from forgetting them.

Why You Should Consider Support Groups

Everyone hates them and not one wants to go to support groups. But, think about why that is. Is it too hard for you to do? Do you hate admitting that something could be wrong? Perhaps you are like one of the many that actually find themselves struggling with the need to surround yourself with others that face the same challenges that you do.

The bottom line is that support groups do help and that they commonly can help to increase your quality of life and help you to realize what you are up against.

Learning to cope with bipolar disorder is not easy but it is challenging. It is something that you can learn to do. In fact, one of the best ways to do this is to work with others that are facing the same situations that you are.

Support groups offer that type of care, something that your family and friends can not give you nor can your doctor. Being around others that are struggling with the same problems you are struggling with, gives you hope, understanding and even a sense of peace.

Learning about support groups is vitally important. Who is in yours depends on your family make up and even those that are striving to provide you with the care that you need.

Right now, you probably have a family that is helping to support your needs. You also have a health care team that is there to provide you with medical assistance. This includes everyone from your family doctor to the psychiatrist that you've poured your heart out to.

Friends should make up part of your support group too. Many don't want to provide personal information about themselves such as their bipolar disorder, but the fact is that you should. A true friend stays by you and helps you to cope as well as offers you the support you need in all times of your life.

Consider telling those that you love what is happening to you. It can only benefit you. What's more, it can help people to understand the way that you react and the moods that you go through, making you a better friend to them.

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While having your family around you will improve your well being and will offer the help that you need, you should consider additional help through outside support groups as well.

Professional groups that meet to discuss bipolar disorder are found in many hospitals, recreation centers and in various psychiatric facilities. To find one that is located near you, ask your doctor for suggestions. They may have one that is tailored to your specific needs in mind for you to choose to go to based on your situation.

These support groups provide professional attention that can be guided by you. For example, several people that have the same disorder as you do can come together with a moderator. By sharing the ins and outs of your day with others, you help them to improve their life as much as you'll help yourself to do the same.

Childhood Treatment Options For Bipolar Disorder

Bipolar disorder was once only seen in adults but studies are showing children also get the manic depressive illness. The only issue is many of the kids are being diagnosed as ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) though now many researchers and doctors are realizing that bipolar is rearing its ugly self in childhood along in adolescence.

The early the diagnosis is made in children, the better their chances of having successful treatments and living inhibited lives that would otherwise be full of chaos. It seems though that anything doing with children is full of controversy. Medicating children with bipolar is not without its debates. Many doctors feel with medication (which is given first) along with talk therapy will work. However, many parents along with psychologists disagree with this method.

It seems that as soon as parents realize their child is on medication that the child loses some of his or her personality.. A sense of who they are that parents seem to love. It's not true actually. Anytime a person is medicated or overly medicated, they do not lose a sense of who they are. However, it can be said that medications can make some children "spacey" or just plain "out of it". This of course causes concern among the parents and doctors, making them questions if medicine is actually necessary and if the child is better off without any.

An effective therapy for children is play therapy especially for children with bipolar disorder. These children tend to live better childhoods. Play therapy typically places the child in certain "pretend" situations where they must have a logically and emotionally healthy solution. Play therapy is good for some children but not so good in others. In certain bipolar children, the mood swings are so strong that the child cannot control both their emotional reactions and other actions to situations.

A new therapy being introduced is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The therapy centers on the patient learning to recognize bipolar symptoms, what triggers it and inappropriate behaviors that go along with it. It also comes up with alternatives to that "bad" behavior. This therapy allows the patient to discover for themselves what they can do to avoid manic or depressive episodes and how to effectively manage it. For adults, this is a good option... for children, however, it is still quite new. This therapy does work well with medicine therapy.

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Cognitive therapy requires some level of resolving crisis and vital thinking that does not occur in children typically. For that reason, it is not used a lot in children under certain age guidelines and their maturity level. Some researchers say if the cognitive and behavioral therapy had some changes and were geared toward children, that it could work. This can prove difficult to do however.

No matter the end result, childhood treatment options should be discussed with their doctor, psychiatrists, psychologists, parents and teachers to come up with a livable and realistic treatment. Every person that child comes into contact should be aware of the process in order for it to be triumphant. Should they have concerns about what kind of effects it will have on the child or they see a difference in a bad result, they need to speak up when necessary. Parents should also not be afraid to change doctors if they feel their child is not getting the care and attention they need. The goal behind treatment is to get the child to live in society and function "normally" as the law says.

What To Do If You Have A Bipolar Disorder Diagnosis

Like any disease a person is diagnosed with, a battle ensues to try and beat it. Whether it is cancer, AIDS, asthma or something dealing in psychiatric disorders such as Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder, there is always some fight going on once there is an official diagnosis made.

Psychiatric disorder Bipolar is among one of the mental disorders that patients cannot can't beat but have to live with and try to overcome when the major symptoms of it begin to take hold. Basically, it's a fight to become normal or have some sort of normalcy restored into their life

Being normal with a disease such as bi-polar disorder is a hard thing to accomplish. It can hit on every aspect of the person's life, disrupting not only their lives but others around them. That's why it is so imperative people with the disease be aware of any changing behavior, if possible!

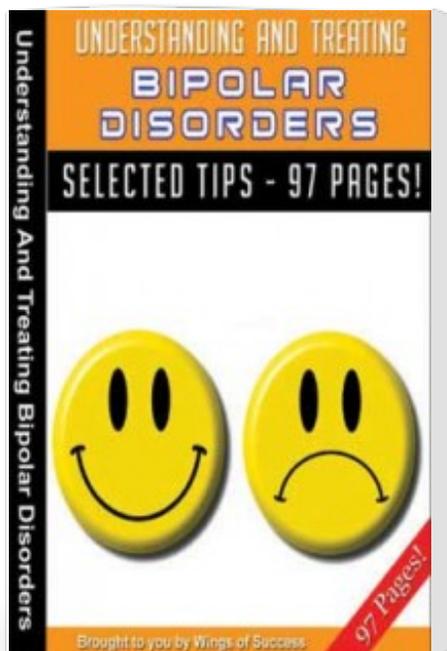
It's likely that the more serious the disorder, the easier it is to spot. Perhaps those who have it can spot it but likely it would be a patient's love one. made in the first place, that the signs were there from the beginning.

Early treatment can stave off some of the extreme manic highs and lows one often feels with the disease. If the disease is found early on, the sooner the treatment can begin successfully and the less likely severe symptoms will erupt.

The biggest issue about knowing someone with this disease is keeping them interested in taking their medication and engaging them in talk therapy. Getting them to take responsibility is very important in the ability to keep the disease in check. For some, making them realize that the diagnosis is correct can be a hard thing because they don't want to really believe a disease is responsible for much of what they do.

For others, it's like a burden has been lifted off their shoulders after realizing that what has been happening to them has a name and that there are treatments for it. For them, they are happier to know that much of what was said and done could not have been helped. Although this doesn't make matters easier in dealing with the past.

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