

SCRIPT: Living with Borderline Personality Disorder
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Lead in: This audio documentary ascertains what Borderline personality disorder is. It affects a person who is diagnosed with it in various ways in which it contributes in the instability of relationships as well as friendships with others. In this documentary, Professor Marwa Hussein, Adham (patient) and Nour (patient's cousin) will be illustrating how a life with BPD looks like and how much of a severe mental illness it is.

MUSIC: FADE IN: Sad Trio by Kevin MacLeod (from the start of the song till (0:59 of the documentary)

Imagine failing to administer and control the normal human emotions that one might have on a daily basis, and having imprudent actions, and problems in behaviors. That's the case for a patient with borderline personality disorder. (0:14)

Nour Zakria (NZ): My cousin used to live abroad, when she came here to Egypt, her attitude was pretty weird, she cut off her relationship with all her friends and that she no longer has friends. Couple of days later I found her calling me telling me that she can't live with her parents anymore and that she wants to move in with me. (0:21)

That was Nour Zakria, whose cousin is diagnosed with BPD. (0:05)

(NZ): She moved in, she was silent most of the time, she used to sit alone in the room and there was no actual interaction between me and her which was very weird because as I said before I thought we were friends. Most of the time she couldn't control her behaviors or her emotions, she used to cry suddenly. (0:22)

FADE IN NAT SOUND: BPD patient squeezing a bottle from stress and then sighing.

(0:05)

MUSIC: FADE OUT Sad Trio by Kevin Macleod at (0:59) and FADE IN: Moments by Ikson at (1:00)

As Nour mentioned, severe impulsive emotions can be very rough on someone's life and produces a turbulent atmosphere. (0:07)

Marwa Hussein (MW): Borderline personality disorder is a serious mental illness that involves mismanagement of emotions, the person feels moments or episodes of intense emotions usually negative of course the person does not know how to manage or how to deal these emotions. And it does affect relationships so you can spot a borderline personality disorder person by the effects he or she implies in relationship. (0:28)

That was Professor Marwa Hussein, a senior counselor in the Student Counseling Center in the American University in Cairo, where the interview took place in her office on campus of AUC. This illness affects relationships with people, academics, social interactions and even normal everyday activities like driving to school, eating with family or chatting with neighbors. (0:20)

Nour's cousin has even failed to have a successful relationship because of her illness. (0:05)

MUSIC: FADE OUT Moments by Ikson at (1:59) and FADE IN: Youth by Ikson (from the beginning of the song till minute 4:20 of the documentary)

(NZ): They got together, it was perfect for a while and then everything started to change, and that's when her illness started to get involved in the relationship. So, her boyfriend couldn't take it anymore, they broke up and it made it worse. (0:14)

(MH): Any minor disputes or any minor conflict between them and someone they love or someone they are dear to, they tend to be extremely angry sometimes very sad intensified. (0:13)

Normally, BPD creates hardship in the life of a person who suffers from it, being completely aware that this is all because of a psychological issue that is controlling his/her life from scratch; not letting even the slightest human interactions flow easily. (0:15)

(NZ): I remember once we decided to watch a movie together and we chose a comedy movie, suddenly she started crying after she was laughing and that was very weird. I didn't know what to do. (0:16)

FADE IN NAT SOUND: Nour's cousin throwing the remote control on the floor. (0:03)

(MH): A lot of them recall that they cannot deal with this emotion, sitting with this emotion is so unbearable that they start doing some kind of self-harm usually physical in order to take the focus away from that negative emotional pain. Sometimes some of them will drive recklessly some would attempt suicide a lot of suicidal attempts will be apparent in this disorder some for attention seeking others, no for real attempt to get pain away. (0:31)

FADE IN NAT SOUND: Anti depression pills sound. (0:03)

(MH): In severe cases, the person will need to take maybe antidepressants or anti-anxiety pills or something like that. (0:08)

Nour's cousin also turned out to also have Dysphoria, which is a characteristic of the borderline syndrome. Dysphoria results from the cyclical emotional oscillation between hope for stability and disappointment in its unattainability, and arises from the mixture of anger, loneliness and inner emptiness. (0:20)

(NZ): since I discovered that she had BPD, everything made sense; her attitude made sense, the way she cuts off her relationship with everyone, her family, her friends, her boyfriend, the fact that she moved in with me. (0:15)

Nour's cousin started to have acceptance of her mental illness, and started to get hospitalized, knowing that this is the best thing she can do at the moment. (0:08)

MUSIC: FADE OUT: Youth by ikson fades out at (4:20) then fade in Sad Trio by Kevin Macleod until (7:57) of the documentary -the end of it-

Adham Sherif (AS): No one turns to me, no one is around me, i feel like i'm physically present but that's it i feel like, i don't know, lonely. (0:12)

One more victim of BPD is Adham Sherif. (0:05)

(AS): i've told actually a few of my close friends, i've noticed that they started treating me in a way different that i'm an incompetent, i started being left out of my friends plans. I was basically an outcast and it made me feel more angry that what i have is something that i have no control over but yet people kept treating me in a way that didn't help me it made me feel worse. (0:35)

Not only does Adham fall as a victim for BPD, but he's also treated as an underprivileged person because of the stigma around having a mental illness. (0:09)

(MH): This disorder usually happens in adolescence, sometimes a little bit later. So if a parent notices some emotional disturbances that their daughter or son is not able to put emotions in perspective, they get too upset they get too angry. I think they need to consult a professional. (0:20)

(AS): Up til this moment my parents have not comprehended the idea of me having BPD, they'd say that i'm doing this to seek their attention and that its childish and that I should grow up and be more mature. (0:30)

(AS): Even though that i want to stop talking to them and leave but in the same time I have this dilemma that I can't cut them out of my life I need them I need their support. i've tried to take my life before, I got a box of sleeping pills and i swallowed all of them, and at this point I was just sick of my life I seem to push everyone away no one wants to sit down and talk with me and understand what's going on, so I felt that if I disappear maybe the people around me might be a little bit happier. fortunately it didn't work out, I was actually saved by my roommate. (0:51)

(AS): I still get these thoughts of hurting myself, I just can't get out of the stigma that is here in egypt, anyone who has a psychological disorder they are put under one category which is being crazy, people do not know how to handle my situation, do not know how to act and behave around me, they just take the easy route of just avoiding. I don't feel welcomed, I don't feel at home wherever I go, even in my own home. (0:37)

Adham is learning some coping skills, knowing that his illness is not going anywhere, and that he must manage to get away with the pain, and think positively. (0:10)

This audio documentary was produced by Nada Darwish for the audio production course at the American University in Cairo taught by professor Kim Fox in the spring semester of 2018.

Special Thanks to my interviewees Dr. Marwa Hussein, Nour Zakria and Adham Sherif. Music is Sad Trio by Kevin Macleod, Moments and Youth by Ikson.

MUSIC: FADE OUT Sad Trio by Kevin Macleod at (7:57).