

“What do you mean I have BPD?” - The importance of helping clients understand their BPD diagnosis

Dr. Victoria Stead, Ph.D., C.Psych. (Supervised Practice)
Young Adult Substance Use Program
Concurrent Disorders Outpatient Program
St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton

St. Joseph's
Healthcare  Hamilton

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the literature on clients' experiences and understanding of their BPD diagnosis
2. Review a biosocial developmental model of BPD
3. Learn how to present a biosocial developmental model to clients with BPD

“BORDERLINE
BETWEEN WHAT
AND WHAT?”

BACKGROUND

“The borderline patient [is] hard to describe, but if he/she were sitting in one of our offices, we would instantly know”
(Becker, 1997, p. xiii)

Often Clinicians perceive clients with BPD as being
“manipulative” and “difficult” and “untreatable” or “not really sick”

One of most stigmatized MH disorders

(Becker, 1997; Bonnington & Rose, 2014; Gunderson, 2009; Ring & Lawn, 2019; Sulzer et al., 2016)

CLINICIANS' PERSPECTIVES

Give Axis I diagnoses in place of BPD

Euphemistic diagnosis instead of BPD

Believe if give the diagnosis it will elicit a negative reaction

In one study - only 9% of clinicians gave individuals with BPD full disclosure about their condition

Health care workers try to “distance” themselves from clients with BPD- potentially treating clients differently

(Lester et al., 2020; Ring & Lawn, 2019 ; Stalker, Ferguson, & Barclay, 2005; Sulzer, 2015; Sulzer et al., 2016)



[News > Medscape Medical News](#)

Borderline Personality Disorder Diagnosis: To Tell or Not to Tell Patients?

Deborah Brauser

March 22, 2021

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News of actor/comedian Pete Davidson [expressing relief](#) after finally receiving a diagnosis of borderline [personality disorder](#) (BPD) prompted a recent Twitter discussion among physicians regarding the ongoing debate on whether or not to tell a patient he or she has this diagnosis.

Recommendations



Smartphone App
Differentiates Bipolar Disorder,
BPD



Borderline Personality
Disorder Common in Chronic
Pain Patients



Managing Borderline
Personality Disorder: New
Insights

Retrieved from:

<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/947850>

CLIENTS' PERSPECTIVES

Many report not learning about diagnosis first-hand

Experience of confusion when given “other” diagnoses

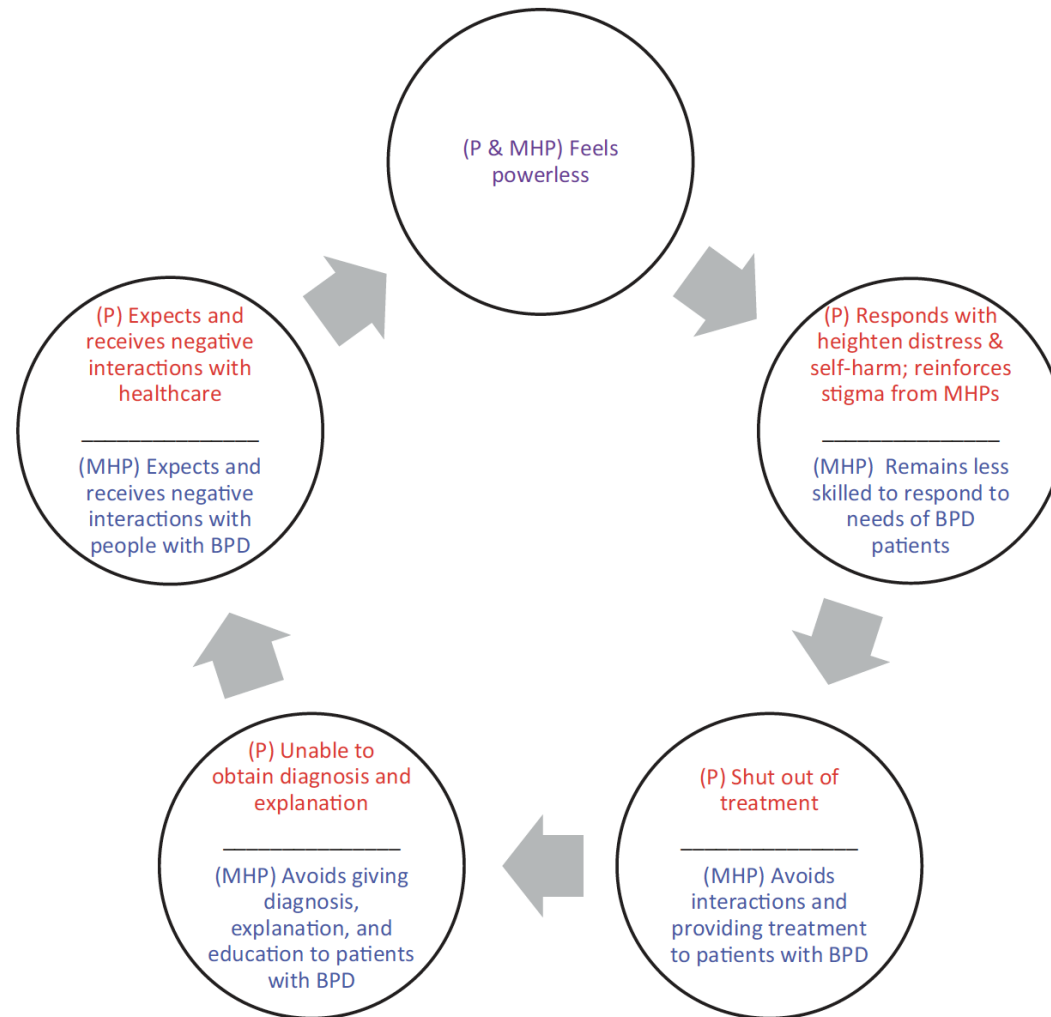
Mixed evidence – most individuals with BPD feel relief and sense of belonging

It appears those who reject the diagnosis do so due to lack of understanding about BPD

Don't receive explanation of BPD

Feeling clinicians had been dismissive

Proposed Model for the Perpetuation of Stigma



(Ring & Lawn, 2019)

Figure 2. Patient (P) and mental health professional (MPH) perspectives on how stigma towards BPD is perpetuated – conceptual framework.

CONSEQUENCES OF WITHHOLDING DIAGNOSIS

- Significant delays in treatment
- Ruptures in therapeutic alliance
- Perpetuation of the stigma (providers and clients)
- Confusion around the diagnosis
- Feeling dismissed and angry
- Believing “bad,” “wrong” or “child-like”
- When asking for more information – being labelled as “challenging”
- Negative beliefs about their prognosis

(Barr et al., 2020; Bonnington & Rose , 2014; Lester et al., 2020; Richardson & Tracy, 2015; Ring & Lawn, 2019; Sulzer et al., 2016)

PERSONALITY DISORDERS

When Borderline Personality Disorder Becomes Stalking

Dangers of intense “neediness” in romantic or close relationships.

Posted Oct 26, 2020 |  Reviewed by Lybi Ma



Retrieved from:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/the-science-mental-health/202010/when-borderline-personality-disorder-becomes-stalking>

Having a Parent With Borderline Personality Disorder

What does it mean to have unstable and immature parents?

Posted Mar 25, 2021 |  Reviewed by Davia Sills



Retrieved from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/living-emotional-intensity/202103/having-parent-borderline-personality-disorder>

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Retrieved from:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/toxic-relationships/201909/the-drama-loving-borderline>

The Drama of Loving a Borderline

If you're on eggshells due to constant high drama, your partner may have BPD.

Posted Sep 05, 2019 | Reviewed by Ekua Hagan



Stop walking on landmines – dealing with someone with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)



Note: This article is not my work, but a compilation of a variety of articles written on the subject by various

Retrieved from:

<https://jorganharris.co.za/stop-walking-on-landmines-dealing-with-someone-with-borderline-personality-disorder-bpd/>

17 things to never say to a girl with Borderline Personality Disorder

What's that? No, you don't need to padlock the rabbit hutch...

 by CHARLOTTE DINGLE  MAR 2, 2016

Retrieved from:
<https://www.cosmopolitan.com/uk/body/health/news/a41655/things-to-never-say-borderline-personality-disorder/>

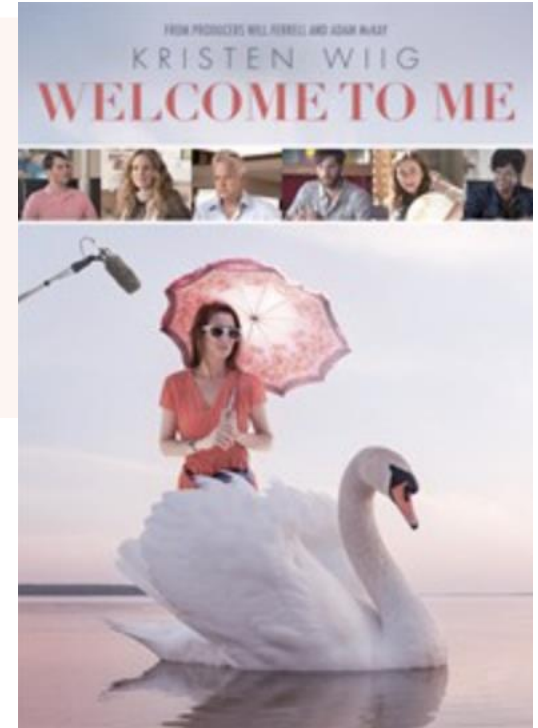
To read more about each type in-depth, you can read the full article here.

What Type of Borderline Personality Disorder Do You Have?



FIND OUT

Retrieved from: <https://themighty.com/2019/09/quiz-bpd-types/>



59



793



Retrieved from: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-au/p/welcome-to-me/8d6kgx05v52r?activetab=pivot%3aoverviewtab>





Borderline Personality Disorder

25 'Embarrassing' Symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder We Don't Talk About



Juliette Virzi • Follow

January 24, 2018

190

16.6K



Retrieved from:
<https://themighty.com/2018/01/borderline-personality-disorder-bpd-embarrassing-symptoms/>

16 Things People With BPD Do That Are Code for 'I Feel Unloved'



Borderline Personality Disorder

16 Things People With BPD Do That Are Code for 'I Feel Unloved'



Sheriden Garrett • Follow

March 22, 2019

8

2.5K

Retrieved from:
<https://themighty.com/2019/03/borderline-personality-disorder-bpd-everyone-hates-me/>

HOW TO DISCUSS THE DIAGNOSIS

Early diagnosis is preferable (prognostic outcomes)

Display a positive and empathetic regard

Take time

Explain the diagnosis and how it relates to them and their experiences/development

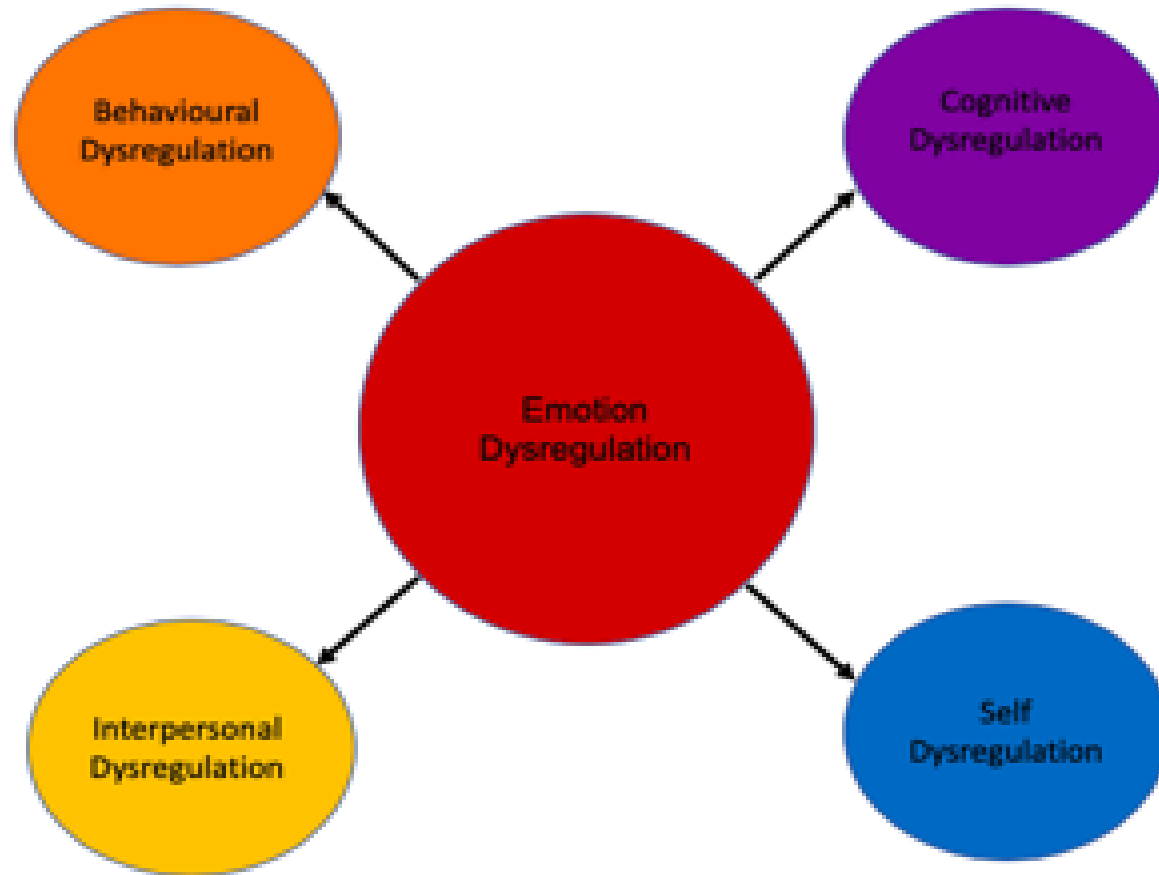
Discuss presence of stigma

Describe effective treatment options

(Barr et al., 2020; Bonnington & Rose , 2014; Gunderson et al., 2011; Lester et al., 2020; Morris, Smith, & Alwin, 2014; Nehls, 1999; Sulzer et al., 2016; Richardson & Tracy, 2015; Stalker, Ferguson & Barclay 2005)

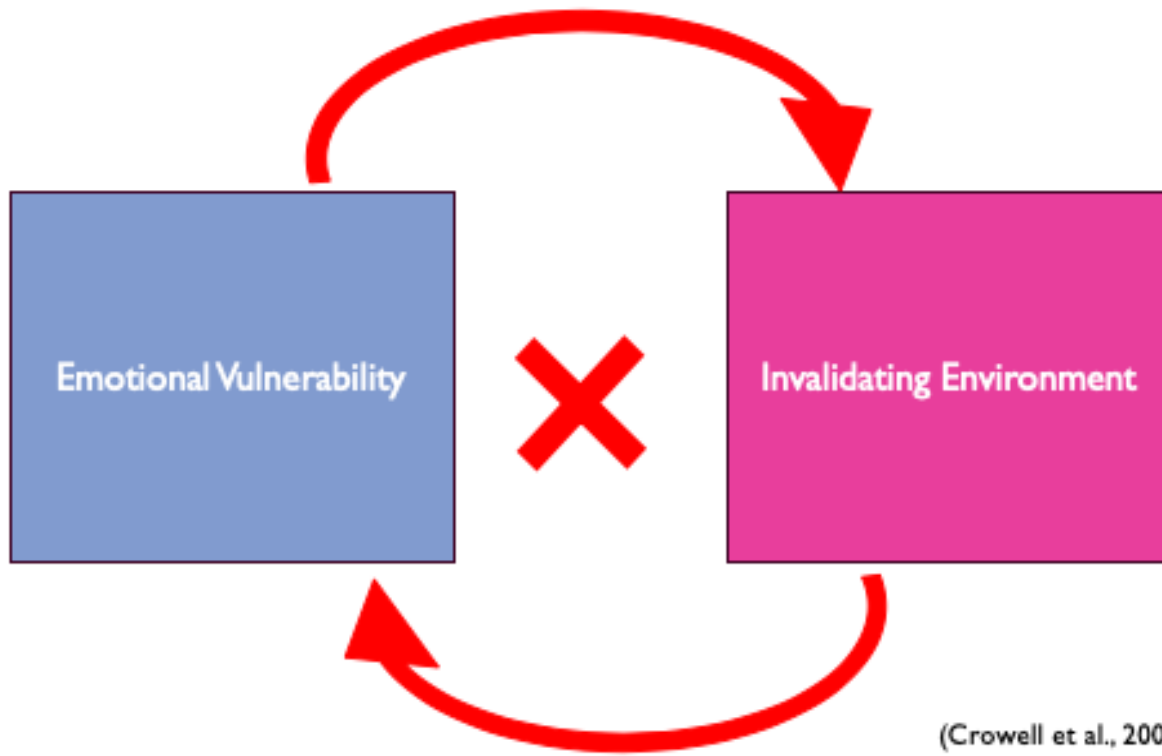
CASE EXAMPLE: “JAMIE”

- Age 19
- Trans youth; pronouns: they/them
- BPD diagnosis
- Hx of trauma
- Receiving tx in current disorders program for polysubstance use
- Started working with them individually (I did not diagnose them with BPD)
- Reported previously feeling “doomed” by their BPD diagnosis and based on info they had Googled



Areas of Dysregulation in BPD

(American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Linehan, 2013)



(Crowell et al., 2009; Fruzetti et al., 2005; Linehan, 2015)

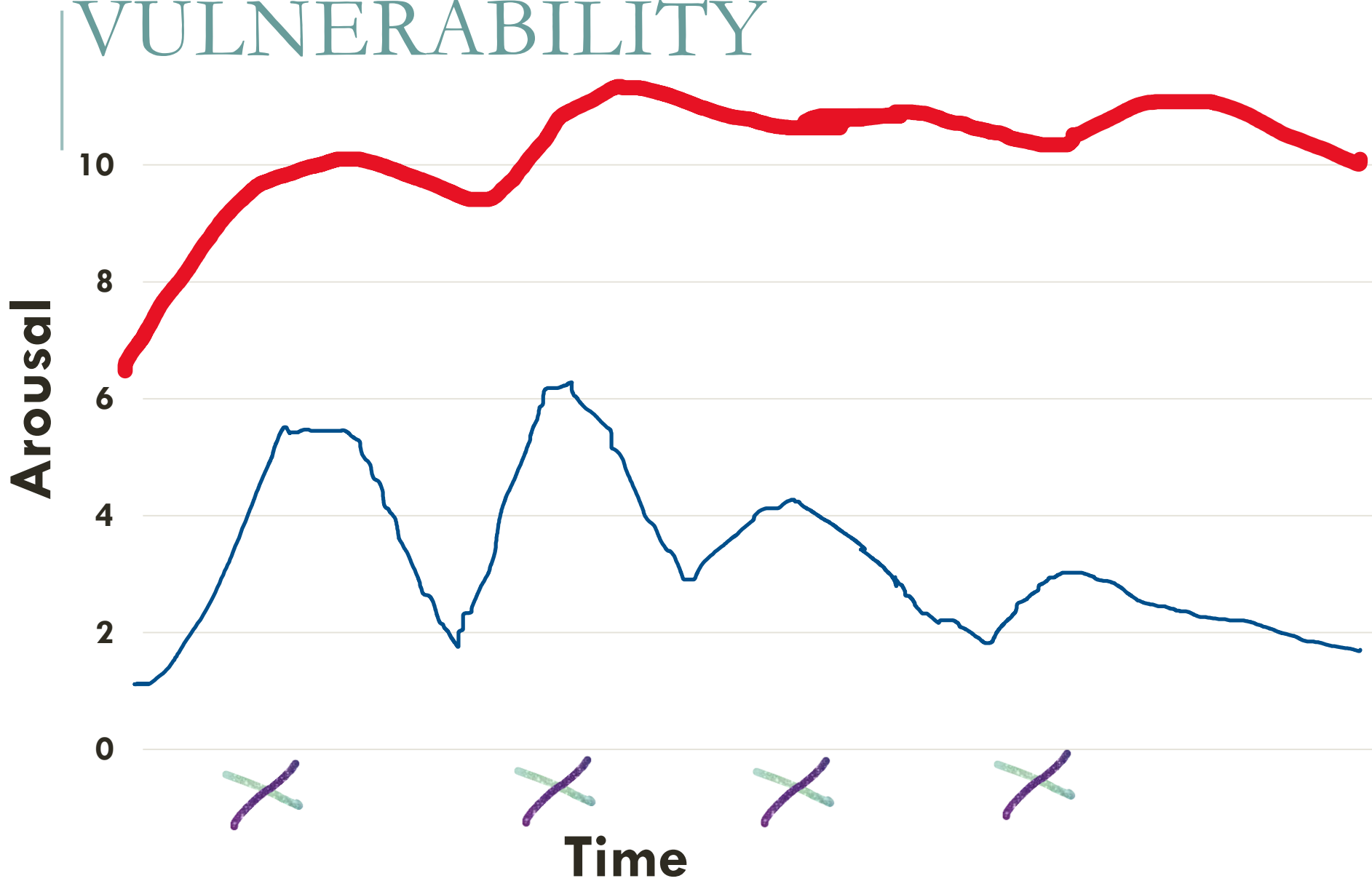
BIOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL OF BPD

BIOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL OF BPD

Emotional Vulnerability	Invalidation Environment	Consequences
Emotional sensitivity	Internal experiences are wrong	Internalization of invalidation
Emotional reactivity	Trivializes, ignores, dismisses and/or punishes emotional expressions	Reinforcing extreme emotions
Slow-to-return to baseline	Oversimplifying difficulty of solving problems/unrealistic expectations	Oversimplification

(Crowell et al., 2009; Fruzzetti et al., 2005; Linehan, 2015)

EMOTIONAL VULNERABILITY



Transactional model

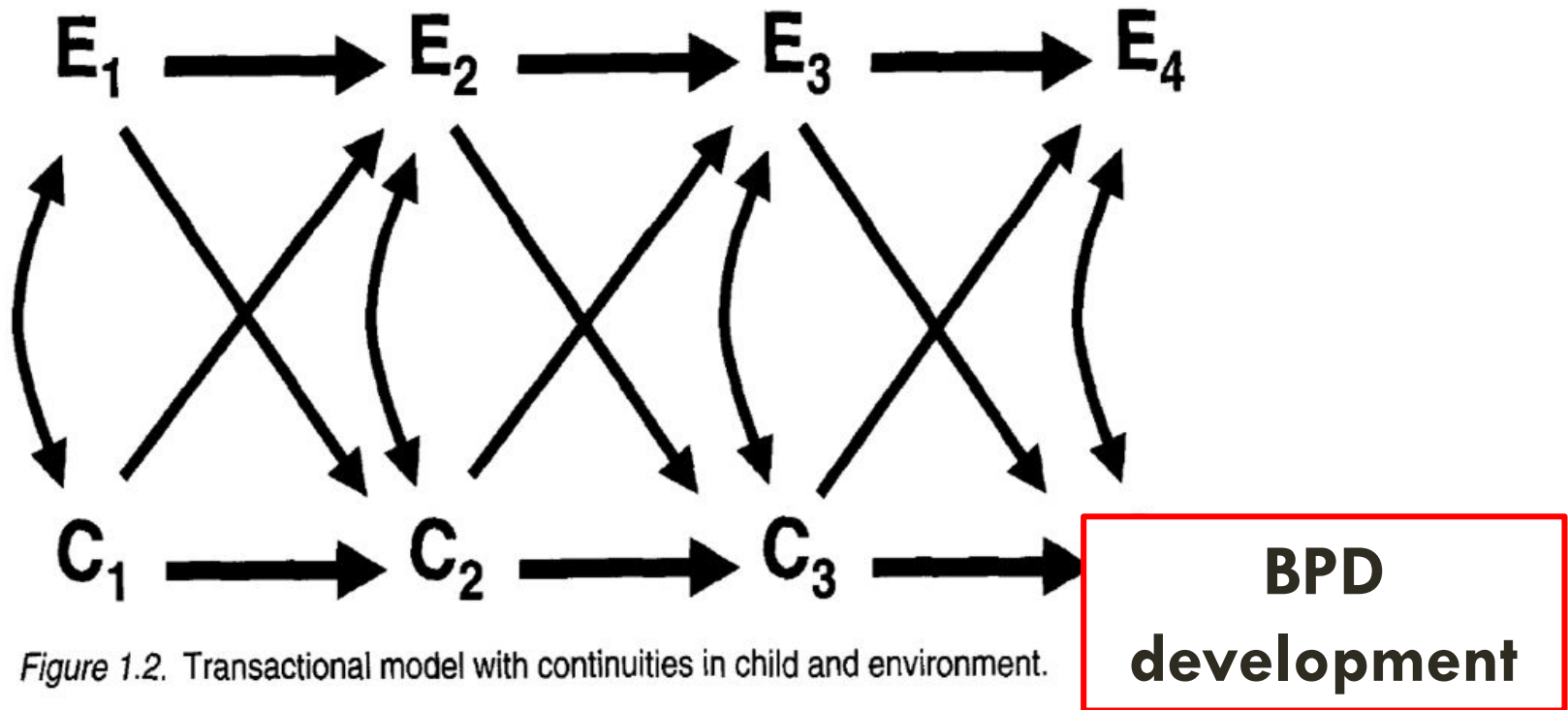


Figure 1.2. Transactional model with continuities in child and environment.

E= environment (invalidating)

C= child's temperament (emotional vulnerability)

(Fruzetti et al., 2005; Linehan, 2014; Sameroff, 2009)

ENVIRONMENT - GOODNESS OF FIT



(Pictures retrieved from Unsplash)

IMPACT ON “JAMIE”

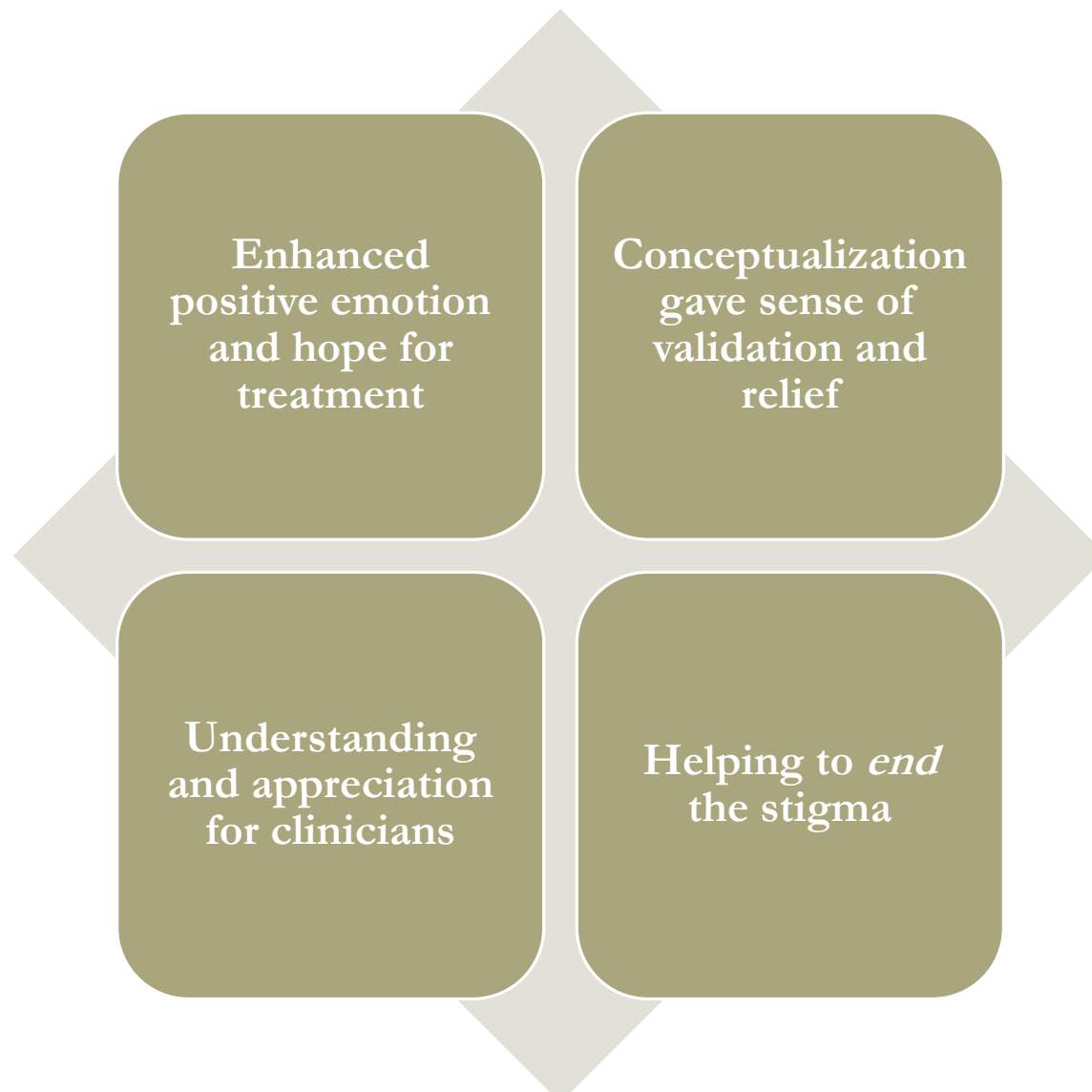
Reduction in self-harm and
substance use

Started to appreciate the
negative impact of a romantic
partner

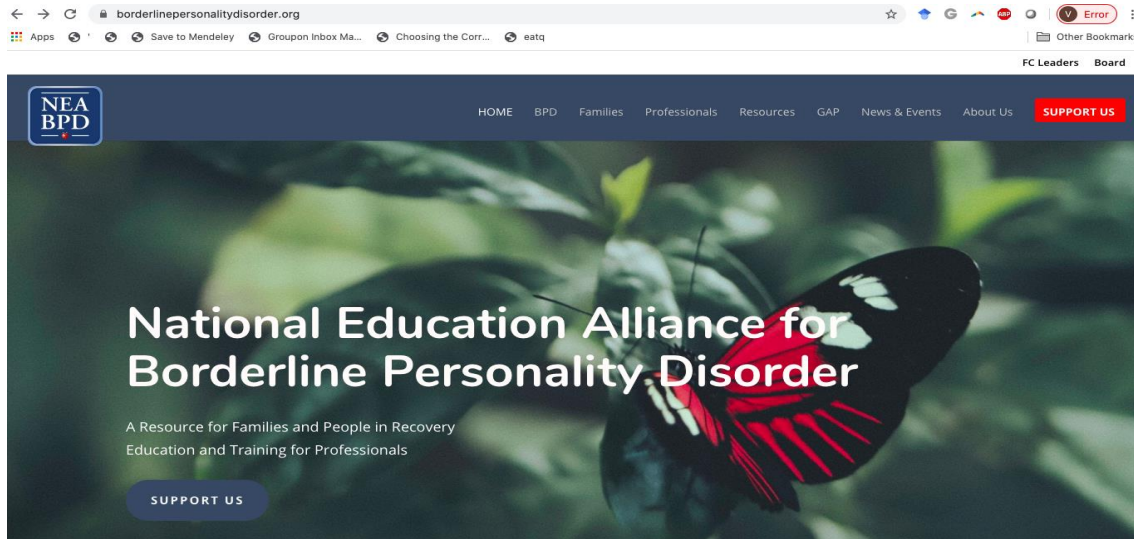
Reported a sense of “hope”

Started to be mindful of their
emotions and the consequences
of their behaviours

IMPORTANCE OF DIAGNOSTIC FEEDBACK



Useful resource:
National Education Alliance
for Borderline Personality
Disorder



<https://www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.org/>

THANK YOU!



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