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Q&A Forum - Review

## Borderline Personality Disorder, 2005-03

Greetings fellow Q&Aers!

I want to let you know that I am planning on starting the following groups in the next couple of weeks:

>**Women's Therapy Group**, Monday evenings from 6:15 - 7:15pm - support & additional ideas for the growth you are making

>**Men's Therapy Group**, Monday evenings from 7:15 - 8:15pm, - support & a look at men's issues with other men

>**Day time Therapy Group**, Wednesdays from 11:15am-12:15pm, - a therapy group offering support and new ideas for your growth & happiness

I am also looking to add one or two members to a mixed (male & female) therapy group I am currently running on Tuesday evenings from 8:15 to 9:15pm (we are pretty sure that, by the beginning of May, this group will be changing time and will be running from 7:15-8:15pm).

Finally, I am considering a small group in our Naugatuck office, most probably on Fridays at 5:15 or 6:15 pm.

Group therapy is a way to take what you are learning/have learned in individual therapy and have a safe way to practice the skills you have learned. You will continue to grow in a small, caring and nurturing environment. It is also a way for me to extend my services when managed care no longer deems counseling/therapy as "medically necessary" but where you and I believe that more growth is possible, and desired.

If you are interested in discussing group possibilities with me, either for your self or someone you know, or to sign up for a group, please contact me as soon as possible. Space is limited and we are filling up fast.

One further note, the couples group that I started at the beginning of March is doing extremely well. I have four couples and we are all growing. Some of us are have growing pains but nothing we can not manage with a little help from our built-in support system.

Now, onto our Q&A with a special thanks to Patty, Nancy and Barbara for the bonuses. Enjoy ---

Q: John, After much persuading, my 22 year old daughter who lives in Florida has thankfully just started going for counseling. Her counselor told her that from her symptoms, she may have Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). I've read a little about it online, and from what I've seen, it does seem to make sense knowing what she has been going through for much of her teenage/adult life. I know this is just a preliminary diagnosis, but to me it's a scary one for my daughter's sake. Some of the things she has been going through: dramatic mood swings, depression, thoughts and threats of suicide (she recently ended up in a psych ward for a few days), fear of abandonment (from her boyfriend). Her father has not been a part of her life, nor has she seen him, since she was 5. She began taking an anti-depressant a couple of months ago. I'm going to visit her next week, and will join in on one of her counseling sessions. My

questions are: Is it successfully treatable? What are the treatments that are now recommended for it? What can I do to help her? Do you know of any good books on this subject? Let me know if you need more information from me. Thank you!

A: From what you describe, the Borderline Personality Diagnosis sounds right. Some of the characteristics of borderlines include: frantic efforts to avoid real or imagined abandonment; a pattern of unstable and intense interpersonal relationships characterized by alternating between extremes of idealization and devaluation; an unstable sense of self; impulsivity in ways that are potentially self damaging; emotional instability due to strong reactions to mood; chronic feelings of emptiness; inappropriate and intense anger or difficulty controlling anger; and, paranoid thoughts & on-again, off-again feelings of being disconnected from oneself. Borderlines tend to be more secure with objects or pets than with people. Generally borderlines are difficult to treat, particularly in an outpatient setting. Therapists try to develop a trusting relationship and to establish specific goals and keep their client focused on those goals, rather than their tendency to rehash all the bad things that have happened to them in their lives. A recent development in treatment has been DBT, Dialectical Behavior Therapy which is highly structured and sets strong boundaries that severely limit the manipulation that is often characteristic of borderlines. Usually, some form of therapy, including DBT and medication, group and individual seem to work best.

I do not know any good books strictly on the subject but The Complete Idiot's Guide to Personality Profiles may give you a good overview.

As far as what you can do to help her: be supportive of her continuing with her therapy, see if she will sign a release of information so you can talk with her therapist and ask him/her what you might be able to do to help. Make sure not to be manipulated by her and not to accept any of her excuses about her treatment that separates her from the treatment. Immediately report any threats of self harm or suicidal gestures to her therapist. And, above all else, pray for her. Please let me know how your daughter is doing in her treatment process. Peace, John

**QUOTE: "It usually takes two people to make one of them angry."--Laurence Peter**

bonus 1

In the Beginning

An old, bearded shepherd with a crooked staff walked up to a stone pulpit and said, "And lo, it came to pass that the trader by the name of Abraham Com did take unto himself a young wife by the name of Dot."

And Dot Com was a comely woman, broad of shoulder and long of leg. Indeed, she had been called Amazon Dot Com. And she said unto Abraham, her husband, "Why doth thou travel far, from town to town, with thy goods when thou can trade without ever leaving thy tent?"

And Abraham did look at her as though she were several saddle bags short of a camel load, but simply said, "How, Dear?"

And Dot replied, "I will place drums in all the towns and drums in between to send messages saying what you have for sale and they will reply telling you which hath the

best price. And the sale can be made on the drums and delivery made by Uriah's Pony Stable (UPS)."

Abraham thought long and decided he would let Dot have her way with the drums. And the drums rang out and were an immediate success. Abraham sold all the goods he had, at the top price, without ever moving from his tent. But this success did arouse envy.

A man named Maccabia did secret himself inside Abraham's drum and was accused of insider trading. And the young man did take to Dot Com's trading; as doth the greedy horsefly take to camel dung. They were called Nomadic Ecclesiastical Rich Dominican Siderites, or NERDS for short.

And lo, the land was so feverish with joy at the new riches and the deafening sound of drums that no one noticed that the real riches were going to the drum maker, one Brother William of Gates, who bought up every drum company in the land. And indeed did insist on making drums that would work only if you bought Brother Gates' drumsticks. And Dot did say, "Oh, Abraham, what we have started is being taken over by others."

And as Abraham looked out over the Bay of Ezekiel, or as it came to be ! known "eBay," he said, "we need a name that reflects what we are" and Dot replied, "Young Ambitious Hebrew Owner Operators."

"Whoopee!" said Abraham.

"No, YAHOO!" said Dot Com.. . and that is how it all began!

bonus 2

Whenever your children are out of control, you can take comfort from the thought that even God's omnipotence did not extend to His own children.

After creating heaven and earth, God created Adam and Eve. And the first thing he said was, "Don't."

"Don't what" Adam replied.

"Don't eat the forbidden fruit." God said.

"Forbidden fruit? We have forbidden fruit? Hey, Eve! We have forbidden fruit!"

"No way!"

"Yes, way!"

"Do NOT eat the fruit!" said God.

"Why?"

"Because I am your Father and I said so!" God replied, (wondering why he hadn't stopped creation after making the elephants).

A few minutes later, God saw His children having an apple break and was He ticked!

"Didn't I tell you not to eat the fruit?" God, as our first parent, asked.

"Uh huh," Adam replied.

"Then why did you?" said the Father.

"I don't know," said Eve.

"She started it!" Adam said,

"Did not!"

"Did too!"

"DID NOT!"

>Having had it with the two of them, God's punishment was that Adam and Eve should have children of their own. Thus, the pattern was set and it has never changed! But there is reassurance in this story. If you have persistently and lovingly tried to give children wisdom and they haven't taken it, don't be hard on yourself. If God had trouble raising children, what makes you think it would be a piece of cake for you?

Advice for the day:

If you have a lot of tension and you get a headache, do what it says on the aspirin bottle: "Take two Aspirin" and "Keep away from children."

A FEW ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS...

You spend the first 2 years of their life teaching them to walk and talk. Then you spend the next 16 telling them to sit down and shut-up.

Grandchildren are God's reward for not killing your children.

Mothers of teens know why some animals eat their young.

Children seldom misquote you. In fact, they usually repeat word for word what you shouldn't have said.

The main purpose of holding children's parties is to remind yourself that there are children more awful than your own.

We childproofed our home 3 years ago and they're still getting in!

Be nice to your kids. They'll choose your nursing home.

bonus 3

There once was a little boy who wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with cupcakes, several cans of root beer and started on his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he saw an elderly woman. She was sitting on a park bench watching the pigeons. The boy sat down next to her and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed the lady looked hungry so he offered her a cupcake. She gratefully accepted and smiled at him.

Her smile was so wonderful that he wanted to see it again, so he offered a root beer as well. Once again she smiled at him. The boy was delighted!

They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling without saying a word.

As it began to grow dark, the boy realized how tired he was and wanted to go home. He got up to leave but before he had gone no more than a few steps, he turned around and ran back to the old woman, giving her a big hug. She gave him her biggest smile ever.

When the boy arrived home his Mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked, "What has made you so happy today?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." Before his mother could respond he added, "You know what? She's got the most beautiful smile in the whole world!"

Meanwhile, the old woman, also radiant with joy, returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face. He asked, "Mother, what has made you so happy today?" She replied, "I ate cupcakes in the park with God." And before her son could reply, she added, "You know, he is much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring; all of which have the potential to turn a life around.

People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime.

Take no one for granted and embrace all equally with joy!

end of bonuses

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