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Is someone you care about causing you a great deal of pain?

Do you find yourself concealing what you think or feel because you're afraid of the other person's reaction or because it just doesn't seem worth the horrible fight or hurt feelings that will follow?

Do you feel that anything you say or do will be twisted and used against you? Are you blamed and criticized for everything wrong in the relationship-even when it makes no logical sense?

Are you the focus of intense, violent, and irrational rages, alternating with periods when the other person acts perfectly normal and loving? Does no one believe you when you explain that this is going on?

Do you feel manipulated, controlled, or even lied to sometimes? Do you feel like you're the victim of emotional blackmail?

Do you feel like the person you care about sees you as either all good or all bad, with nothing in between? Is there sometimes no rational reason for the switch?

Are you afraid to ask for things in the relationship because you will be told that you're too demanding or that there is something wrong with you? Are you told that your needs are not important?

Is the person always denigrating or denying your point of view? Do you feel that their expectations of you are constantly changing, so you can never do anything right?

Are you accused of doing things you never did and saying things you never said? Do you feel misunderstood a great deal of the time, and when you try to explain do you find that the other person doesn't believe you?

Are you constantly being put down? When you try to leave the relationship does the other person try to prevent you from leaving in a variety of ways (anything from declarations of love and promises to change to implicit or explicit threats)?

Do you have a hard time planning anything (social engagements, etc.) because of the other person's moodiness, impulsiveness, or unpredictability? Do you make excuses for

Basics of BPD

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their behavior or try to convince yourself that everything is okay?

Right now, are you thinking, "I had no idea that anyone else was going through this?"

Thoughts that may indicate BPD

Does this person:

- Alternate between seeing people as either flawless or evil? Have difficulty remembering the good things about a person they're casting in the role of villain?
- Find it impossible to recall anything negative about this person when they become the hero?
- Alternate between seeing others as completely for them or against them?
- Alternate between seeing situations as either disastrous or ideal?
- Alternate between seeing themselves as either worthless or flawless?
- Have a hard time recalling someone's love for them when they're not around?
- Believe that others are either completely right or totally wrong?
- Change their opinions depending upon who they're with?
- Alternate between idealizing people and devaluing them?
- Remember situations very differently than other people, or find themselves unable to recall them at all?
- Believe that others are responsible for their actions-or take too much responsibility for the actions of others?
- Seem unwilling to admit to a mistake-or feel that everything that they do is a mistake?
- Base their beliefs on feelings rather than facts?
- Not realize the effects of their behavior on others?

Feelings that may indicate BPD

Does this person:

- Feel abandoned at the slightest provocation?
- Have extreme moodiness that cycles very quickly (in minutes or hours)?

- Have difficulty managing their emotions?
- Feel emotions so intensely that it's difficult to put others' needs-even those of their own children-ahead of their own?
- Feel distrustful and suspicious a great deal of the time?
- Feel anxious or irritable a great deal of the time?
- Feel empty or like they have no self a great deal of the time?
- Feel ignored when they are not the focus of attention?
- Express anger inappropriately or have difficulty expressing anger at all?
- Feel that they never can get enough love, affection, or attention?
- Frequently feel spacey, unreal, or out of it?

Behaviors that may indicate BPD

Does this person:

- Have trouble observing others' personal limits?
- Have trouble defining their own personal limits?
- Act impulsively in ways that are potentially self-damaging, such as spending too much, engaging in dangerous sex, fighting, gambling, abusing drugs or alcohol, reckless driving, shoplifting, or disordered eating?
- Mutilate themselves-for example, purposely cutting or burning their skin?
- Threaten to kill themselves-or make actual suicide attempts?
- Rush into relationships based on idealized fantasies of what they would like the other person or the relationship to be?
- Change their expectations in such a way that the other person feels they can never do anything right?
- Have frightening, unpredictable rages that make no logical sense-or have trouble expressing anger at all?
- Physically abuse others, such as slapping, kicking, and scratching them?
- Needlessly create crises or live a chaotic lifestyle?

- Act inconsistently or unpredictably?
- Alternately want to be close to others, then distance themselves?
(Examples include picking fights when things are going well or alternately ending relationships and then trying to get back together.)
- Cut people out of their life over issues that seem trivial or overblown?
- Act competent and controlled in some situations but extremely out of control in others?
- Verbally abuse others, criticizing and blaming them to the point where it feels brutal?
- Act verbally abusive toward people they know very well, while putting on a charming front for others? Can they switch from one mode to the other in seconds?
- Act in what seems like extreme or controlling ways to get their own needs met?
- Do or say something inappropriate to focus the attention on them when they feel ignored?
- Accuse others of doing things they did not do, having feelings they do not feel, or believing things they do not believe?

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