

1. Impaired Emotional Control:

(mood swings)

- poorly regulated emotional responses, especially anger, that change rapidly.

2. Harmful Impulsivity:

- impulsive behaviors that are harmful self or to others such as:
 - spending sprees,
- excessive use of alcohol or drugs or food,
 - self-injurious acts (e.g., cutting),
 - physically aggressive acts
 - sexual indiscretions.

Borderline personality disorder is a mental disorder that results in **four groups of symptoms**

4. Disrupted Relationships:

- tumultuous relationships with a person close to you that vary from extreme fear of abandonment to episodes of excessive anger
- the desire to both get away and to cling
- “Come here, Get Away!”
- I hate you, don’t leave me!”

3. Impaired Perceptions & Reasoning:

- difficulty in reasoning under stress,
 - suspiciousness,
 - misperceptions,
- an unstable self-image, a poor sense of identity
ie: multiple changes in educational or career direction.

Risk Factors The causes of BPD are not yet clear, but research suggests that genetic, brain, environmental and social factors are likely to be involved.

- **Genetics.** BPD is about five times more likely to occur if a person has a close family member (first-degree biological relatives) with the disorder.
- **Environmental and Social Factors.** Many people with BPD report experiencing traumatic life events, such as abuse or abandonment during childhood. Others may have been exposed to unstable relationships and hostile conflicts. However, some people with BPD do not have a history of trauma. And, many people with a history of traumatic life events do not have BPD.
- **Brain Factors.** Studies show that people with BPD have structural and functional changes in the brain, especially in the areas that control impulses and emotional regulation. However, some people with similar changes in the brain do not have BPD. More research is needed to understand the relationship between brain structure and function and BPD
- **Recommended Reading** Paul Mason [*Stop Walking on Eggshells: Taking Your Life Back When Someone You Care About Has Borderline Personality Disorder*](#) Revised Dec 2020

