



8th Annual

Yale NEA-BPD Conference

Impulsivity, Aggression, and Legal Involvement

Friday, May 4, 2012; 8:30 AM - 4:45 PM

BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER: IMPULSIVITY, AGGRESSION, & LEGAL INVOLVEMENT

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Mary S. Harkness Memorial Auditorium, Sterling Hall of Medicine


333 Cedar Street, New Haven, CT

sponsored by

Yale SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Department of Psychiatry




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CLEARVIEW
TREATMENT PROGRAMS
CENTER FOR BORDERLINE PERSONALITY AND EMOTIONAL DISORDERS

The Importance of DBT Skills for Families

Marie-Paule de Valdivia MBA

NEA-BPD Family Connections

- Developed by Alan Fruzzetti, Ph.D., and Perry Hoffman, Ph.D. from the National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder (NEABPD)
- 12 week structured course
- Led by professionals or family members
- Integrates DBT principles of acceptance and mindfulness
- www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.com

"Without FC I would never have had the strength or the knowledge to support my daughter, allow her to grow and be independent, set limits and most importantly - communicate. I thank God everyday for what I learned through FC and I look forward to being able to share what I've learned with other hurting families. You, Alan, Perry and all the many people involved with NEA-BPD are to be commended for your amazing work."

An FC Parent

How do we do this? Education - Skills - Support

"The class was a lifeline for us when we were very, very low and not completely understanding our daughter and her issues. [our life together today] would have not been possible without the skills and understanding that we acquired ... The class lifted the curtain of ignorance about this illness and exposed it to the light."

Getting started Skills

- **Rights of Relatives:**
 - healthy selfishness,
 - Learn to say no
 - accept that we cannot solve our relative's problems,
 - accept that we will lose our cool at times)
- **Basic Assumptions to be Effective:**
 - interpret things in the most benign way possible,
 - no one or absolute truth,
 - everyone is doing the best they can in this moment AND
 - everyone needs to try harder

Developing interest & curiosity

- Sensitivity, reactivity, return to baseline
- Awareness of validating vs invalidating family/social environment
- Awareness of our relative's need for support AND our need for balancing our relative's and our needs (oxygen mask)
- Emotion mindfulness: Observe, Describe, Participate Non-Judgmentally, One-Mindfully and Effectively

Relationship Mindfulness

- Observing and describing another
- Letting go of judgments
- Stay with facts
- Benign interpretations
- Recognize transactional nature of the relationship

"Sure, we still have our moments of conflict, but we can usually come to a place of understanding, thanks to our new skills."

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Radical Acceptance

- What is the reality?
- Four ways to deal with any problem
- Acceptance reduces suffering
- Acceptance gives you more control, not less
- Practice acceptance every day
- Start small
- Change/Tolerance starts with you

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Limit Setting Skills

- "Boundaries" can be a loaded term/ abandonment issues can be raised.
- In this class we "Observe our limits".
"I wish I could help you but this is all I can do."
- Fine line between enabling and being supportive. We will find the balance to avoid burning out in the long run.

Validation Skills

- Really understand the other person
- Communicate that you understand

A... and I had a big breakthrough this morning (...). A dysregulated and I was of course the target. I managed to stay calm, listen to her and validate the emotion I thought she was feeling. IT WORKED!!!! We have a long way to go but this was huge. Thanks for all you do.

Validation – What to validate?

- Feelings or emotions
- Legitimacy in desires
- Opinions or thoughts
- Values / Priorities
- Task difficulty
- Effort made towards goals
- Things that enhance relationships

Only validate the valid things.
There are always valid parts.
Validation doesn't mean you agree.

The Big Picture for Relatives

- Take care of ourselves first
 - Observe and stick to our limits. Our relative needs to know we are safe and predictable.
 - Change starts with us
- Keep in mind the importance of the relationship
 - A good goal is to not effectively. Being effective presents more opportunities to engage.
- Not escalating is usually more effective than being right
 - Be aware of longer term goals
 - Try to see both sides. "You don't have to be wrong for me to be right."

Final Parent Words

Thank you SO very much for the incredible learning experience of this Family Connections class. You have been so informative, warm, supportive and validating, that this exceeded all of my expectations. ... There just is no substitute for the sharing, and networking, and heart to heart with other families who are dealing with BPD loved ones. (...) I believe that through my personal research, and focus on DBT learning skills, it has made me a more effective parent. Together we are learning to trust. I do believe that the more I naturally assume the DBT communication strategies and principles, the better things will get. I would like to continue to pursue this, and help other families who might not have some of the resources and experience that I have. We are all on a journey, schooled, skilled, or not.