Difficult Conversations:
How to Discuss Borderline Personality Disorder with a Loved One

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When you suspect a loved one has Borderline Personality Disorder

- Do not bring the subject up in a time of crisis

- Avoid outright “labeling” such as:
  - “You are Borderline”
  - or any “you are” statements

- Use a curious, “not knowing stance”
  - Saying you understand is often felt as dismissive

- Always observe and describe in a non judgmental manner
  - Be brief and clear

- Be prepared for push back!
When you feel treatment would help

- Again, do not raise "you need therapy" in the middle of an argument
  - It will increase negative associations.

- Avoid "selling treatment" discussions, as you may increase resistance

- Again, using a curious, exploratory stance is not only tactical, but essential
  - There are many types of treatment and it's often not clear what will be most helpful.

- Don't get discouraged by push back
  - Plant the seed!
Resources

There is a lot of disinformation on the internet!

Always have good, reliable resources readily available, such as:

- National Educational Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder: [www.neabpd.org](http://www.neabpd.org)
- Tara4BPD: [http://www.tara4bpd.org/](http://www.tara4bpd.org/)
- BPD Resource Center: [www.bpdresourcecenter.org](http://www.bpdresourcecenter.org)
- Borderline Personality Disorder Patient and Family Education Initiative: [mcleanhospital.org/bpdinitiative](http://mcleanhospital.org/bpdinitiative)