

You Want Me to Do What?!

Making Use of Family Therapy in
Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder

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Outline

- ▶ This presentation is geared toward family members who have a family member in treatment for Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)
- ▶ What to expect
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ Most helpful skills to focus on
- ▶ How to be supportive of your family member AND get your own support

What is family therapy?

- ▶ Focus on individual dysfunction and relationship dysfunction
 - ▶ This happens simultaneously
- ▶ Can be discomfoting
- ▶ Progress is not linear
- ▶ Everyone plays a part in the strengths and weaknesses of a family



What are you signing up for?

- ▶ A family is a system in and of itself
- ▶ Every interaction is a transaction
 - ▶ Get ready to examine your contribution to problematic dynamics
- ▶ Embrace family therapy as an opportunity to strengthen the family as a support system
 - ▶ Everyone, not just the individual diagnosed with BPD, can benefit from family therapy



Family Guidelines



- ▶ Helpful guidelines/best practices
 - ▶ Address difficult situations
 - ▶ Set limits, be consistent, set reasonable expectations
 - ▶ Read these, bring to family therapy, and ask questions
- ▶ May seem counterintuitive!
- ▶ <https://www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.com/family-connections/family-guidelines/>

Family Connections

- ▶ 12 week program
 - ▶ BPD affects the whole family!
- ▶ HIGHLY recommend this program
- ▶ Sign up through NEABPD
 - ▶ <https://www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.com/family-connections>



Psychoeducation



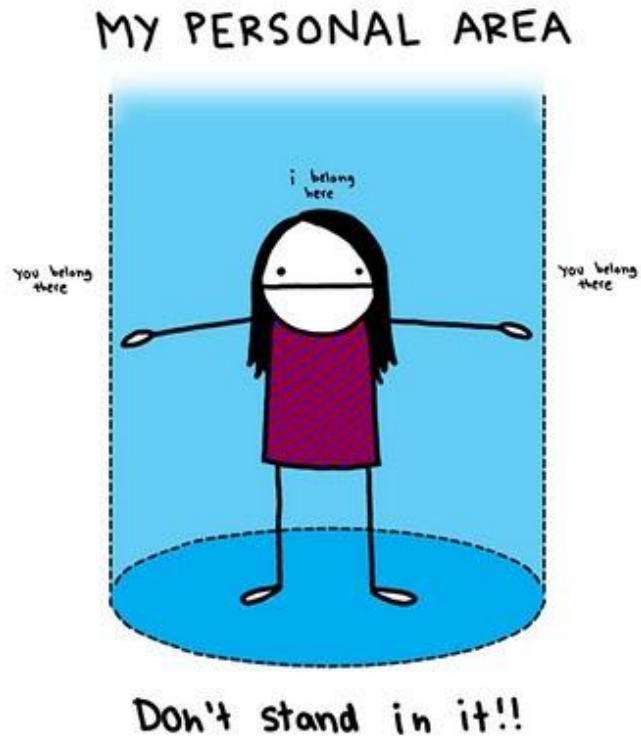
- ▶ Educate yourself about BPD, treatment, mental health
 - ▶ Generalized and specific knowledge
- ▶ NEABPD
- ▶ Ask your family therapist for recommendations
 - ▶ Books, articles, resources
- ▶ In the face of uncertainty, arming oneself with knowledge can be most helpful intervention
- ▶ Send a strong message!

Validation

- ▶ IF YOU LEARN ANY ONE SKILL – MAKE IT VALIDATION!!!
- ▶ Seems simple - it's not
- ▶ Practice, practice, practice
- ▶ Goal is not to agree, but to acknowledge
- ▶ Be open to getting it wrong
- ▶ Self-validation is key



Setting Limits



- ▶ Inspiration for the title of this webinar
- ▶ Often confused with making threats
- ▶ Getting clear and being consistent
- ▶ Short term discomfort vs. long term stability
- ▶ Put your oxygen mask on first

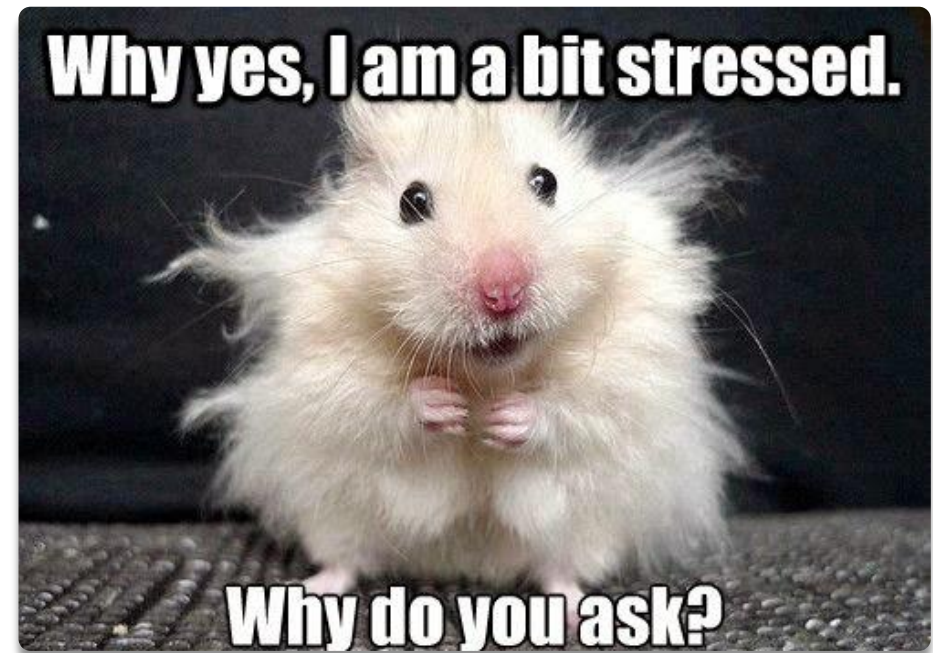
Practice the skills, Get engaged!

- ▶ Family therapy alone is not enough
- ▶ Put yourself in the struggle WITH your loved one
- ▶ Set up phone calls, plan get-togethers, do some homework
- ▶ You are building your psychological muscles



Don't Neglect Yourself

Family therapy may unearth or highlight some of your own struggles. If you are feeling overwhelmed in this process, talk to your family therapist and seek your own help if needed.



Ask Questions!!

- ▶ ASK ALL THE QUESTIONS!!
- ▶ WE'VE HEARD THEM ALL!!
- ▶ Give yourself a break
- ▶ There was no handbook for you to parent your loved one with BPD
 - ▶ Now is your chance to learn!

