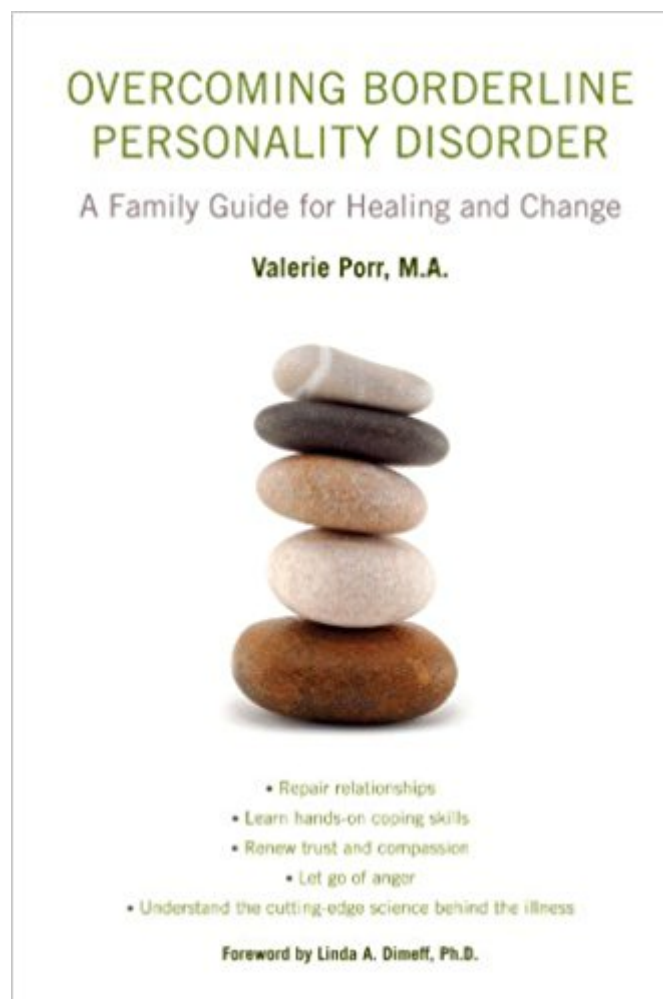




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# Overcoming Borderline Personality Disorder: A Family Guide For Healing And Change



## Synopsis

Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is characterized by unstable moods, negative self-image, dangerous impulsivity, and tumultuous relationships. Many people with BPD excel in academics and careers while revealing erratic, self-destructive, and sometimes violent behavior only to those with whom they are intimate. Others have trouble simply holding down a job or staying in school. *Overcoming Borderline Personality Disorder* is a compassionate and informative guide to understanding this profoundly unsettling--and widely misunderstood--mental illness, believed to affect approximately 6% of the general population. Rather than viewing people with BPD as manipulative opponents in a bitter struggle, or pitying them as emotional invalids, Valerie Porr cites cutting-edge science to show that BPD is a true neurobiological disorder and not, as many come to believe, a character flaw or the result of bad parenting. Porr then clearly and accessibly explains what BPD is, which therapies have proven effective, and how to rise above the weighty stigma associated with the disorder. Offering families and loved ones supportive guidance that both acknowledges the difficulties they face and shows how they can be overcome, Porr teaches empirically-supported and effective coping behaviors and interpersonal skills, such as new ways of talking about emotions, how to be aware of nonverbal communication, and validating difficult experiences. These skills are derived from Dialectical Behavior Therapy and Mentalization-based Therapy, two evidence-based treatments that have proven highly successful in reducing family conflict while increasing trust. *Overcoming Borderline Personality Disorder* is an empowering and hopeful resource for those who wish to gain better understanding of the BPD experience--and to make use of these insights in day-to-day family interactions. Winner of the ABCT Self Help Book Seal of Merit Award 2011

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Valerie Porr has championed the cause of people with borderline personality disorder for decades. Her understanding of the disorder and its effects on the individuals themselves and their families, partners, and friends is outstanding. This readable and informative book distills her years of experience and her first hand knowledge of how to help patients and families, providing the practical wisdom that comes only with a genuine understanding of what it is to be 'borderline'. This is required reading for anyone, from novice to expert, who seeks an understanding of borderline personality disorder and who wants practical guidance on what helps." --Anthony Bateman, Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist, Barnet, Enfield, and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust and Visiting Professor University College, London "Overcoming Borderline Personality Disorder by Valerie Porr is like water for a parched land. Few psychiatric disorders are as misunderstood as borderline personality disorder, a condition that can be profoundly disabling to patients and devastating to families. Opinions about what families should do are plentiful, but evidence-based guidance, derived from solid research, is rare. This is what this book delivers. It is an invaluable roadmap for families of patients with BPD." --John Oldham, Chief of Staff, The Menninger Clinic "An important book for family members of people with BPD." --Larry Siever, Professor of Psychiatry, Mount Sinai School of Medicine "She ably explains neuroscience as it applies here and emphasizes understanding, validation, and acceptance (not unconditional love)... An outstanding model of the psychoeducational approach, this volume bridges a daunting gap between laity and psychotherapists. Highly recommended for professionals as well as families of these patients." --Library Journal

Valerie Porr, M.A, is a mental health educator and advocate trained in Dialectical Behavior Therapy, and the founder and president of the Treatment and Research Advancements National Association for Personality Disorder (TARA NAPD). She conducts psycho-educational training seminars for family members of those with BPD in New York and elsewhere.

I have been on a 6 year journey trying to understand and deal with these strange and mystifying behaviors in a family member, ultimately diagnosed as borderline personality disorder (BPD). This

book is one of the best that I have ever read on the topic and it gave me new insights and understanding on the neurobiological system and symptoms. Time and time, Porr provides wonderful examples to help explain complex concepts. For example, Porr uses a wonderful analogy of nine colored balls that a juggler would toss into the air to describe each symptom: #1 blue: impulse control dysregulation #2 red: mood or affective dysregulation #3 purple: sensitivity dysregulation #4 green: cognitive dysregulation #5 yellow: emotional processing dysregulation #6 orange: sleep dysregulation #7 black: pain dysregulation #8 white: memory dysregulation #9 pink: anxiety

Reading this book gave me "new eyes" and insights regarding the disorder. It helped me to feel more compassionate towards my family member and learn new ways to communicate and interact. At the same time, Porr emphasized that the person with BPD too needs to do the work to learn coping skills and minimize stressors. After reading segments of this book, my husband who had thought the family member was misbehaving on purpose, changed his mind after reading Porr's description of the neurobiological underpinnings of the disorder (pp. 40-75) and he also became much more compassionate and understanding. That was a major breakthrough! Porr discusses various treatment methods including dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) and mentalization. I greatly appreciate her perspective and empathy for the families who are going through this with their loved ones. She really "gets it" because she herself has a loved one with BPD.

This book has changed the life of my partner and I. It provides the background, biology and well written skills necessary to begin immediately helping me to understand my partner, and begin communicating and sharing our lives after a long period of pain, anger, helplessness. Utilizing the methods this book details, starting with validation, was equal to flipping a light switch to the life we previously shared, and are rebuilding together. It also catalyzed my partner to seek dbt. Thank you Valerie. I hope others find this book and can use it as I have as the first step to understanding BPD, DBT and using the information to improve their lives.

Finally, somebody SEES my 39 year-old daughter! The entire family has tried all her life to figure out why she does and thinks as she does. Kind, caring, capable turns to mean, harsh and floundering to cope the next. Trying to love and understand and above all to not be angry with her has been a great challenge. But now we have the tools to enable us to stop being angry and able to respond in ways that will help us all. Through the recommendations in the book we were able guide her to find the correct type of therapy for herself at last. Thank you Ms. Porr!

...in a self help book is whether or not what is being presented works. In this case, Valerie Porr has written down exactly what to do that works. She presents information based on cutting edge research combined with her ability to apply empathy and logic to teach loved ones of a person diagnosed with BPD how to rebuild their relationships. She helps the reader understand what is going on in the mind and brain of their loved one with BPD and shows them the best, most effective approach to use. It is written from the perspective that those of us who have a loved one with BPD want to help and want to have a close relationship with them, but don't know how to get past the overwhelming emotions that are controlling them. Step by step Valerie translates our BPD loved ones' words and behaviors into a language that we can understand and shows us how to communicate with them in a way that they will understand us, too. Then we are taken through the steps to rebuilding our relationship and eventually shown how we as trusted loved ones (who are actually communicating with our BPD diagnosed loved one) can help them start to put their life together and make progress in the direction of recovering from this horrible illness. It is so refreshing to read a book about this illness that is based on hope and success. The time of BPD being a dead-end road diagnosis is behind us, there is hope and recovery is possible. Because BPD affects the family and the relationships within that family, it is imperative that the family learns what they can do that will help. This book is written to teach exactly that.

This is the first book I have read about BPD that offers some hope, understand, and most importantly, compassion for both people with BPD and the people who live with them/and love them. There is a lot to learn and practice. You will want to read this book through several times. I started reading this book at the same time I started seeing a therapist to deal with my anger resulting from a relationship with a person with BPD. Wish I could get every single member of my family to read this.

As a Neurotherapist working with families try to love someone with a brain that acts with borderline tendencies, this is a very helpful book to give hope. - Karen D. Wood, Author of Brain Prayers: Explore Your Brain, Expand Your Prayers. [brainprayers.com](http://brainprayers.com)

It was suggested that a close family member of mine may be suffering from BPD. Not having heard of this condition before and at my wit's end, I went searching for knowledge and came across *Overcoming Borderline Personality Disorder: A Family Guide for Healing and Change* by Valerie Porr. I bought the e-version of the book first, then decided I needed a hard copy for other family members.. This insightful, informative book has helped me understand not only my loved one but

myself as well as others. It is written logically and with enormous compassion. It is refreshing in that it offers real hope by answering the reader's obvious questions along with those prompted by knowledge and insights being shared. Thank you Valerie, you truly are a life saver.

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