

Borderline Personality Disorder

Shah Jalees, MD

The passionate character is believing, powerful,
active, inspired. It proceeds by a feeling for
things, and produced by a natural abundance.
Capacity for work. Keen, enthusiastic, absorbed
worker

Anonymous

The Encyclopedia of Occult Sciences





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"Please be reasonable — You have sixteen distinct personalities and I'm only billing three of them."

What is a personality disorder?

- Enduring subjective experiences and behavior that deviate from cultural standards and are rigidly pervasive and stable through time
- Start in adolescence or early childhood
- Cause impairment in many areas of a person's life

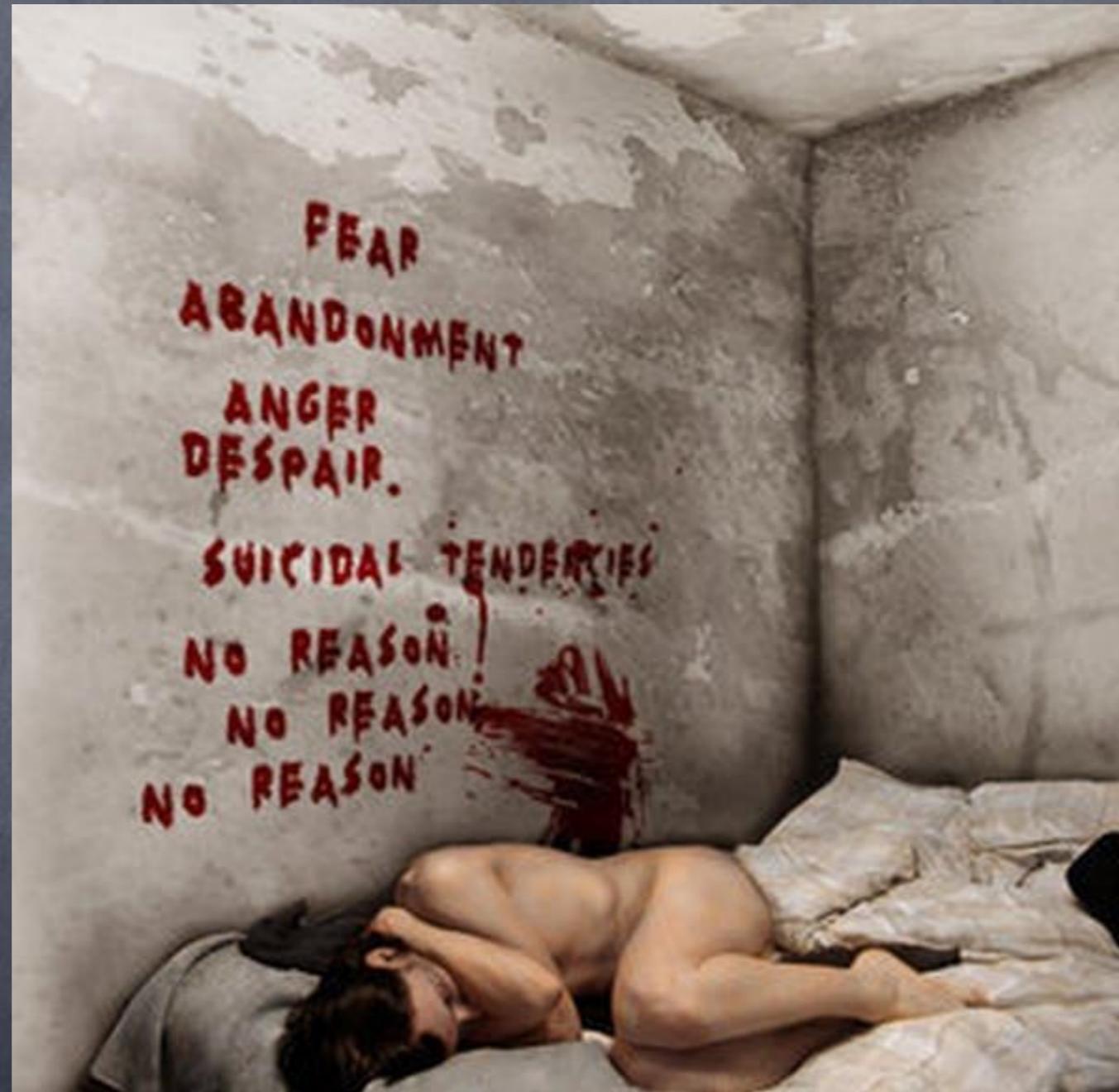
Classification of Personality Disorders

- Cluster A: (odd) Paranoid, Schizoid, Schizotypal personality disorders
- Cluster B: (dramatic) Antisocial, Borderline, Histrionic, Narcissistic personality disorders
- Cluster C: (anxious) Avoidant, Dependent, Obsessive-Compulsive personality disorders

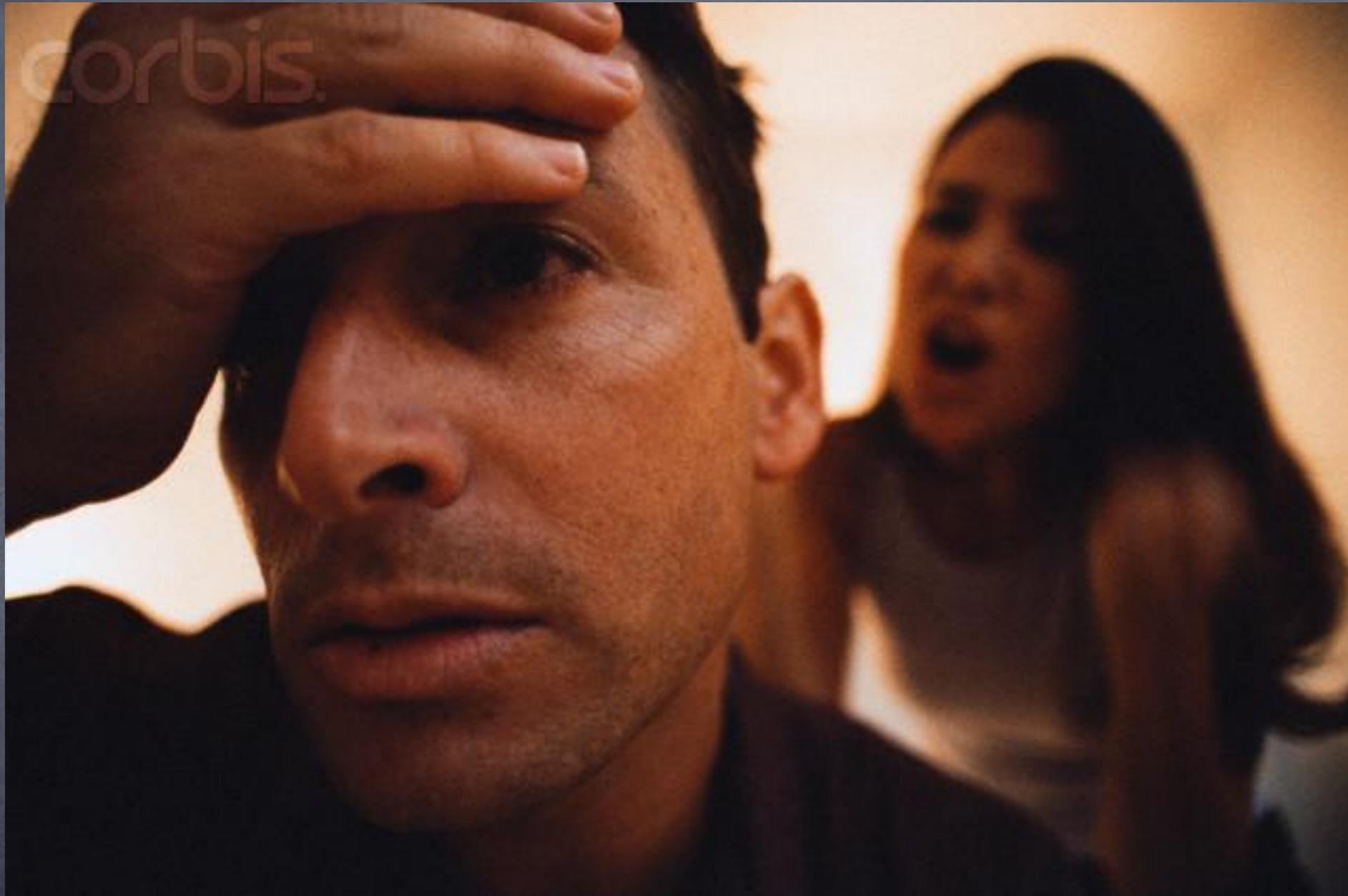
Borderline Personality Disorder criteria

- Fears abandonment
- Unstable relationships
- Changing self image
- Impulsive sex, spending, etc
- Suicidal/self mutilating behavior
- Mood shifts
- Feels empty
- Anger
- Temporary paranoia/dissociation

Fears abandonment



Unstable relationships



Identity disturbance: unstable self image and impulsivity



Suicidal/self-mutilating behavior



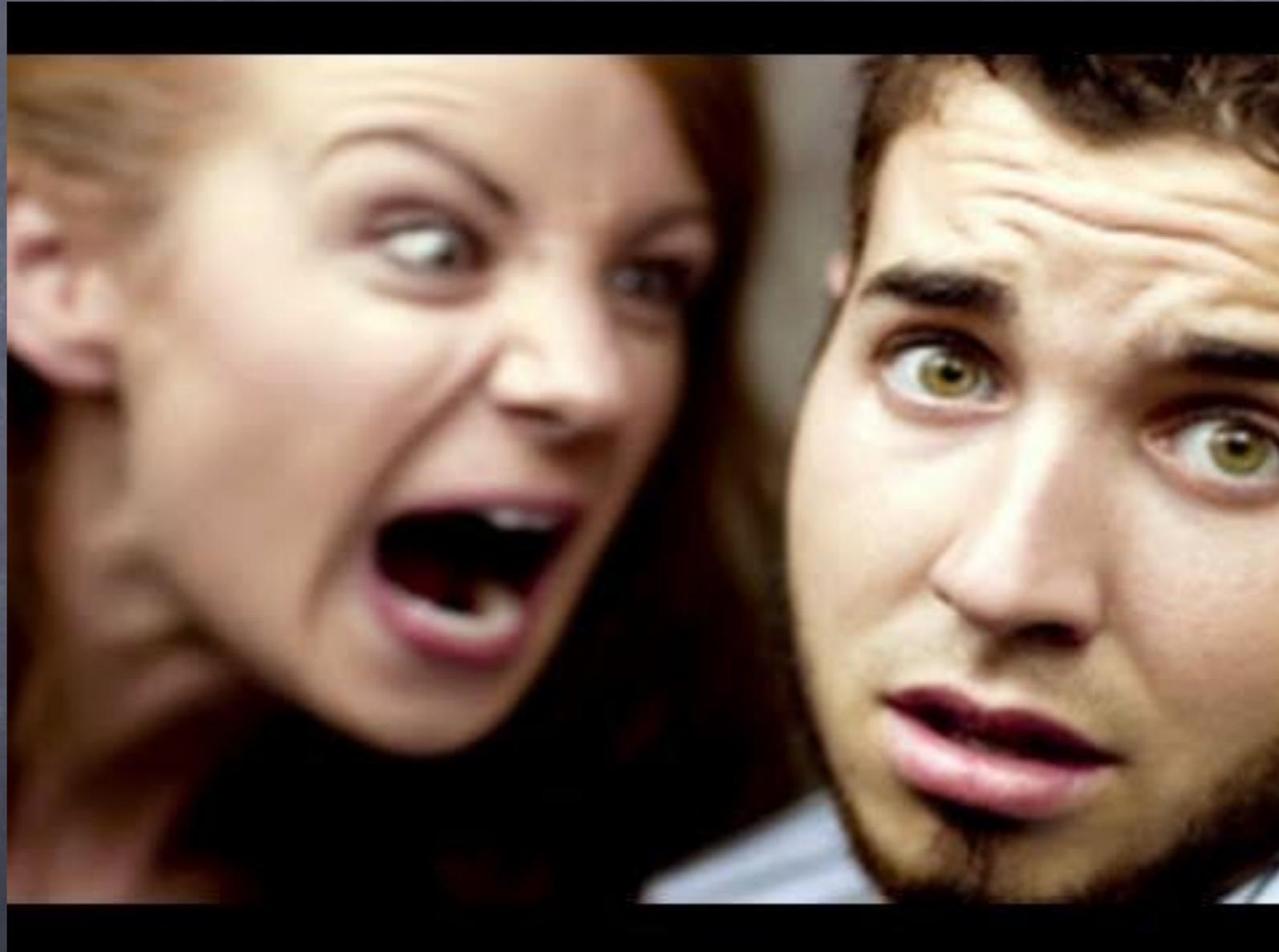
Mood shifts



Feels empty



Anger



Temporary Paranoia/dissociation



QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Important to remember

- The obnoxious and irritating behaviors of people displaying various personality disorders is a response to their pain and anxiety

Characteristics of BPD

- Often perceived by others as:
 - More competent than they feel themselves
 - Manipulative
- Evoke reactive feelings in others
 - Projective identification

Treatment

- No curative medication
- The treatment of choice is
PSYCHOTHERAPY

Tool kit for emergency responder

- Listening skills
- Validation
- Identifying the need
- Avoiding power struggle

Tool kit for emergency responder

- Avoiding physical contact where possible
- Helping them save face
- Honesty
- Being in touch with your own feelings

Listening skills

- Assume they are competent responsible adults
- Ask questions
- Validate their experience
- Assume a non-threatening posture

Validation

- Does not necessarily imply “agreement” with their view of circumstances
- Willingness to accept another persons subjective experience
- Attempt to understand how their experience “makes sense”

Avoiding power struggle

- BPD - problematic relationship with parents
- Re-create these problems in interaction with authority figures
- Don't get pulled into it
- Active listening

Avoid physical contact

- History of physical/sexual abuse
- Expect authority figures to be abusive
- Touching --> power struggle --> escalation of the situation

Handling self-injurious behavior

- Don't intervene physically unless absolutely necessary
- Focus on the cause of their distress
- Avoid pejorative terms to label their behavior (i.e words like crazy, senseless or stupid

Being honest

- Don't offer or threaten anything you can't or are unwilling to deliver
- Set limits but offer them choices - increases their sense of control and helps them save face

Things to avoid

- Being reactive or in a hurry
- Role of an authoritarian 'bad parent'
- Threatening unenforceable consequence
- Promising anything you can't deliver
- Physical contact

Handling extremes of emotions

- BPD patients don't believe they can control themselves
- If you lose control of your emotions --> effect is additive
- Conveying you are in control of your emotions --> helps them gain control