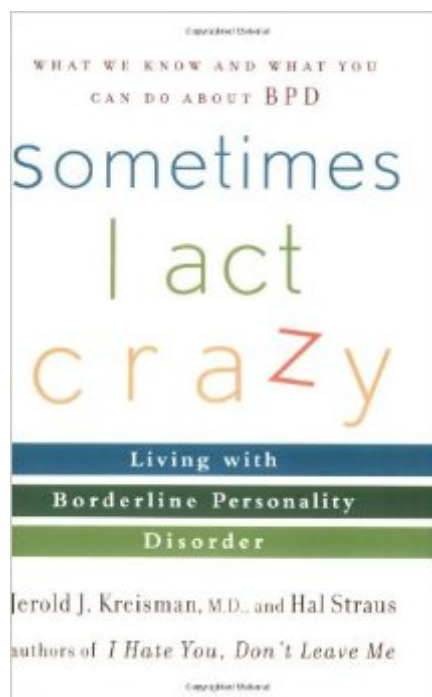


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Sometimes I Act Crazy: Living With Borderline Personality Disorder



Synopsis

A source of hope, expert advice, and guidance for people with borderline personality disorder and those who love them Do you experience frightening, often violent mood swings that make you fear for your sanity? Are you often depressed? Do you engage in self-destructive behaviors such as drug or alcohol abuse, anorexia, compulsive eating, self-cutting, and hair pulling? Do you feel empty inside, or as if you don't know who you are? Do you dread being alone and fear abandonment? Do you have trouble finishing projects, keeping a job, or forming lasting relationships? If you or someone you love answered yes to the majority of these questions, there's a good chance that you or that person suffers from borderline personality disorder, a commonly misunderstood and misdiagnosed psychological problem afflicting tens of millions of people. Princess Diana was one of the most well-known BPD sufferers. As a source of hope and practical advice for BPD sufferers and those who love them, this new book by Dr. Jerold J. Kreisman and Hal Straus, bestselling authors of *I Hate You, Don't Leave Me*, offers proven techniques that help you: * Manage mood swings * Develop lasting relationships * Improve your self-esteem * Keep negative thoughts at bay * Control destructive impulses * Understand your treatment options * Find professional help

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Customer Reviews

For months, my wife was searching frantically for a book that explains what BPD is and what the treatment options are. She found exactly what she was looking for in *Sometimes I Act Crazy*. She actually bought a few other books first, but they were just too dry. What sets this one apart is that it

contains accounts of real people that let you experience what it's like to have BPD. She was able to identify with these people, and it helped her so much to know that she's not alone. The book also explains the causes and the reasons for the various symptoms, so you can really understand what's behind them. Once she got started, she couldn't put it down, and then made it required reading for me. I also identified with people in the case studies, the husbands and wives, and friends, moms, and dads, of borderlines, who are also suffering. I know now that I'm not alone and this has made it easier for me. Most important, the book gives valuable practical advice on how to cope with this excruciating mental illness and how to go about seeking help step-by-step. We probably saved ten times the cost of the book just by reading the chapter on what to look for in a therapist! We had no idea this kind of help is available.

The reader gets to experience the patient's stories just like a psychologist would, with patient stories in bite-sized portions. The explanations are unusually good. The index at the back of the book is more thorough than the first book; I looked to see if Woody Allen's movie "Zelig" was listed in this index, since it was mentioned in both books, and there it was! The book was reader friendly. It was also thoughtfully written, so that a person with a short attention span and unlikely to read the whole text would be able to get the important message that there is a "cure." I was surprised at the sexuality in some of the stories, but I was grateful for these examples because they were necessary to understand the thinking of the BPD patients. The authors presented astonishing evidence of successful treatment methods. The book mentioned many of the illnesses that are similar to BPD and what exactly the defining symptoms were. What BPD was, how to identify it, and how to respond when a person with this disease exhibits its symptoms, is the focus of the book - A new hope for a future without BPD! It may take ten years, but for the ones suffering, it is something - Satisfying to read.

I've read more academic books (and think those are important, too. For that, I recommend "Demystifying Borderline Personality Disorder"), but this one was accessible and engaging, and had useful and practical advice for people with the illness and those around them. Because of that, the book gives the reader a sense of hope. In this field, that can be rare. There is some sexual content, and I can understand why some people would find that offensive. I personally didn't. Any misgivings I have about the book are offset by my enthusiasm about its readability and its usefulness to the people for whom it is written: borderlines and their families.

Good advice despite flawed writing. This book serves both as a good introduction to borderline personality disorder and general advice for persons with BPD and their families, partners, etc.... . I recognized many of my own observations and experiences with my mother, who suffers from BPD. The book summarizes the different ways of understanding and treating BPD; each chapter highlights a key aspect of the disorder, how it manifests and how one can deal with it. There's a healthy degree of empathy, and illuminating explanations of what appears to be peculiar and erratic behaviour. Each chapter closes with "action steps", reasoned responses to the challenges and crises that BPD creates, though sometimes they are intended for the person with BPD and other times for the persons around them. But the short stories or monologues that begin each chapter, serving as "case studies", read as shallow and sensationalist, cramming all sorts of possible permutations of the disorder in one scenario; I would have preferred to read a personal account by someone affected by BPD in their own words, or various accounts that allow you to see a range of experiences. It doesn't help that the characters are rather homogenous - from a middle-class, white background; it limits one's ability to relate. And while the authors' cultural references - from Shakespeare to Frank Herbert to Nora Ephron - can be interesting, they don't add much substance and are sometimes distracting. And one last gripe: the BPD "checklist" seems like a dangerous exercise in self-diagnosis - particularly when "sexual confusion (e.g., bisexuality)" is listed as a warning sign without explanation; I could do without the pathologizing of bisexuality. These are, nonetheless, all flaws I could read around, and there is valuable information here.

This is one of the best introductions to borderline personality that I know of. It is thorough and does a great job of explaining how the disease works in layman's terms. It also illustrates all the important aspects with excellent short examples. This book is well written and is an enjoyable read. It is compassionate, but doesn't gloss over the facts. It also develops the topic in a logical manner and is easy to read over multiple sessions without having to do a lot of reviewing. The sections on therapeutic approaches are very good and there is some excellent advice on finding a good therapist. While it lacks the detail on brain chemistry and research that is present in *Borderline Personality Disorder Demystified*, it makes up for it in its readability and straightforward approach. This is a good book for therapists, people from this affliction and also people dealing with family members or friends with this disorder. I highly recommend this volume as a first introduction to Borderline Personality Disorder.

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