

Bipolar is the gift that keeps on giving

There is no end to how many ways bipolar alters, disrupts and destroys the lives of those who suffer and those who try to support the sufferers.

This is my second article addressing all the fun and fanfare surrounding this disaster of an illness. If you are bipolar, then read on to see I speak the truth. I speak it from personal experience. If you are a support person then read on to gain some understanding of how your friend or loved one thinks and what they are up against:

-Periods of knowing all the answers. Nobody can tell you anything. This comes with the manic side of bipolar. Your mind is running at hyper speed. You are able to come to conclusions, clearly see the path through multiple choices and arrive at an answer much quicker than is considered normal. Problem is, you often arrive at the wrong conclusions when you're in this state of mind. Not always but usually.

There is no talking you out of your decisions if you are the bipolar person. Your conviction level is too high; unshakeable. Everything you decide to do seems to be the absolute best plan you ever came up with in your life. Those around you can see otherwise and try to save you from yourself but you won't hear of it. In fact, you probably enthusiastically try to convince them of the righteousness of your plans! It's madness or maddening depending which side of the fence you're on.

- (Possibly the worst) Family and friends think you can and should "snap out of it". This is a very common complaint amongst the afflicted. The non-afflicted believe this is something in which a little will power can pull you through. They have no clue. Can you "will" a broken arm to instantly heal? No. But that is what they are asking of you. You are a rowboat on the Indian Ocean during typhoon season. That's how much control you have over your symptoms. If the normal people only knew how insane their view on this was, they'd agree to their own 'refusal to accept' therapy.

-Projecting your thoughts onto others. Assuming all around you feels the same way as you on a topic and you're not even close. Your way of seeing life is so painfully, crystal clear and obvious to you that you assume all around you can see it too. This can apply to any life situation. When the day comes that you are well again and you look back on these moments, you will be amazed at how skewed your vision of reality truly was!

-Physical ills translate into mental woes. IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome), migraines, pain with no clear cause; digestive tract controls your moods. These are all things that bipolar people contend with daily. Your mental state is affected strongly by whatever else hurts.

This is really a case of six of one or half dozen of the other. Your brain is malfunctioning so it can't modulate your bodily systems properly. Your body is breaking down and your brain is not getting the help it needs to operate properly. See what I mean? The two feed each other. You have to address both to get well again.

-Spending sprees, gambling sprees. These differ from what a normal person in the same situation would feel. These are mania induced explosions of effort in the aforementioned areas. The intended goals are all different. Your brain needs to keep firing on all cylinders to keep from collapsing under the weight of its own energy. This leads to bankruptcy but fast!

-Can't get enough sex even though you may be screwing your brains out. It's the same compulsion as mentioned above but applied to sex. It's as if your senses can not get enough stimulation. There is a yearning inside you for more, more, more! I experienced this for years. I literally bled for this sport. This can lead to a very passionate relationship with your significant other (assuming he or she can keep up) or it can lead to the next symptom.

-Variety in sexual preferences and partners. Promiscuity. Think Jeff Goldblum in "The Fly". It just like that! Whether you're in a relationship or not, you crave endless variety pertaining to sex. It's a dangerous outpouring of your creative side. Protection and risk never even enter your thoughts as you hunt. Your energy and appetite for sex is monstrous. Usually, your inhibitions drop right out of existence and you'll pursue avenues that will lead to mind numbing guilt after the fact.

-Loss of sex drive. The other side of the bipolar sexual coin. This is bad enough but if you're in a relationship it's devastating. You might want sex but you can't perform. Or worse; you know you should want sex as a healthy person but you simply don't. You don't even miss it and you know this is bad based on principle.

This hit me at one point in my second marriage. I lost both the will and ability for a year and a half. That did wonders for the home life! And as a man it scared the crap out of me! It was a combination of stress, bipolar eating me alive, and the drugs I was on for my illness. It is a common side effect of many psychotropic medications. Not cool in my book. It played a big part in how I decided to fix myself.

So there's some more to think about and maybe enlighten you. The list continues. It will blow your mind. I have much more to share on this. Please read, learn and believe. Then you can get well or help someone to get well. It is totally possible.

About the Author

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