

1

What is EUPD?

Emotional Unstable Personality Disorder (EUPD) can be defined as an enduring pattern of inner experience and behaviour that deviates markedly from an individual's cultural norms and expectation. People can experience ongoing patterns of extensive and inflexible varying moods, intense episodes of anger, depression and anxiety resulting in poor impulse control and problems with interpersonal relationships.



Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder (EUPD)

2

Symptoms of EUPD

People with EUPD experience intense and highly changeable moods. EUPD is characterised by a fear of abandonment and going to extreme steps to avoid this. Behavioural characteristics include rapidly changing moods, impulsive behaviour, a poor sense of self-identity, sensitivity to criticism or rejection, chronic feelings of emptiness or depression and stress related paranoia. It is common for people who live with these symptoms to self-harm and have thoughts of suicide to help deal with painful feelings.

7

Sources of Information & Support:

[Mind, the mental health charity - Information about EUPD](#)

[NHS -Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder](#)

[Emotional Personality Disorder and Alcohol](#)

[Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder Factsheet](#)



3

Impact of symptoms of EUPD

People may have difficulties with making or maintaining relationships, including with personal friendships and family. Symptoms are an inability to control emotions & impulses, poor coping with life and difficult feelings and unable to problem solve. Symptoms are often worsen with stress. The individual may experience distress and depression/anxiety, suicidal ideas and intent. These symptoms can appear in early childhood and quickly become overwhelming. Individuals often challenge professionals and exhibit "splitting behaviours" ie; subconsciously they see people as either "good or bad", "black and white /all-or-nothing thinking.

6

Practice Considerations

Understand the person and what makes them who they are (eg be trauma informed and steer away from being diagnosis led). Ensure clear professional boundaries are maintained. Aim to set small achievable goals; agree ways of working and mutual support - avoid failure. People may request new workers, thus develop a team approach with a structured care plan to ensure a cohesive approach by team members. Work from a crisis management approach, devise a plan. Progress toward long-term work on personality aspects. Offer appropriate follow-up within a timeframe agreed between both parties.

Staff should have good support mechanisms in place (Burns 2010)

5

Causes of EUPD

There is no single cause of EUPD. Research shows it is likely to be caused by a combination of factors such as biological factors, environmental factors i.e. a history of traumatic or adverse experiences in childhood, adolescence or early adulthood. Diagnosis is usually only made after the age of 18 but may be made earlier if symptoms are clear and persistent by the age of 14. (Mental Health Foundation 2019)

Approximately 5% of the UK population would be diagnosed, if they were assessed, with a personality disorder of some kind and it is estimated 1 in 100 people live with EUPD. (Mental health UK 2019)

4

Alcohol Misuse and EUPD

Personality disorder and alcohol abuse are commonly co-occurring conditions. Symptoms of EUPD such as impulsivity and risk taking behaviour can increase alcohol intake in an individual; meaning people with a EUPD may abuse substances/alcohol as a means of coping with their intense emotions and when presented simultaneously, symptoms of EUPD may be masked. Substance and alcohol misuse with EUPD can therefore be challenging to manage and treat. Alcohol misuse can also lead to a misdiagnosis of a EUPD, however recovery is possible with treatment that comprehensively addresses both of these conditions.