

Does My Child or their Spouse Have a Personality Disorder?

What is a personality disorder? Generally speaking, it's when a person's reactions to events, either internal (memories, thoughts, or feelings) or external (conflict, stress, trauma) cause the person to react in ways that radically alter their view of themselves or others. It may also cause them to respond in consistently maladaptive ways. Since I know that many of you have wrongly been accused of having a Borderline Personality Disorder, I thought it would be useful to review the most common symptoms:

Borderline Personality Disorder:

- * Extreme reactions-including panic, depression, rage, or frantic actions to abandonment or disappointment, whether real or perceived**
- * A pattern of intense and stormy relationships with family, friends, and loved ones, often veering from extreme closeness and love (idealization) to extreme dislike or anger (devaluation). Black and white thinking is very common.**
- * Distorted and unstable self-image or sense of self, which can result in sudden changes in feelings, opinions, values, or plans and goals for the future (such as school or career choices)**
- * Impulsive and often dangerous behaviors, such as spending sprees, unsafe sex, substance abuse, reckless driving, and binge eating**
- * Recurring suicidal behaviors or threats or self-harming behavior, such as cutting**
- * Intense and highly changeable moods, with each episode lasting from a few hours to a few days**
- * Chronic feelings of emptiness and/or boredom**
- * Inappropriate, intense anger or problems controlling anger**
- * Stress-related paranoia or severe dissociative symptoms, such as feeling cut off from oneself, observing oneself from outside the body, or losing touch with reality.**