



Journal:

Bipolar Disorder

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Bipolar Disorder

(It May Not Be What You Expect)

(video: 16 minutes)

True Bipolar Illness:

- Devastating and overwhelming
- Can be challenging to treat
- Classic lack of “insight”

Partner with a trusted individual

Discussion/Reflection:

Discuss the difficulty in seeing ourselves in the midst of a manic episode.

In what ways might a trusted partner help to process information and give feedback?

Do you recognize how the tendencies to minimize symptoms and lack of insight might lead to medication noncompliance?

How might the tendencies to minimize symptoms and lack of insight lead to other reckless and dangerous behaviors?

Accurate Diagnosis-

“Bipolar” or Manic Depressive Illness:

- “Manic” episode
- Longest time without sleep?

Discussion/Reflection:

Could there be potential contributions or complications involving the accurate diagnosis of Bipolar involving:

- Insomnia?
- Choices?
- Drugs?
- Alcohol?

Possible contributions on the “mislabeling” of Bipolar:

- Unresolved issues
 - o Trauma
 - o Abuse
 - o Conflict
 - o Stress
- Anger as an isolated symptom

Discussion/Reflection:

Could an unresolved issue of trauma, abuse, conflict, or stress be a possible contribution on the “mislabeling” of Bipolar Disorder?

What about the possibility of anger as an isolated symptom?

Other possible contributions on the “mislabeling” of Bipolar:

- Medications
- Consider the timing

Discussion/Reflection:

Consider the effects of any medications you are taking in relation to manic episodes.

Review:

- Insight
- Partnership
- Sleep
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Anger
- Unresolved issues
- Prescription medications

There is great impact on the individual diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder.

Impact of Diagnosis:

Good:

Bad:

Missed opportunities for adequate help if inappropriately diagnosed:

- Insomnia treatment
- Drug / alcohol treatment
- Anger management
- Different medication
- Abuse
- Trauma
- Conflict / stress

There is possible difficulty in “letting go” of a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder once it has been made.

Don't stop your medications!

Psychotherapeutic and Psychoeducational interventions are helpful and often ignored... But, they should be tried!

Discussion/Reflection:

Consider and discuss the importance of your medication compliance.

Do you see the importance of having an individual you can trust who can observe any changes whenever medication is adjusted?

What potential benefit can you gain from adding psychotherapeutic and psychoeducational tools as complimentary and augmentation strategies to your Bipolar management?

Consider additional resources, or a therapist, for:

- Anger
- Insomnia
- Addictions (Comprehensive)
- Self-Esteem and Goal Setting (perhaps has “mood stabilizing” effects itself)
- Trauma
- Abuse