

What can help people experiencing such difficulties is a sense of acceptance and being listened to by someone that understands and is non-judgemental. A sense of safety which includes; consistent people and a place where they can become healthily attached while working through difficulties, a response and support when in crisis, delivered with firm and consistent boundaries and the knowledge that they will not be treated as 'time wasters' or 'attention seeker' or rejected!

Medication has helped some to cope with difficult thoughts and feelings, however when a client is ready and able, group work and 1-2-1 appointments can help to heal unresolved trauma, develop self-compassion and stronger a sense of self.

The Haven Project is dedicated to the support and recovery journey of people diagnosed with Personality Disorder.

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A HUMAN BEING NOT A DIAGNOSIS



YOUR GUIDE TO PERSONALITY DISORDERS

This leaflet is an effort to define conditions that are often labelled as Personality Disorder. Some of our original clients helped to compile it and gives an insight about causes, symptoms and what helps. This information is intended for clients, family and friends and for anyone wishing to gain an insider's view of this condition.

Personality Disorder is a controversial diagnosis which covers a wide range of people. For some people they are very unhappy they have received the diagnosis, others may not know they have received it and for many it is a relief that they finally have an understanding and some answers as to what has been happening to them. The 'Psychiatric Manual' says many things about the diagnosis and many professional disagree about what it is and who should be given it.

Research carried out by people with the diagnosis has shown that most have suffered significant trauma in their lives, usually in childhood and sometimes adolescence. Reported experiences range from; abuse of all kinds, shocking bereavements or long term difficulties in that the person has received unhealthy responses to their emotions in early life, i.e. 'walking on eggshells' out of the fear of what might happen.

Some have lived through later shocking incidents that have triggered earlier difficulties or memories. This is because the early damage done to that person has not always allowed for what we consider the 'normal development' of relationships

Or helped them to form nurturing relationships, or deal with life crises.

Whatever the specific causes for each individual, they are often left with a much damaged sense of self and little or no self-esteem or self-worth. The world can seem like a place to which they do not belong and they may easily experience a sense of terrible rejection. For some, this can result in severe depression and anxiety states causing disturbed thoughts and perhaps disturbing voices, a dissociated feeling of being 'out of it', or agoraphobia, mood swings and or suicidal feelings. Life may become a terrible struggle to negotiate on a daily basis.

People with such difficulties are often unable to cope with their overwhelming thoughts and feelings. They may use self-harm as a coping strategy for a sense of relief, self-medicating or making serious attempts to take their own life. They could develop eating disorders or develop negative coping strategies such as alcohol or drug misuse. For a minority who are suffering so badly or feeling so misunderstood it can result in offending, aggressive behaviour.

At the Haven Project we think of people with a Personality Disorder as 'Survivors' and with the right ingredients we help support our clients on the road to recovery, as it is a condition developed from life.

On the following page we describe some of the important ingredients that are essential parts of this journey