

BPD: Multidisciplinary strategies to navigate feelings of rejection and fear of abandonment

MHPN WEBINAR

Tuesday 23rd July 2024

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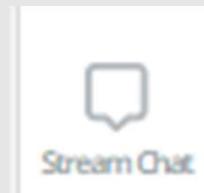


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Learning outcomes



The webinar will provide the audience the opportunity to:

- Identify treatment strategies that support people living with BPD to better manage feelings of rejection and fear of abandonment.
- Identify strategies to educate carers and families that will help them better support people living with BPD manage feelings of rejection and fear of abandonment.
- Outline how a multidisciplinary approach supports people living with BPD to better manage feelings of rejection and fear of abandonment.

Disclaimer

The content in this webinar is for educational purposes only and does not constitute medical advice.

If any content in tonight's webinar causes distress, please seek care with your GP, local mental health service or Lifeline 13 11 14.

Tonight's Panel



Chloe
Lived experience



**Associate Professor
Sathya Rao OAM**
Psychiatrist
VIC



Zonia Weideman
Occupational Therapist
QLD



**Facilitator:
Professor Steve Trumble**
General Practitioner
VIC

Lived experience perspective



Identify treatment strategies that support people living with BPD to better manage feelings of rejection and fear of abandonment.

- Clear communication
- Boundaries
- People following through with boundaries.



Chloe

Lived experience perspective



Identify strategies to educate carers and families that will help them better support people living with BPD manage feelings of rejection and fear of abandonment

- Appropriate timing to discuss boundaries
- Clear understanding
- Empowerment



Chloe

Lived experience perspective



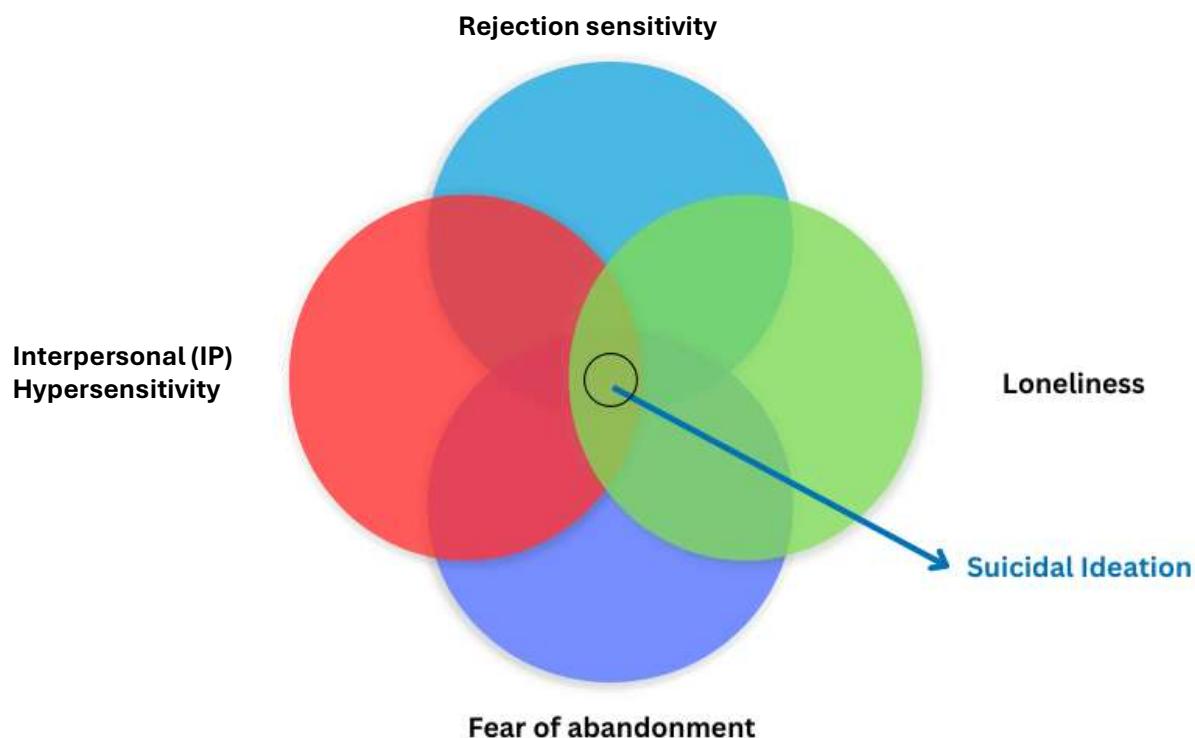
Outline how a multidisciplinary approach supports people living with BPD to better manage feelings of rejection and fear of abandonment.

- Showed people cared when the team worked together, and I didn't need to repeat myself again and again.
- Each service focussed on an element of recovery as part of the collective approach.



Chloe

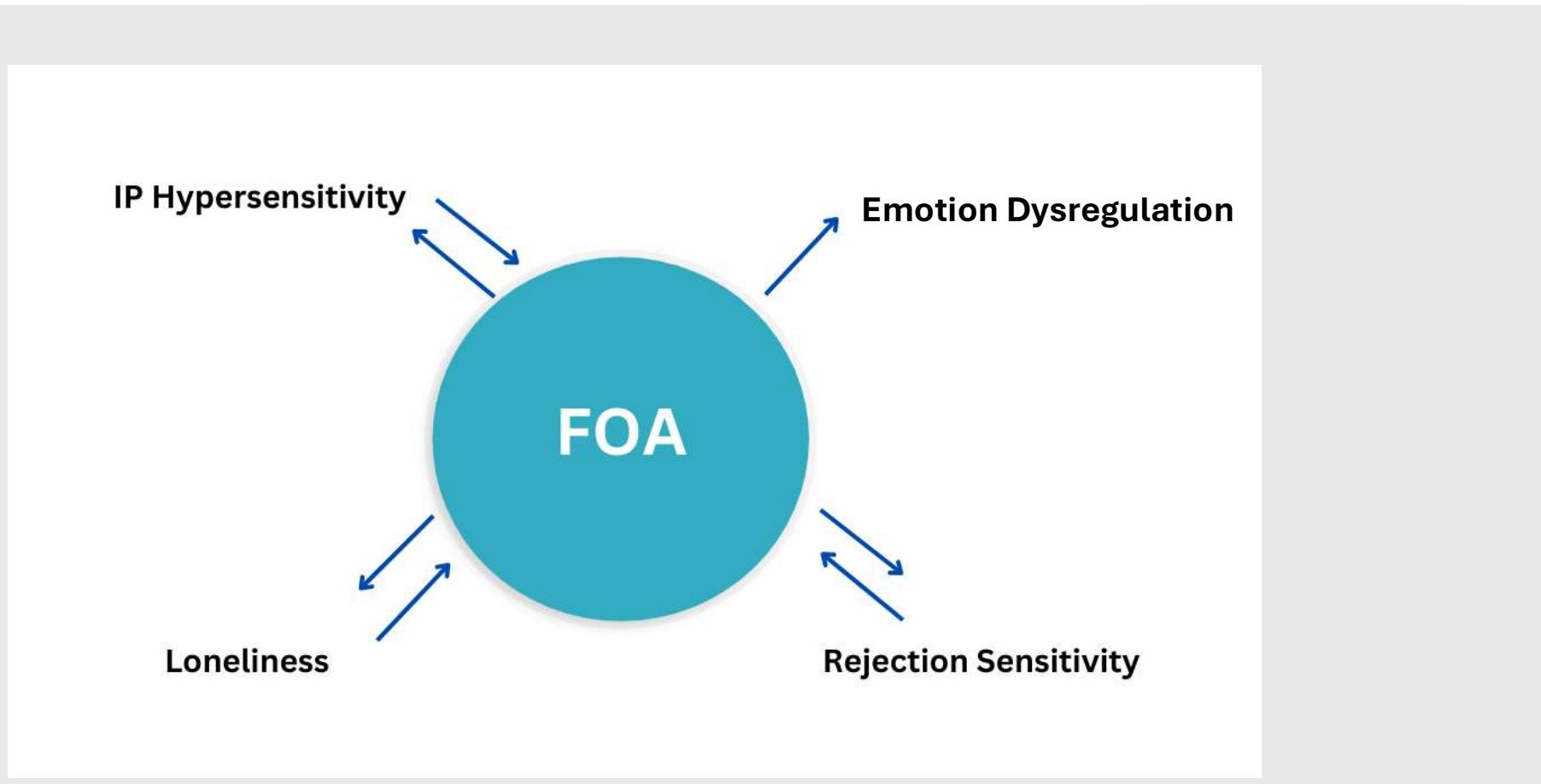
A psychiatrist's perspective



Associate Professor Sathya Rao



A psychiatrist's perspective



Associate Professor Sathya Rao



Cause of Fear of Abandonment (FoA) and Rejection sensitivity

- Biological factors:
 - Heritability
 - Interpersonal hypersensitivity
 - Addiction model
- Psychological factors
 - Disorganised/insecure attachment
 - Parents with mental illnesses
 - Rejection sensitivity
- Social:
 - Fear of aloneness
 - Identitylessness
 - Childhood trauma

A circular portrait of a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a blue suit and red tie, smiling at the camera.

Associate Professor Sathya Rao

Examples of triggers for fear of abandonment

- Real or perceived rejections in romantic relationships, friendships and family relationships
- Discharge from hospitals
- Termination of therapy
- End of each therapy session
- Therapist going on leave
- Therapists cancelling appointments when patients are receiving weekly long-term therapy
- Feedback or negative comments at the workplace

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Regular Article

Reviewing the clinical significance of 'fear of abandonment' in borderline personality disorder

Venura Paliyawadana Senior Psychiatry Registrar, Spectrum, Eastern Health, Richmond, VIC, Australia
Jillian H Broadbear Senior Research Fellow, Spectrum, Eastern Health, Richmond, VIC, Australia
Sathya Rao Executive Clinical Director, Spectrum, Eastern Health, Richmond, VIC, Australia



Ref: Piliyawadana, Broadbear & Rao, 2018

Associate Professor Sathya Rao

Clinical manifestations of fear of abandonment

- Fear of aloneness
- Emotion dysregulation
- Anger
- Family violence
- Impulsivity, self-injury, suicidality
- Idealisation-devaluation responses in interpersonal context
- Interpersonal clinging
- Dissociations/micro-psychosis



Associate Professor Sathya Rao

Treatment strategies

- Education re fear of abandonment and rejection experiences to client, carer and family
- Psychological therapies (e.g., Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Mentalization Based Treatment)
- **Abandonment psychotherapy**
- Psychological approaches:
- Attachment repair
- Trauma informed
- Modelling
- Awareness of fear of abandonment/rejection experience
- Working on triggers
- Awareness of automatic psychological and physical reactions
- Skills to delay and modify reactions
- Mindfulness strategies
- Biological approaches- Specific Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor medications ?



Associate Professor Sathya Rao

Journal of Personality Disorders, 30(2), 271-287, 2016
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**DISAPPOINTED LOVE AND SUICIDE:
A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL OF
"ABANDONMENT PSYCHOTHERAPY"
AMONG BORDERLINE PATIENTS**

A. Andreoli, MD, Y. Burnand, MSc, M.-F. Cochenec, MSc,
P. Ohlendorf, MSc, L. Frambati, MSc, D. Gaudry-Maire, MD,
Th. Di Clemente, MD, G. Hourton, MSN, S. Lorillard, MD,
A. Canuto, MD, and A. Frances, MD

Verbatim descriptions of FoA in people diagnosed with BPD

- 'I feel like everyone is leaving me'
- 'I know I will be alone eventually'
- 'No one likes me anymore'
- 'You are not there for me'
- 'It is just a matter of time... before you leave me'
- 'You have too many friends... I am not that important to you'



Associate Professor Sathya Rao

Ref: Pilihawadana, Broadbear & Rao, 2018

AUSTRALASIAN PSYCHIATRY

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Treatment planning

- Regular Therapy Sessions with ad hoc check-ins
- Plan for when it is hard
- Transparent Guidelines
- Diary cards



Zonia Weideman



Treatment

- Therapeutic Relationship
- Explore self-defeating behaviours from an occupational perspective
- Planned treatment
- Group interactions



Zonia Weideman



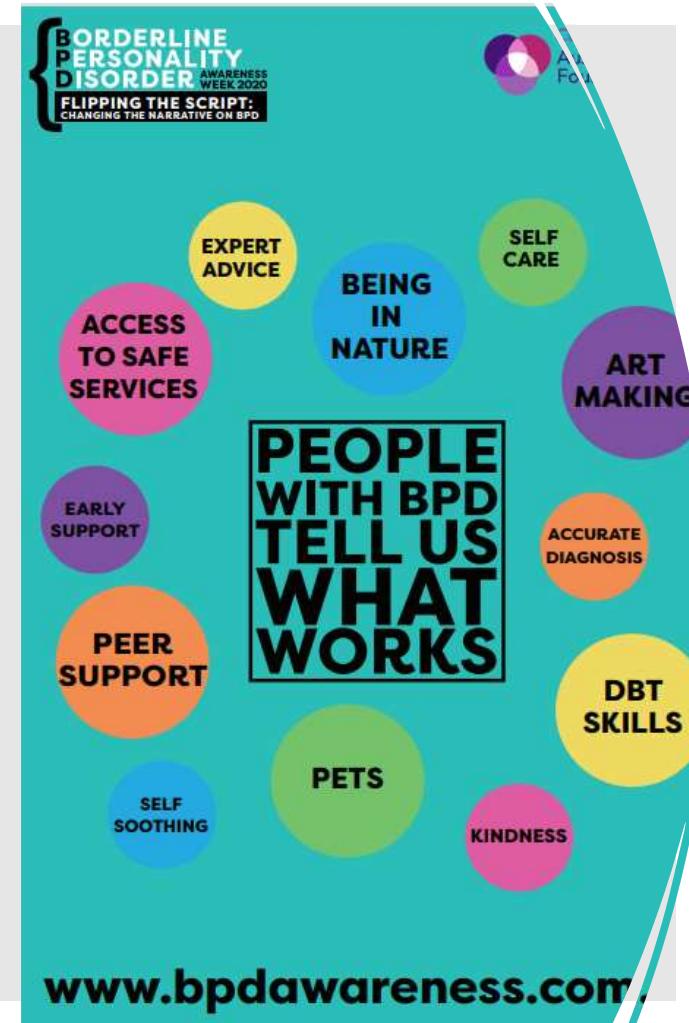
Verywell / Emily Roberts

Fear of abandonment/rejection in therapy

- Pleasing therapist to avoid criticism.
- Difficulty forming healthy relationships.
- Strategies:
 - targeted exposure, coping ahead.
 - normalizing imperfection, self-disclosure.
 - activities to build a bridge.



Zonia Weideman



Ending therapy or not

- Reduce therapy rather than ending
- Regular check-ups is normal



Zonia Weideman



Carers and Families

- Education and training
- Daily routine planning
- Communication and collaboration
- Social activities



Zonia Weideman



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Upcoming webinars:

- BPD: How to apply the principles of mentalization-based therapy in your practice
Monday 9th September

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www.mhpn.org.au/webinars/

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- In the First Person: Living with Bipolar

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2. If there's nothing in your area, start a new network.
3. If you are part of an eligible multi-disciplinary group of practitioners that are already meeting, become an MHPN network to access funding, admin support, and CPD statements for those who attend.

Learn more at: www.mhpн.org.au/networks

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