

What People with Bipolar Disorder have to say about their Mental Health

Sohail Ansari*

Department of Pharmacy, YBN University, India

INTRODUCTION

People who suffer from bipolar disorder do, in fact, think differently. With good treatment, patients can manage their thoughts and live happy, healthy lives.

Cautionary note about the content: Suicidal ideation and self-harm

Unpredictable. Unstable. Untrustworthy. Unreliable. They are unable to care for themselves. They are unable to control their emotions. Many people have misconceptions about how someone with bipolar disorder thinks and behaves. Although some people may have had similar experiences, stereotypes are frequently incorrect and damaging.

“Knowing how people with bipolar disorder think will immensely aid understanding and sympathy for those who suffer from the illness,” says Claire Ishi Ayetoro, who suffers from bipolar I. “It could also be extremely beneficial to those who care for someone who suffers from bipolar disorder.” So, how does a person suffering from bipolar disorder think?

Do those who have bipolar disease realise they have it before they are diagnosed?

Ayetoro, for example, had concerns for years before being diagnosed in 2014.

“For a long period, I had what I thought were aberrant mood swings from extremely high energy to extremely low energy. “My moods would plummet to the point that I would spend unusually long periods of time in bed depressed,” she recalls. “It seemed weird that this depression would come after such good spirits [1].”

Before acquiring her diagnosis, she had two manic episodes. “Putting a name to what was [happen on] with me was somewhat of a relief, but then the difficult road to stability began.”

Howard, on the other hand, was taken aback when he was diagnosed with bipolar I and psychosis at the age of 25. “As for what led me to feel I was suffering from an ailment, there was nothing. I was duped into visiting the hospital. Everything seemed ‘normal’ up until the moment I was admitted. It hit me like a tonne of bricks.”

“Who would I be if I didn't have bipolar disorder?” says the narrator. He adds, “I'd love to find out.” “However, it has been my life's work to master my mind and use it to the best of my ability.”

Common thought Patterns

Cyclical thoughts

Ayetoro calls her way of thinking “cyclical.” She explains that she will begin a cycle on a bright note, with sensible thoughts and a productive work ethic. When she's in a “bad mood,” on the other hand, she may miss deadlines, be anxious, and have self-deprecating thoughts.

“Thinking in cycles makes consistency a significant challenge in anything,” she explains. She goes on to say that these states of mind don't remain a defined period of time – some last a long time, while others are fleeting. Her manner of thinking is also influenced by her emotions.

Throughout most of his adolescence, King recognized that his moods shifted dramatically. “On certain days, I was bursting with energy, ecstatically eager, and self-assured. I was fatigued, utterly overloaded, and extremely discouraged with my life on other days [2,3].”

Depression

As per researchers, depression causes people to think more negatively and hopelessly. “Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, and low self-worth can cause someone to see things negatively during a depressive episode.”

King admits that his bouts of despair are usually long. “When I'm in this mood, my thoughts appear to be moving at a slower pace. My thoughts are hazy and distracted. It's easy to feel overworked and overwhelmed, and I struggle to take things one step at a time. My brain feels like it's trapped in the mud.”

“Depression in bipolar illness type II can feel like it will never stop, like you have no control over your life, and it makes me feel like I should simply give up on my goals,” he continues.

Mania

“A manic episode is a period of abnormally elevated mood characterised by increased energy, excessive activity, grandiosity,

*Correspondence to: Sohail Ansari, Department of Pharmacy, YBN University, India, E-mail: sohails1993@yahoo.co.in

Received: August 28, 2021, Accepted: September 17, 2021, Published: September 24, 2021

Citation: Ansari S (2021) What People with Bipolar Disorder have to say about their Mental Health. *Bipolar Disord* 7: 157. doi:10.35248/2472-1077.21.7.157.

Copyright: © 2021 Ansari S. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

racing thoughts, and a decreased need for sleep that lasts for several days to a week,” according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Those rushing thoughts can make it difficult to concentrate or accomplish activities. “Sometimes I’ll have numerous thoughts at once, and/or my thoughts will fly so rapidly in my head that I won’t be able to catch them accurately,” she says.

Manic episodes, according to Dr. Dudley, can also lead to increased energy, creativity, and feelings of invincibility.

This is particularly true in the case of King. “When I’m in the manic phase of my bipolar disorder, my thoughts race. Information appears to be easier to process, and I’m able to achieve a higher degree of flow in my work and relationships with less effort. This is when my mind feels most capable of processing information,” he explains.

Self-harm

People with bipolar disorder, according to Dr. Dudley, are more likely to feel suicidal or have thoughts of self-harm. At the age of 33, Jennifer Hicks was diagnosed with bipolar II. “I developed an exercise addiction in my late twenties and early thirties,” says the author. “At the same time, I was suffering from anorexia and self-harming.”

Howard claims that his mind functions in a unique way compared to other minds, and that some of those distinctions are life-threatening. “It’s quite severe when my mind tells me that harming or even killing myself is OK. Everyone gets sad, but sadness and suicidal depression are part of my emotional spectrum [4,5]”.

“I’d considered suicide for as long as I can remember, but I didn’t realise it was wrong. It was natural to me because I was born this way,” he recalls.

Psychosis

According to Dr. Dudley, “when bipolar disorder mood symptoms are severe, a person may suffer psychosis, or delusional and paranoid thinking that is out of touch with reality.”

Bipolar psychosis, according to Howard, is frightening since what he thinks is happening isn’t. “I was convinced that devils were stalking me under my bed. My brain informed me there were devils present, so I believed them. It was especially heartbreaking to realise my brain was sending me wrong information.”

REFERENCES

1. Mandriota M. What People with Bipolar Disorder Say About How They Think. Psych Central. 2021.
2. <https://psychcentral.com/bipolar/how-a-person-with-bipolar-thinks>
3. Highet NJ, McNair BG, Thompson M, Davenport TA & Hickie IB. Experience with treatment services for people with bipolar disorder. Medical J Australia. 2004: 181; S47-S51.
4. Suto M, Murray G, Hale S, Amari E, & Michalak EE. What works for people with bipolar disorder? Tips from the experts. J Affective Disorders. 2010: 124(1-2); 76-84.
5. Michalak EE, Yatham LN, Kolesar S, & Lam RW. Bipolar disorder and quality of life: a patient-centered perspective. Quality Life Research. 2006: 15(1); 25-37.