

## Are Bipolar and Narcissism Related?

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### INTRODUCTION

Bipolar disorder (BD) is a chronic mental health condition that causes fluctuations in a person's emotions, energy between high moods, or manic episodes, and low moods, or depressive episodes.

Narcissistic personality disorder or Narcissism is a personality disorder that affects how a person feels, thinks, and acts. A person with this disorder, has a high sense of self-importance, grandiosity can mask low self-esteem. It is part of a group of personality disorders called cluster B disorders. Cluster B disorder features dramatic, emotional, or unpredictable thinking and behavior.

### IS THERE A LINK?

Most mental health issues are diagnosed by a technique called the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) - DSM-5 does not list narcissism as a symptom of bipolar disorder.

Individuals suffering from bipolar disorder during manic episodes may display some behaviors which also help to characterize narcissistic personality disorder. Behaviours Such as

- high levels of confidence
- feelings of self-importance
- high level of energy
- grandiose self-perception

While sometimes in during depressive episodes, an individual might neglect caring duties, may avoid social contact, or sometimes appear insensitive to the other's needs. All this mostly happens when overwhelming symptoms of depression make it difficult for the individual to consider others.

In narcissistic personality disorder person may seem disinterested or insensitive to others requirements, which may be based on a fear of inadequacy. People with narcissism may be prone to depression, which can be reflected as elevated self-confidence.

**Symptoms of Bipolar:** As person with bipolar disorder experience intensive changes in mood: periods of mania and

depression

Symptoms during mania include

1. high self-esteem
2. an exaggerated belief in their own importance
3. an increased sense of self-worth
4. high level of energy
5. little sleep
6. aggression
7. rapid thinking and speaking
8. a feeling of being "weird"

• Symptoms during depression include

1. severe sadness
2. irritability
3. feelings of guilt, shame, and hopelessness
4. sleep issues
5. low level of energy

### Symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder

- feeling of entitlement
- seeking attention
- an overstated ability of self-worth or importance
- disregard for others feelings and needs
- fantasies of grandiose achievements or power
- belief that one is special or unique
- taking advantage of others to accomplish one's objectives
- problems with self-esteem
- a sense of identity that depends on comparison with others
- relationships that remain superficial

### TREATMENTS

#### For Narcissistic Personality Disorder

Individuals with Narcissistic personality disorder tend not to seek any treatment as they do not see a need for change. However, they may encounter underlying depression, sadness or anxiety, and doctor can prescribe medication to reduce that or recommend psychotherapy.

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Bhasin A

**For Bipolar Disorder:**

Bipolar disorder is a chronic disorder, there is no cure, but it is treatable. It can be treated via below treatments individually or in combination

**Medication** which includes mood stabilizers such as lithium can help people with less mood swings. Few are benefitted from antidepressants, antipsychotic drugs, or antianxiety medications.

**Therapy and lifestyle adjustments include CBT (cognitive behavioral therapy):** Adopting Healthy lifestyle changes such as getting regular exercise, having a healthful diet, routine sound sleep

**Electroconvulsive Therapy:** If a person's symptoms do not improve after taking medication, therapy, etc. then Doctors recommend electroconvulsive therapy which involves giving a mild shock to the brain. Doctors say they are still not sure how it works, but it seems to have impact in reducing the symptoms of bipolar disorder and other mental health problems.