



BPD COMMUNITY

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The newsletter of
BPD Community Victoria Ltd.



To join our email list, email:
barb@bpdcommunity.com.au

Mental Health Victoria has prepared a report on the state of mental health in Victoria, It highlights that chronic underfunding has seen Victorian mental health systems fall below the rest of Australia. Click here: [Saving Lives, Saving Money](#)

Celebrate BPD Awareness Week with us! Put the night of Thurs 4 Oct aside to join with our community, to meet old friends and new ones. And don't forget to RSVP: barb@bpdcommunity.com.au

Hope and optimism

A core mission of BPD Community is to replace stigma and discrimination with hope and optimism. Despair and despondency are the opposite of hope and optimism. Stigma and discrimination helps create this situation of hopelessness.

Our now very large community celebrates the knowledge that recovery is a realistic goal for everyone affected by BPD, this is our message of hope and optimism. We can and do change ourselves and we can and do change our world as a result.

While that sounds easy enough, the paths we travel can be rocky and perilous. To know that recovery is possible doesn't make it easy to attain. The many obstacles in our way can be overwhelming. Each of us has different types of chal-

lenges and these challenges can affect us differently too. There is no easy solution just a lot of hard work.

It is frustrating when we reach out for help and we don't feel we are listened to. It can feel lonely and isolating when we feel that we are alone. But in reality, we are not alone.

It is time to celebrate the knowledge that we are here to stay. Slowly we are working towards a better world, all of us together. We are building a kinder, more caring world. We are hanging on tight.

As individuals, in families and as a community, we hold on to the knowledge

that there is hope and optimism, change is a realistic possibility. As individuals, families and as a community, we also know that this change will not happen on its own, but requires hard work and dedication and determination.

We will not just survive, but we will thrive and the future is ours. When things are at their darkest, that is when lights shine the brightest. This is the message of this issue of our newsletter. We are mindful that to attain this future, in the present we need a sound plan, support and strength and courage to change ourselves. When that escapes us temporarily, we hang on tight, because things will change.

In this issue we explore the question of suicide and its prevention.

"Nothing is so strong as gentleness, and nothing is so gentle as true strength."



Sometimes it's lonely

Sometimes it can feel very lonely, we feel alone as if no-one is there for us. And that loneliness can feel so very sad. Always though there are people who do care and people who can listen and can support us. The kind person on the end of the phone at Life-

line is a representative of the world that does care for each and every one of us.

For decades now, Lifeline has been there for us. When we think there is no-one, when we are distressed and are looking for someone to listen, we

can reach out to Lifeline.

Call: 13 11 14

If you are worried about someone being suicidal, visit: www.lifeline.org.au

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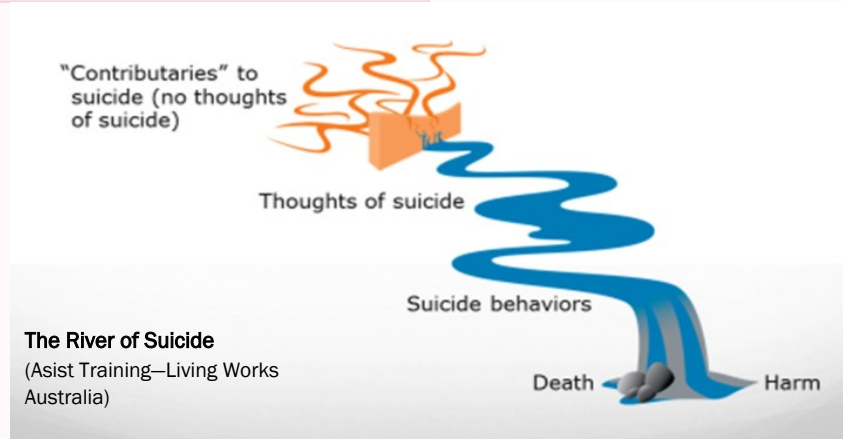
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BPD and suicide and prevention

The unhelpful thoughts and behaviors that come with BPD are deeply ingrained. They develop over the lifetime of a person and are often survival mechanisms. The deep psychic pain caused by BPD encourages thoughts and behaviours to ease that pain. These behaviours can become habitual, automatic and unhelpful. It can be so difficult for someone to even recognise the existence of what are maladaptive thoughts and behaviours.

The metaphor of the River of Suicide shows us how unhelpful 'contributaries' can build up and cause a break on the wall that protects us. Contributaries that



we can have control over include negative thinking, self harm and at risk behaviours. When that wall is broken, then we enter the river which sweeps us along. These contributaries become ingrained and more serious without intervention.

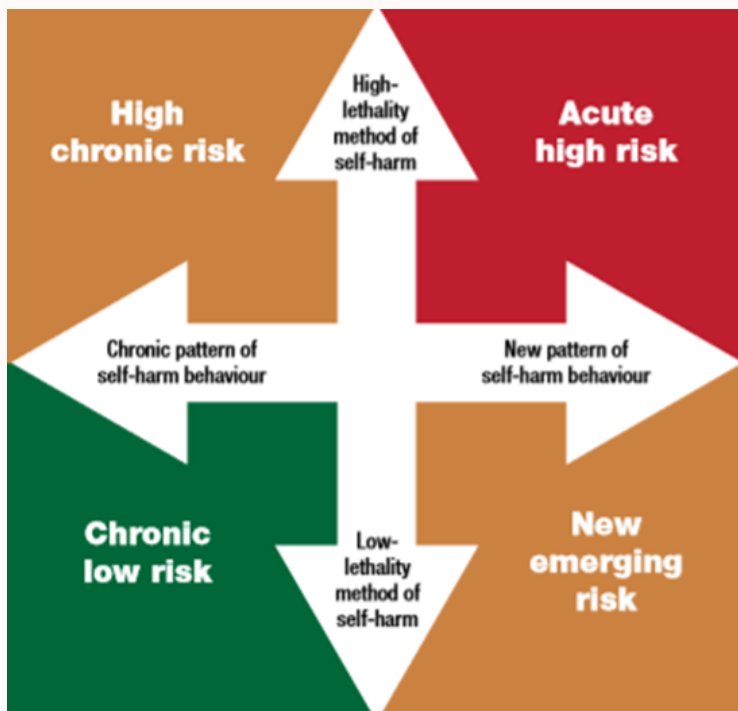
Thoughts of suicide become practice runs, working out strategies. At time of high stress, impulsive behaviours can kick in and suicidal behaviours become more real.

The ultimate suicide prevention is to stop those

chaotic thoughts before they break through that wall.

The help of a professional who we can trust and who can help us plan our recovery is invaluable.

Worrying about self harm



When a habit of self harm is created, it helps to understand how to respond appropriately, whether we are the self harmer or whether we are watching a loved one self harm. For the person self harming it is an act of desperation which can become a habit. Many of us panic when we see a person hurting themselves and our natural response is to want to fix the problem. We need to be wise and not react emotionally.

The table on the left describes the movement from low risk to high risk. Low risk does not mean we ignore what happens, when a person self harms it is a non verbal expression of severe pain. It is maladaptive and unhelpful but it can provide immediate relief for the pain being experienced. Our role is not to reward inappropriate behavior but to learn how to listen and respond to the reasons why it happens, we need to find different ways to manage the pain.

Acute high risk occurs when there is a pattern of high lethality self harm or as a result of a change in self harming behavior.

It is important for the person with BPD to be supported in learning how to manage themselves and have a safety plan in place.

Always seek professional support and sometimes this can be challenging, our task is to persevere.

From: Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of BPD, <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/mh25>

Suicide Prevention

On Tues 19th June, Dr Alison Asche and Dr Daniel Rylatt both presented to a keen audience at Star Health, on Suicide Prevention. Both Alison and Daniel lead Suicide Prevention Programs under the State Govt place based and assertive outreach trials.

The state gov't aims to halve the current suicide rate in 10 years, reduce suicide attempts, improve community and individual resilience and develop ongoing improvement of the suicide prevention system.

Across Victoria there are 12 place based trials, Alison leads the

trial for the Dandenong area. This includes Lived Experience Workshops with the Roses in the Ocean organisation, GP Training on BPD done by Spectrum, GP Practice training and a program for Men in the Trades.

In 6 Victorian hospitals an assertive outreach program operates, they include Barwon Health, Geelong; St Vincent's; Maroondah; Alfred; Peninsula; and Albury Wodonga Health. Daniel leads the HOPE Project at the Alfred. In this program, an assertive outreach model is used to follow up with patients who have been admitted after a suicide attempt or suicidality.

Caitlin our MC for the night



Alison chatting with Fred



Daniel catching up with Ania



For 3 months after they leave hospital, the HOPE team work with the individual to build a safety network and safety plan.

We know that research suggests that 10% of people with BPD will suicide and self harm and suicide attempts are rife within our community. Anecdotally we also know the challenges faced by distressed people who encounter direct stigma and discrimination when they seek support from the emergency system.

Alison and Daniel both reflected the care and sensitivity of the people working in this field, the audience was enthusiastic in their support of this work.

We hold great hope that these trials will show a way forward to address the needs within our own community.



Your Safety Plan

What an innovation! A free app for our smartphone or desktop to guide us through making our own personal Safety Plan. Brought to us by Beyond Blue.

With 7 easy steps, we can prepare a safety plan once

we have downloaded the app.

It is simple enough to do on our own and the app has prompts to help us when our thoughts are blank. However, if we could share the task with a friend or family, it would be easier.



The best part of the app is that we can share our plan with someone we trust.

This app is highly recommended and it rates highly amongst its users also, at 4.5 stars.

The website has more information for us:

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/beyondnow-suicide-safety-planning/create-beyondnow-safety-plan>

A Crisis Plan

Different to a Safety Plan, a Crisis Plan is a plan to work on for things such as an unexpected hospital visit, eg, who will look after the pets?

In a Crisis Plan we document all our medical infor-

mation such as medications, doctors' names, medical conditions (including such things as drug and alcohol dependency). As well as family and friends emergency contacts.

For more information on what to include visit our website here: bpdcommunity.com.au



Info Night—Thurs 4 October,

Celebration!

The first Week of October is BPD Awareness Week. This year we are again celebrating this event with our 4th consecutive Celebration Night.

Every year we take time out to party and celebrate the year's successes. It is the opportunity for the Board of Directors to report to our community on our achievements over the year. It is the chance to listen to a story of recovery and celebrate an individual's personal journey, this year Gabrielle Blair will be presenting her journey towards recovery. And joining as usual to entertain us will be Zeke Ox.

Please accept this as your personal invitation to join us, we want to see a full house again, all the familiar faces we have known over our years together and welcome new faces too.



A new day, a new start



A generous heart

Gabrielle, like so many with lived experience of BPD, is a sensitive, kind and caring person. Gabrielle wants to give to her community and wants to speak with us at our annual Celebration Night about her experience and what she has learnt.

It was as a student studying psychology that Gabrielle first discovered BPD, about 4 years ago she felt that this might provide the answer for her mental health which she then confirmed with her mental health professional of the time. Gabrielle had been actively reaching out for professional support since she was about 18. Now 26 she feels she is finally on the homeward stretch.

When we hear firsthand the stories of those with lived experience of BPD, our lives are enriched. The hope and optimism it leaves us with is powerful. We are grateful to have this opportunity.



TITLE: Celebration
PRESENTED BY: BPD Community with Gabrielle and Zeke Ox

TIME: 6.30pm
DATE: Thurs 4 Oct 2018

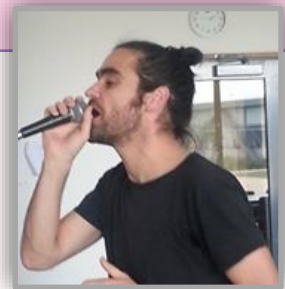
PLACE:
Sth Melb Town Hall
Bank St
Sth Melbourne

Please RSVP to:
barb@bpdcommunity.com.au

Zeke Ox

We are lucky that Zeke is committed to the work of BPD Community, he will be joining us again to celebrate BPD Awareness Week. Zeke is a multi talented performer and a social activist who sings to us every year, thrilling the audience with his voice and touching our hearts with his song.

Dedicated to making the world a better place through music and performance, Zeke is a prolific and outspoken career multidisciplinary artist, performing since 1998.



Probably most well known from his work with hard rock and alternative metal groups Mammal, Superheist and Over-Reactor, he fronts these bands as the lead singer. But he can also melt the hearts of oldies with a powerful, emotionally charged ballad.

Everyone is invited to join us.