

Understanding Bipolar Disorder

Mindspring Mental Health Alliance
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Objectives:

Participants will...

- Understand the types of bipolar disorder,
- Build knowledge of their symptoms,
- Identify common misconceptions about the disorder,
- Explore how relationships are impacted, and
- Learn about treatment options and practical tips for managing symptoms or helping others.



Understanding Bipolar Disorder

Developed by Ashley Adams, BS, MOT, OTR/L

Mindspring Mental Health Alliance

An aerial view of a city skyline at dusk, with a warm, golden light flare on the left side. The text "Session Overview" is overlaid in orange.

Session Overview

- Signs & Symptoms
- Prevalence
- Causation
- Co-occurring disorders
- Treatment
- Tips for Self-Care & Helping Others



What is Bipolar Disorder?

Bipolar disorder (formerly called manic-depressive illness or manic depression) is a mental disorder that causes intense shifts in mood, energy, activity levels, concentration, and the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks.

Prevalence

An estimated 4.4% of U.S. adults experience bipolar disorder at some time in their lives

The average age of onset is about 25, but can occur in teens, childhood, during pregnancy or following childbirth

A large, white, hand-painted number '4' is centered on a dark, textured brick wall. The number is composed of several thick strokes, giving it a slightly rough, artistic appearance. The bricks are dark brown or black, and the mortar lines are visible between them.

Types of bipolar disorder

- There are four types of bipolar disorder
- All four types involve clear changes in mood, energy, and activity levels



Types of Bipolar Disorder

- Bipolar I Disorder
- Bipolar II Disorder
- Cyclothymic Disorder or Cyclothymia
- Bipolar Disorder, “other specified” and “unspecified”

Bipolar 1 Disorder

Most people diagnosed with bipolar I will have episodes of both mania and depression, though an episode of depression is not necessary for a diagnosis.



Bipolar II Disorder

Defined by a pattern of depressive episodes and hypomanic episodes, but not the full-blown manic episodes that are typical of Bipolar I Disorder.



Cyclothymic Disorder or Cyclothymia

A chronically unstable mood state in which people experience hypomania and mild depression for at least two years.



Bipolar Disorder, “other specified” and “unspecified”

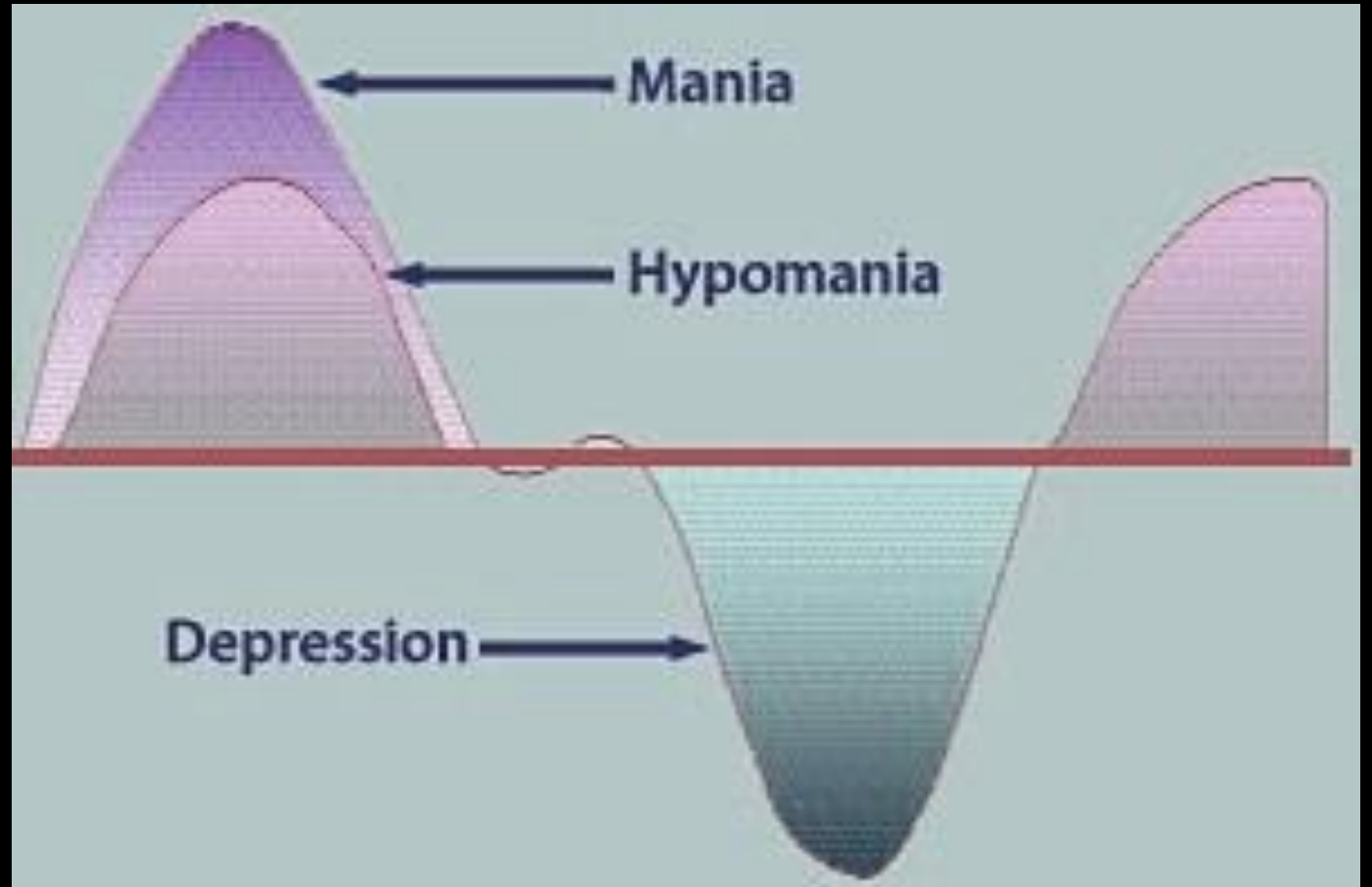
When a person does not meet the criteria for bipolar I, II or cyclothymia, but has still experienced periods of clinically significant abnormal mood elevation.

Symptoms of Mania

While they vary in intensity, the symptoms of mania and hypomania are the same:

- Inflated self-esteem
- Decreased need for sleep
- More talkative than usual
- Racing thoughts
- Distractibility
- Increased goal-directed activity that is harmful
- Excessive involvement in activities with painful consequences

Mania vs. Hypomania





Symptoms of a Depressive Episode

A depressive episode includes five or more of these symptoms:

- Depressed mood, such as feeling sad, empty, hopeless or tearful (in children and teens, depressed mood can appear as irritability)
- Marked loss of interest or feeling no pleasure in all — or almost all — activities
- Either insomnia or sleeping too much
- Either restlessness or slowed behavior
- Fatigue or loss of energy



Self-Reported Feelings of Mania

“This part is awesome. I have tons of energy and don’t want to stop.”

“You could crash a car through my house and I’d reply, “What a great time to build something new!”

“This is when I go out more, spend all my money, and drink too much.”



Self-Reported Feelings of Depression

Krans, B. (2019, December 06). What Does It Feel Like to Have Bipolar Disorder? A Personal Story. <https://www.healthline.com/health/bipolar-disorder/what-bipolar-feels-like>

“It can be difficult to physically move. I tend to sleep 10, or even 12 hours a day.”

“I don’t enjoy things because the smallest details annoy me.”

“I turn into this grumpy old man. I’ve contemplated suicide and have attempted it once before.”

“Without the highs of mania, I wouldn’t be able to tolerate the lows of depression.”

Rod's Story

NHS Choices. (2009, November 10). Bipolar disorder: Rod's story | NHS.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaC9Zz_2JHM

Rod was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 1987. He describes how his symptoms got worse and led to his diagnosis, the treatments offered to him, and how he copes today.





Causes of bipolar disorder

- Genetics
- Biological Differences

Conditions that co-occur with bipolar disorder

Many people with bipolar disorder also may have other mental health disorders including:

- Anxiety Disorders
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Misuse of Drugs or Alcohol
- Eating Disorders
- Psychosis



Treatment

Delays in treatment

For the past 20 years, studies have consistently estimated that between 40-50% of all people with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder are receiving no treatment for their mental illness at any given time.

The average delay between onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is **11 years.**



When to see a doctor:
When your mood starts impacting your ability to do your daily activities



What to say to the doctor

“This is what I’m feeling...”

“This is how it’s affecting my life...”

“I need help managing this”

What to expect from the doctor:

The doctor will likely ask a number of questions:

- When did you or your loved ones first begin noticing your symptoms?
- How frequently do your moods change?
- Do your symptoms interfere with your daily life or relationships?



Diagnosis:

To determine if you have bipolar disorder, your evaluation may include:

- **Physical exam**
- **Psychiatric assessment**
- **Mood charting**
- **Criteria for bipolar disorder**



Treatments

- Medication
- Psychotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Electroconvulsive Therapy
- Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation
- Supplements

A close-up photograph of a person's hands, one holding a small white pill. Below the hands is a black pill organizer with several compartments, some containing pills. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

Medication:

Medications generally include mood stabilizers and second-generation (“atypical”) antipsychotics

Treatment plans may also include medications that treat sleep and anxiety



Medication:

Avoid stopping a medication without talking to a health care provider first. Suddenly stopping a medication may lead to a “rebound” or worsening of bipolar disorder symptoms.

Psychotherapy:

Psychotherapy is often referred to as “talk therapy”

Provides a variety of treatment techniques that aim to help a person identify and change troubling emotions, thoughts, and behaviors

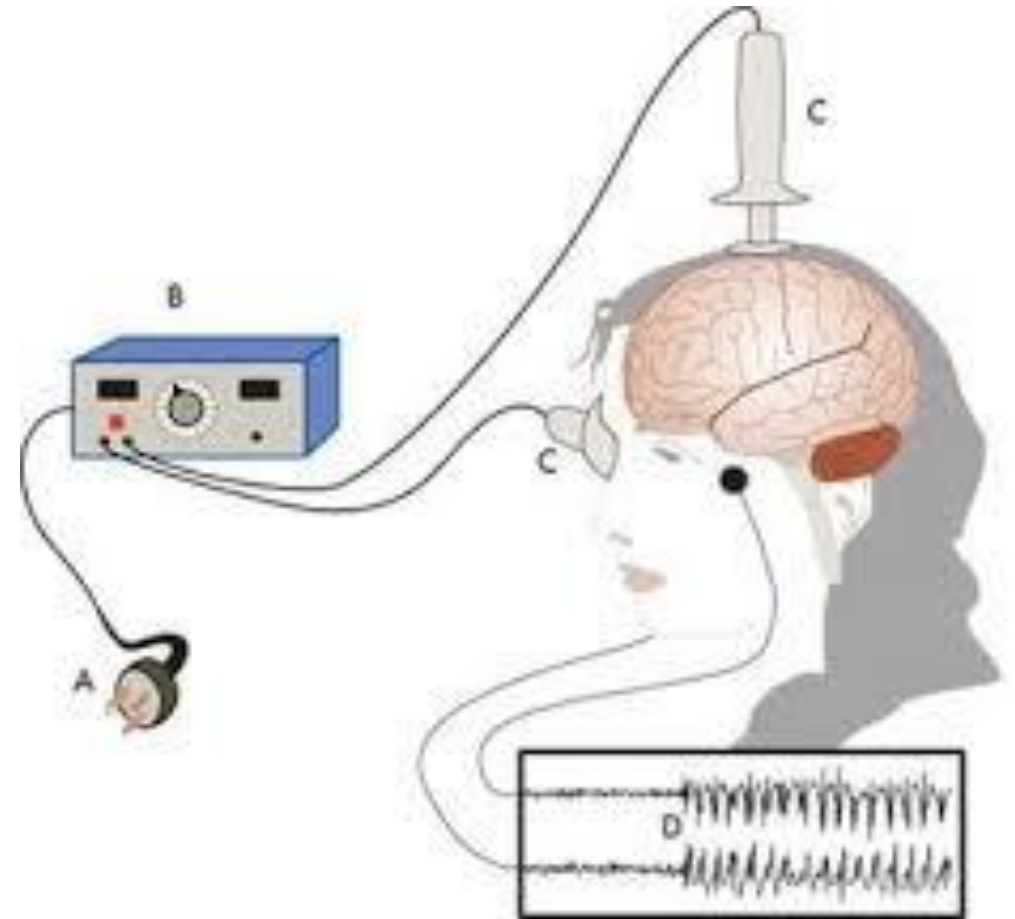


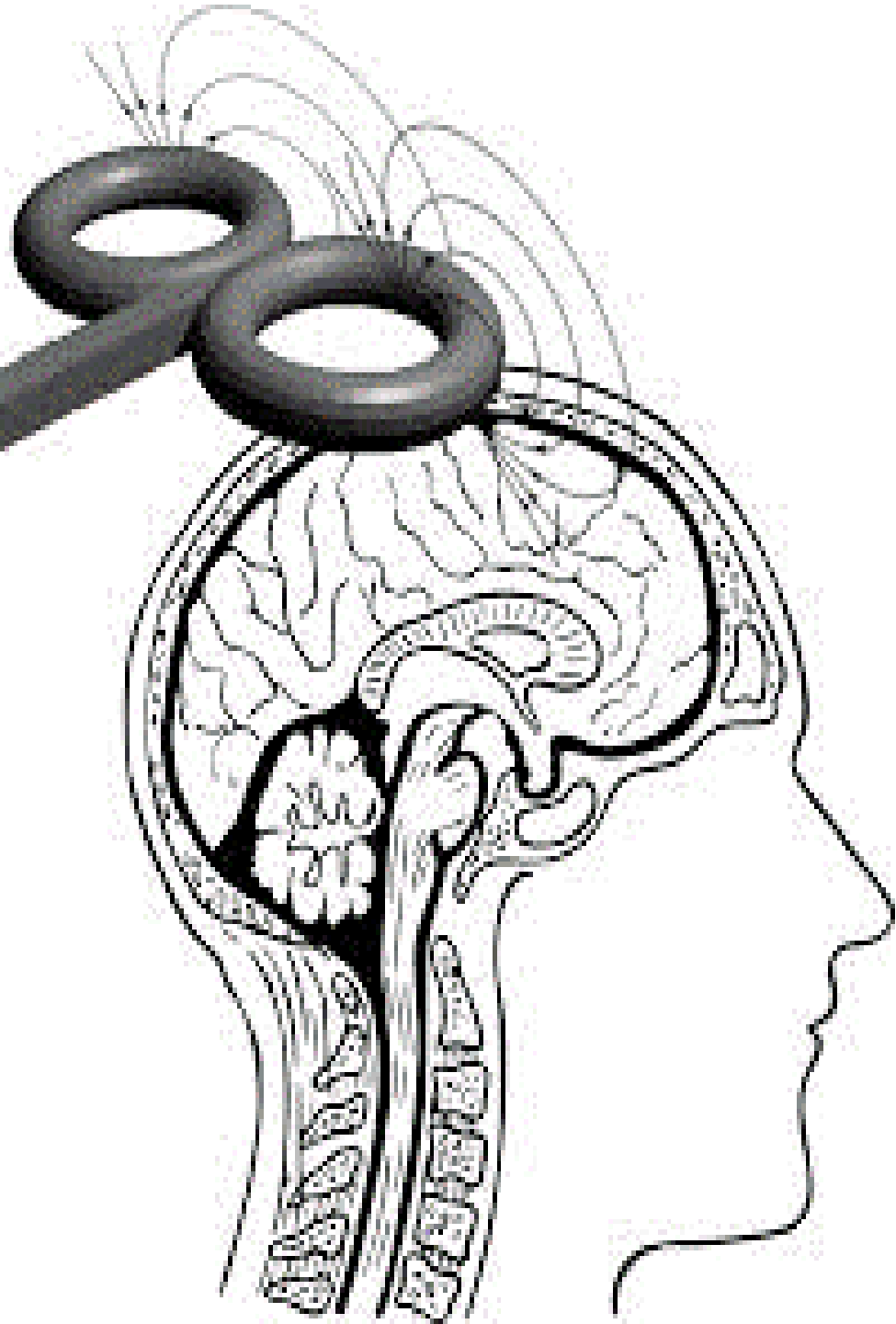
Occupational Therapy:

Occupational therapy (OT) teaches people who are ill how to complete their daily activities more effectively (such as showering, cooking, emotional regulation, sleep, budgeting, etc.)

Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)

A brain stimulation procedure that can help people get relief from severe symptoms of bipolar disorder





Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)

- A newer approach to brain stimulation that uses magnetic waves
- Delivered to an awake patient most days for 1 month



Supplements

- There are reports that some supplements and herbs may help
- Not enough research has been conducted to fully understand how supplements may affect people with bipolar disorder

Prevention

There's no sure way to prevent bipolar disorder. However, getting treatment at the earliest sign of a mental health disorder can help prevent bipolar disorder or other mental health conditions from worsening.

A middle-aged man with short, graying hair and black-rimmed glasses is shown from the chest up. He is wearing a dark green or black polo shirt. He is looking slightly to his left with a neutral expression. The background is a plain, light gray gradient.

Tips for Managing Symptoms & Helping Others



Coping with Bipolar Disorder

- ✓ Learn to recognize the signs & symptoms
 - ✓ Structure your day
 - ✓ Stay connected
- ✓ Avoid misuse of alcohol and other drugs
 - ✓ Be patient

Coping with Bipolar Disorder

Keep medical and therapy appointments and talk with your doctor / therapist about treatment options

Take all medicines as directed

Coping with Bipolar Disorder

Tracking: Keeping track of daily mood symptoms, treatments, sleep patterns, and life events can help patients and health care providers track and treat bipolar disorder over time

Supporting others:

Learn about the symptoms & treatment options for bipolar disorder

A close-up photograph of a person's hand being held by another person's hand. The person being held is wearing a white shirt and blue jeans. The person holding the hand is wearing a grey t-shirt. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting. The overall tone is supportive and caring.

Supporting others:

Encourage your loved one to get help. The sooner bipolar disorder is treated, the better the prognosis, so urge your loved one to seek professional help right away.

A young man with his arm around a young woman's shoulder, looking at her with a supportive expression. The woman is wearing a dark beanie and a dark jacket, looking down. The man is wearing a dark jacket over a white t-shirt with a graphic. They are standing in front of a blurred city street at night.

Supporting others:

Be understanding. Let your loved one know that you're there if they need a sympathetic ear, encouragement, or help to get treatment.



Supporting others:

Accept your loved one's limits. Your loved one with bipolar disorder can't control their moods. They can't just snap out of a depression or pull themselves out of a manic episode.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark plaid shirt, stands on a beach at sunset. She is holding the hand of another person whose arm is visible from the left. The background shows the ocean with waves and a sandy beach under a warm, orange sky.

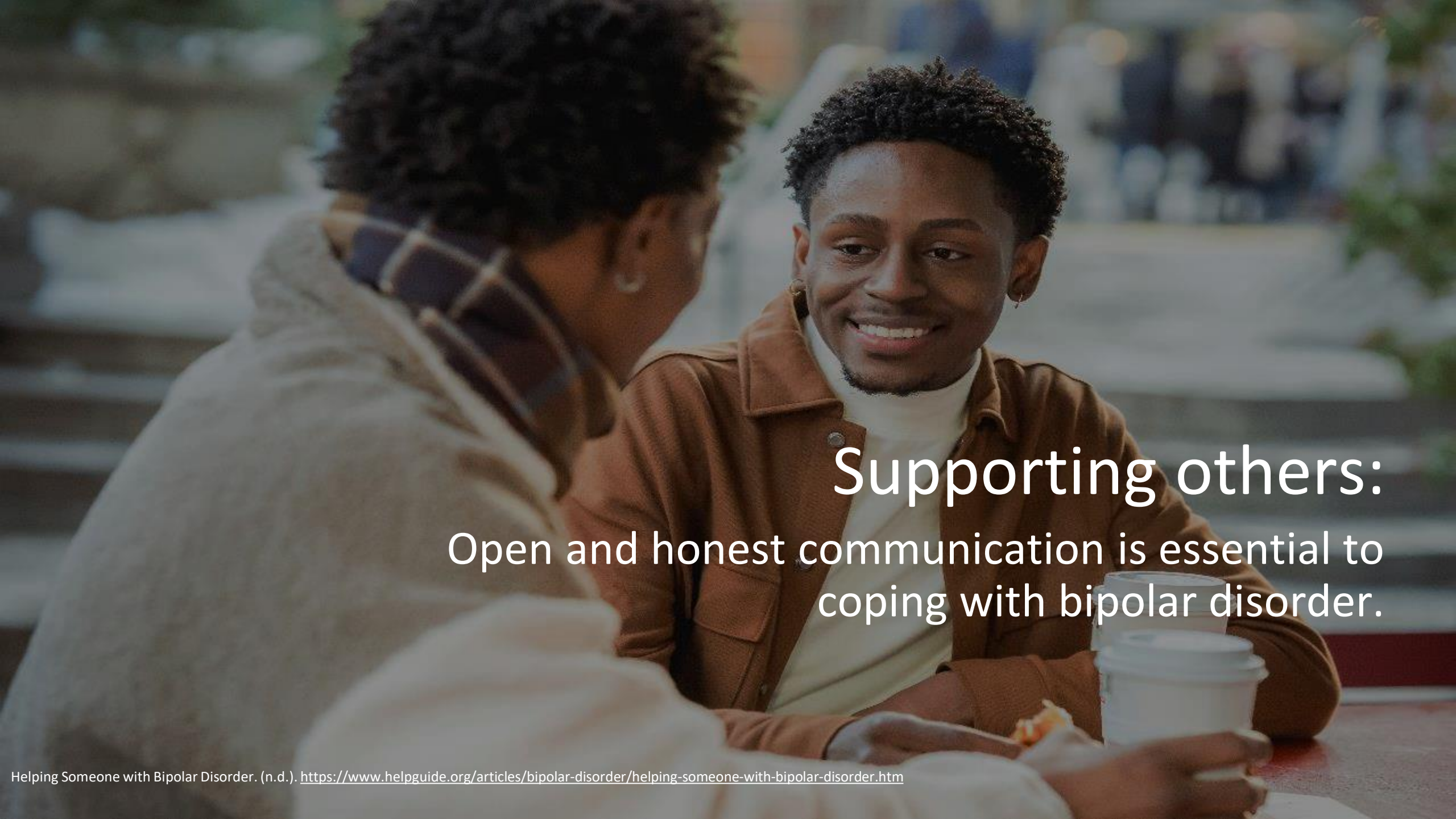
Supporting others:

Accept your own limits. You can't rescue your loved one with bipolar disorder, and you can't force them to take responsibility for getting better.

A man with a beard and a woman with long blonde hair are in a kitchen. The man is holding a black cutting board and a wooden-handled knife, and the woman is holding a red lid. They are both smiling and looking at each other. In the background, there are white cabinets, a window with a view of a house, and a red pot on a shelf. In the foreground, there is a red pot on the stove, a silver pot, and some vegetables like a red pepper and an avocado.

Supporting others:

Stress makes bipolar disorder worse, so try to find ways to reduce stress in your loved one's life.



Supporting others:

Open and honest communication is essential to coping with bipolar disorder.

SATISFACTION POLL

Your feedback helps us to gauge our strengths and identify areas for improvement. Please reflect on your experiences in this seminar and give an honest appraisal.

Your feedback is anonymous and confidential



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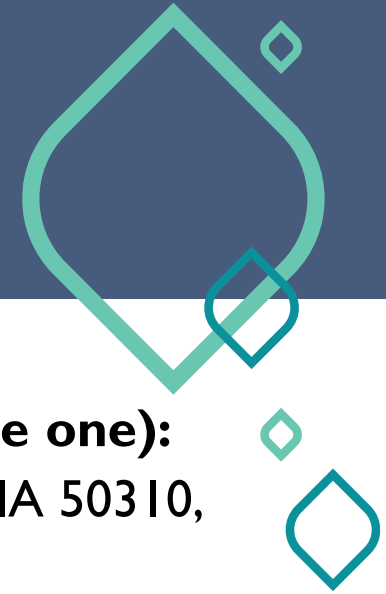


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Upcoming Training:



NEXT

HCBS Cost Reporting

June 15, 2023 | 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM | Attend in person or virtually (Choose one):

[In Person Registration](#) at Polk County River Place, 2309 Euclid Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50310, Conference Room I (In-person attendance is encouraged) or

[Virtual Registration](#) through Zoom

■ **Presenters:** Laura Parker, CPA, CFE, Myers and Stauffer LC Senior Manager and Stacy Fenton, Myers and Stauffer LC Manager

■ **Intended Audience:** Individuals who prepare HCBS Waiver cost reports or answer questions about cost reports for HCBS Waiver agencies who submit an annual HCBS Cost report because they provide services that require cost reporting.

See more at [Competency-Based Training and Technical Assistance for Long-Term Services and Supports | Iowa Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Additional Upcoming Topics



Cultural Wellness Perspectives on Mental Health and Disability: Supporting Immigrants and Refugees in Iowa

June 19, 2023 | 10:00AM – 12:00PM | Attend in person or virtually - Choose one:

[In Person Registration](#) at Polk County River Place, 2309 Euclid Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50310, Conference Room One or [Virtual Registration](#) through Zoom

What do all these terms mean? A Look into the Language of the LGBTQIA2S+ Community

June 20, 2023 | 9:00AM – 10:00AM | [Virtual Registration](#) through Zoom

A Life in the Community: The Goals of Olmstead

August 15, 2023 | 10:00AM – 11:30AM | [Virtual Registration](#) through Zoom

Understanding Rights and Restrictions

August 2023 | Time TBD | Registration Coming Soon