

Giving a try to "what he/she was might have been going through"... and at the same time, may have been a profoundly different experience... I am so sorry for what you all went through.

This has always been hard. This has never really made sense. One moment all would be well and people would be accepting, embracing, supportive. They'd say something. Maybe I'd say something. And the next moment, they'd look at me funny, I'd feel alone, weird, scared. It would happen so fast. And so I would try to not feel that, because it didn't make sense, because that was just such a dark place, full of so many scary feelings, full of such pain with no relief - a place that takes forever to get out of. But not feeling - well, not feeling is hard too. Then I'd do things that didn't always make sense to anyone else, just to get distracted, just so I wouldn't feel, and I'd find myself in a worse place - not feeling, except feeling worse. The nightmare kept closing in. No escape. Those people closest to me, people I love, even they couldn't understand. It seems that life was easy for them, that I just couldn't make them feel what I was going through, that they had the answers - except I couldn't hear them, I couldn't do it. It made them so upset, I made them so sad, and I loved them so much... So I kept up a good front, I smiled for them, smiled with them, felt empty inside. It is just so hard, at times I just knew it was insurmountable. That it might never stop. It is so much pain... It is so easy to lose sight of the hope.

BPD is a series of experiences that involve having more emotions than the average person. It's not just that we are more sensitive, but that our emotions are actually incredibly painful and last a really long time! On top of that, the world, because it often doesn't understand the nature of emotional pain, tries to tell us that our emotions aren't real, aren't realistic, and shouldn't be the way they are. So we spend much of our lives trying to live down our emotional experiences, shut them off, ignore them or banish them from existence. This of course just makes the situation worse. The good news is that one smart, brave, kind and generous woman, Dr. Marsha Linehan, figured out what was happening to her and all of us with similar experiences, and found a path to recovery. As for a severely burned child, the road is long and difficult. But long before the end is reached, a new way of life is discovered-- involving the understanding, and the cessation, of suffering. Also like a severe burn, at times there is just too much damage to the body for some people to ultimately recover from. Even with all her skill, Marsha herself has met people who were not ultimately able to recover, despite their best efforts. And we know they were doing their best at all times! What this means is that, in addition to helping those who have been burned, we also need to work twice as hard to prevent the injuries in the first place. And thankfully, in our work with teens and families, we have seen courses diverted that most certainly would have ended in needless pain. There is no doubt whatsoever that what we have learned in the past 20 years has changed our view of severe emotional suffering, and thereby changed the world. Can you just imagine what the next 20 years will bring?