

“Once you get to know people in the therapy group, you realise you all have similar problems and you don’t feel so alone.”

“Sometimes I wonder why I come to this group, but then I realise it is helping. My life is changing for the better.”

Oxford Health   
NHS Foundation Trust



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**What is a  
Personality  
Disorder?**



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## *What are Personality Disorders?*

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Everybody has some patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving that cause difficulties for them in relationships, behaviour and mood.

People with personality disorders have extreme difficulties of this sort.

### **Common features can be:**

- Lacking trust
- Low mood/mood swings
- Feeling stuck
- Feeling alienated and ashamed
- Not knowing who you are
- Isolated with no friends
- Low self esteem/loss of confidence
- Feeling suicidal
- Striving for perfection
- Needing support and reassurance

## *What causes Personality Disorders?*

People develop personality disorder through a range of experiences that include:

Physical and emotional neglect in childhood

Emotional, physical and sexual abuse in childhood

Disrupted and/or unsupportive family life

Trauma

Bereavement in childhood

### *What they are not!*

It does not mean that you are crazy or mad

It does not mean that you are going to be locked up

It does not mean that you are an attention seeker

It does not mean that there is no hope

## *What can help!*

Begin to:

- Think about and monitor thoughts, feelings and behaviour
- Be honest about oneself, problems and imperfections
- Accept responsibility for solving problems even if you did not cause them
- Seek acceptance from family and friends
- Be taken seriously
- Acknowledge personal strengths
- Be open to change and staying motivated

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