Personality Disorder in Older Adults

A Brief Overview

Developed by: The BSO Knowledge to Practice Community of Practice
Released: May 2024

Behavioural Supports Ontario
Soutien en cas de troubles du comportement en Ontario

What is Personality Disorder?

- A mental health condition where a person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours deviate significantly from cultural expectations

- Personality disorders reflect long-term, learned patterns of behaviour and functioning that affect at least two of the following areas:
  - Way of thinking about oneself
  - Way of responding emotionally
  - Way of relating to other people
  - Way of controlling one's behaviour

- As a result, people living with personality disorder often struggle to maintain healthy relationships because of interaction patterns that create tension

See information booklet at www.brainxchange.ca/BSOPDCBPackage for more information!

Impacts of Living in Care Settings & Requiring Care

Essential Care & Communication Strategies

Common Behaviour Patterns in Care Settings

- Intense or excessive requests for help

- Help-rejecting behaviour

- Difficulty accepting professional boundaries

- Antagonistic interactions with team members

- Suspicious/mistrusting of team members

- Dependence on team members for decision-making

- Behaviours that pose physical risk to others

- Team Splitting

Understanding Team Splitting

Preventing Team Splitting

open team communication

consistent team approach

self-care

set and maintain healthy boundaries

The person classifies team members as "good" or "bad"

The person interacts with team members according to how they have been classified (e.g. pleasant toward the "good" and unpleasant toward the "bad")
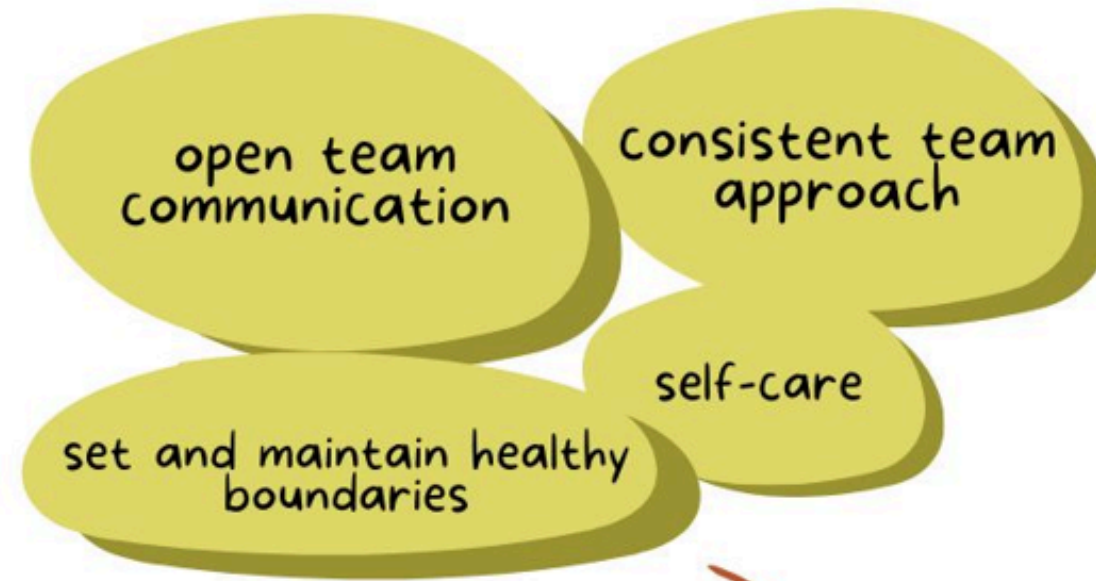
Team members' responses are influenced by how they are treated and team members experience the person very differently

TEAM SPLITTING
Opposing impressions of the person
Team members are divided by disagreements in relation to the care of the person

See tip sheet for more information!

Comprehensive Behavioural Assessment

Communication Strategies in Difficult Moments

AVOID

A void Controlling Language and Power Struggles

Accommodating **V** arious/multiple Requests

O ffering Too Many Choices

I nternalizing Negative Criticism

D eveloping a Special Bond

Instead, Try this

- ✓ Communicate using neutral and objective observations. Use a calm tone and relaxed and open body language.

- ✓ Remind the person of the agreed-upon limits.

- ✓ Stick to the routine and offer fair and sustainable choices.

- ✓ Reflect on positive feedback you have received from others.

- ✓ Work as a team and remember your professional boundaries. Avoid personal disclosures.

See tip sheet for more information!

5 Steps to Set Healthy Boundaries

A healthy boundary is not an ultimatum for the person, but rather involves establishing limits that include offering choices with consequences. Boundaries can include physical, emotional and task-related limit setting.
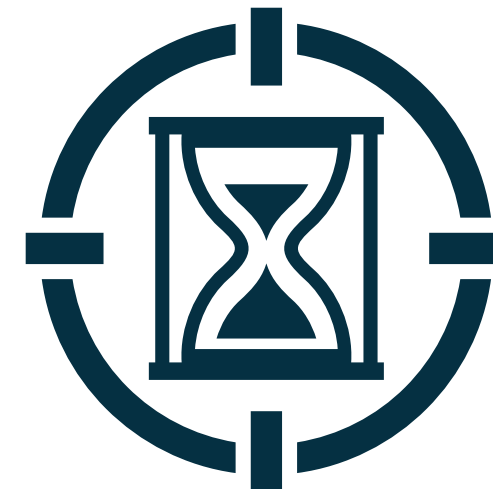
1

Stop

2

Assess/Reflect

3

Validate

4

Establish a Healthy Boundary

5

Follow Through to Build Trust

See tip sheet for more information!

Setting Healthy Boundaries

Examples of starter phrases to set healthy limits:

- You can _____ when you _____.
- First _____, then _____.
- When _____, then _____.
- If _____, then _____ (positive).
- Would you like to _____ or _____?
- You can either do _____ or _____.
- Do you want to _____ now or in five minutes?
- I'll help you as soon as you _____ (e.g. stop yelling).
- I'll be able to listen as soon as your voice is as calm as mine.
- I'll be glad to discuss this when _____.
- I'll be happy to discuss this with you as soon as the arguing stops.

When ...
then ...

Common Responses From Team Members

Feeling Judged

Tension with Others

Frustration

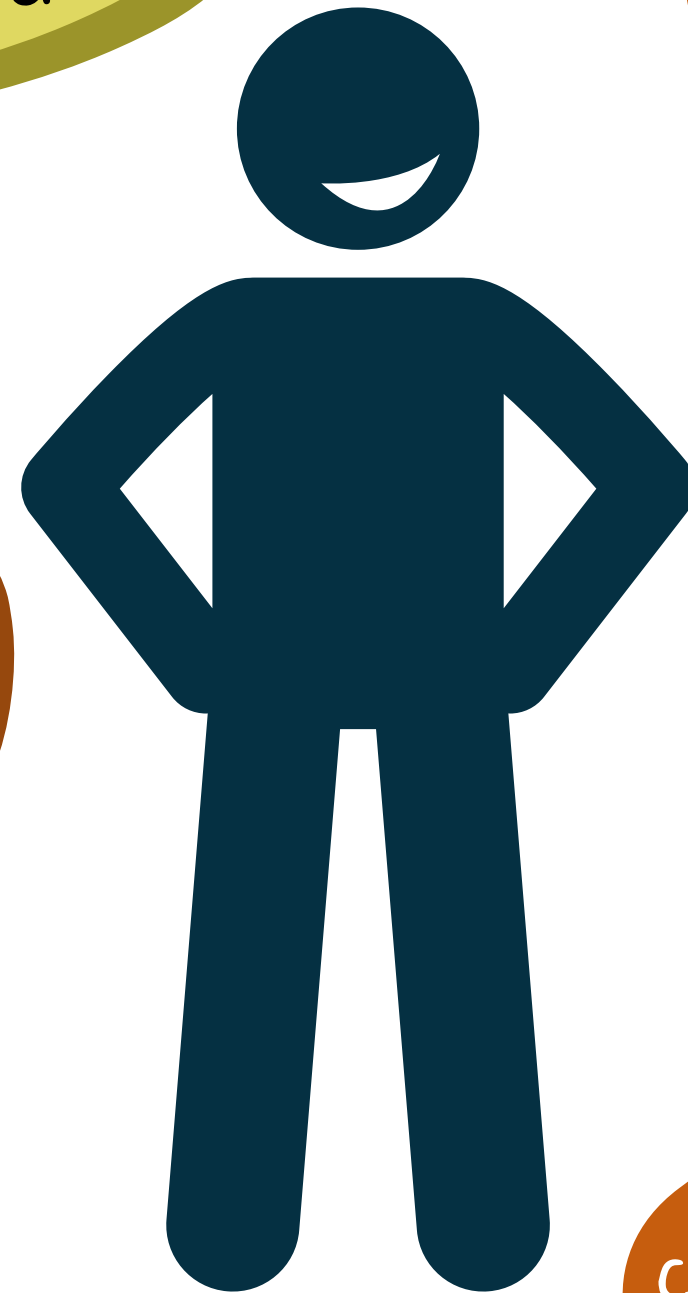Guilt

Fearful

Exhausted

Angry

Avoiding the Individual

Powerlessness

Helplessness

Recap of Successful Strategies

Avoid internalizing negative criticism

Learn about personality disorder

Maintain professional boundaries

Include the person in care plannning

Use self-care strategies

Support each other as a team!

Set clear & realistic expectations

Set healthy boundaries

Regular team communication

Team-wide consistency in care strategies
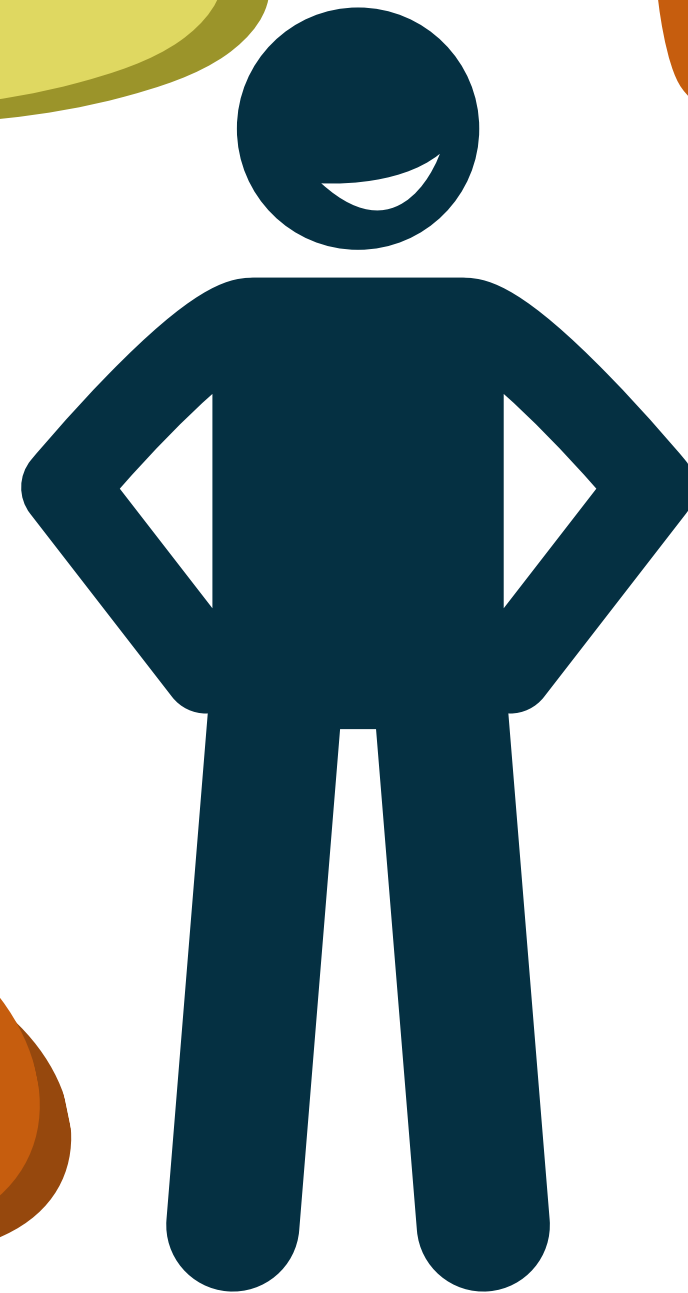
Self-Care Strategies for Team Members

Reflection & Application

From the strategies discussed today:

1. What is one 'take-away' that you plan to put into practice **when caring for individuals living with personality disorder**?

2. What is one 'take-away' that you plan to put into practice that will **support you and your team** as you care for individuals living with personality disorder?

Want to learn more?

Visit **www.brainxchange.ca/BSOPDCBPackage**

for more resources, including:

- Personality Disorder in Older Adults Tip Sheets:

    1) Essential Care and Communication Strategies

    2) Communication Strategies to AVOID and to Try in Difficult Moments

    3) Setting Healthy Boundaries

    4) Preventing Team Splitting

    5) Myths vs. Facts

- Information Booklet:

    ○ Personality Disorder in Older Adults: Understanding the Person, Building Skillful Approaches and Fostering Wellness in Care Teams

Full references for the information presented is available within the information booklet

Wrap Up

We want to hear from you!

✉ **BSO Provincial Coordinating Office**
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brainxchange.ca/BSO
✕ @BSOprovOffice

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Thank you!