

Bipolar Disorder: The Ultimate Guide-A Review

Simran Sharma*

**St. Xavier's College, Ahmedabad, India.*

Received February 20, 2020; Revised March 14, 2020; Accepted March 16, 2020

ABSTRACT

'Bipolar Disorder – The Ultimate Guide' is a book focussing on different dimensions of the disorder. It is written by Sarah Owens, and Amanda Saunders who are first cousins and four of their family members have been diagnosed by Bipolar. The book is a result of extensive research about the disorder and several interviews conducted with experts in the field such as psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, community workers, professors, researchers, and more. The patients and their caregivers were also interviewed to collect personal experiences and anecdotes for the book. 'Bipolar Disorder – The Ultimate Guide' is a book with a holistic approach and includes topics like symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, support, medication, various therapies, and hospital care. The book can be considered a comprehensive guide for anyone who wants to have a grounded understanding of the disorder. It is written in a question-answer format and has been divided into six sections. Each of these sections is focussed on different aspects of the disorder which affects the people diagnosed with bipolar. The chapters in the book are Causes, Symptoms, and Diagnosis; Treatment; Support; Hospital care; Lifestyle Choices and Living with Bipolar. Each section digs more profoundly on the theme of the chapter and answers several questions about the same. With an elaborate discussion of the six major dimensions of the disorder, the readers take away an in-depth understanding of the disorder by the end of the book. The book is indeed 'ultimate guide' about the disorder and is highly recommended to the professionals, social workers, patients, and caregivers affected by the disorder.

Keywords: Bipolar disorder, Lifestyle choices for bipolar, Hospital care, Bipolar symptoms

REVIEW

According to National Alliance of Mental Health [1], 2.8% of the US population is affected by bipolar disorder and 83% of these cases are considered severe. The World health organization has identified bipolar disorder as one of the top causes of lost years of life and health in 15-44 years old, ranking above war, violence, and schizophrenia [2]. The severity of the disorder and its effects on the normalcy of the life of the people affected by it highlights the need for awareness programs, patient support programs, and other measures.

The book 'Bipolar Disorder – The Ultimate Guide' bridges the gap between the disparity of the patients and awareness about the disorder. The book is set on specific values, principles, rights of the patients, the need to keep desensitization of the disorder at the centre of the awareness programs in practice for bipolar disorder. The book serves as a comprehensive guide for the disorder.

The authors of the book Sarah Owens and Amanda Saunders are first cousins. Four members in their close family have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Sarah Owens started

her career in journalism in 1994 at Cosmopolitan magazine. She eventually went on to freelance with several reputed publications such as the Express Daily Mail, Sunday Times, Marie Claire, and Psychologies. Sarah has been involved in making online content and designing patient support programs for people with long term health conditions.

Amanda Saunders has been working as a writer, editor, and senior communication professional for almost thirty years. Her experience includes writing for the National Childbirth Trust and being the head of internal communications at the London School of Economics. Recently, she has been appointed as the deputy director of communications at the House of Commons. This is a non-political role.

Corresponding author: Simran Sharma, Akshar Plaza, Near Swaminarayan temple, Opp Sarita Sagar Sankul Trust, Surat, Gujarat, India, Tel: +91-7045715981, +98160177364; E-mail: simransharma98.ss@gmail.com

Citation: Sharma S. (2022) Bipolar Disorder: The Ultimate Guide-A Review. J Psychiatry Psychol Res, 5(1): 275-277.

Copyright: ©2022 Sharma S. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

The book identifies several issues that fall under different competencies about the disorder. The problems highlighted in the book include causes, symptoms, diagnosis, medication, therapy, hospital care, and several others. Additionally, the book also focusses on the legal aspects of the disorder. Several helpline numbers and additional resources are also included in the book for their readers.

The authors have also focused on the less-recognized symptoms of the disorder. They have highlighted the uncommon and unofficial symptoms of bipolar disorder. These symptoms are often observed in the people affected by the disorder but haven't yet made a place in the DSM-5. According to the US National Co-Morbidity Survey, 31-42% of those with bipolar suffer from anxiety disorders – an umbrella term used to encompass a wide range of symptoms including excessive worrying, paranoia, a racing heartbeat, feelings of dread and fear, sweating, shaking, breathing difficulties, and obsessive tendencies, such as collecting objects, repetitive actions, and an inability the house without making endless safety checks [2]. Some other unofficial symptoms of bipolar disorder include low self-esteem, libido problems, and self-harm.

The book is easy to read guide about bipolar disorder. It also includes the personal experiences of several patients and caregivers who were interviewed by the authors during the research carried out for writing the book. These quotes add emotional value to the information discussed in the book. It is written in a question-answer format and has been divided into six sections. Each of these sections is focused on different aspects of the disorder which affects the people diagnosed with bipolar. The chapters in the book are Causes, Symptoms, and Diagnosis; Treatment; Support; Hospital care; Lifestyle Choices; and Living with Bipolar. The book brings out several fundamental theories and research results throughout the six sections in a comprehensive manner.

The first chapter 'Causes, Symptoms, and Diagnosis' aims to educate the readers about the symptoms of the disorder and understand the causes of the same. This section of the book includes an introduction to bipolar disorder and its different types namely Bipolar I, II, and III. The chapter also answers why the American Psychiatric Association renamed manic depression to bipolar disorder in 1980. It also defines and explains depression, hypomania, manic episode, psychosis, and mixed state. It elaborates on the symptoms of bipolar disorder and how the diagnosis affects the person diagnosed with it and their caregivers does.

'Treatment' - the second chapter of the book highlights the effectiveness of different treatment measures used to control the symptoms of bipolar disorder. It also emphasizes the official treatment guidelines for bipolar. Several therapies and treatments are discussed in detail such as cognitive behavioral therapy, psychological treatment, drugs, antidepressants, electroconvulsive therapy, transcranial magnetic stimulation, and others. It focusses on the best

combination of these and the future of the people affected with the disorder.

The next chapter - 'Support,' focusses on the support needed by the patients and emphasizes the enormous effect positive support can have on the improvement and control of the symptoms of a person. It talks about the support professionals such as general practitioners, psychiatrists, psychologists, community psychiatric nurses, and the crisis resolution team can provide to the patients. This section also elaborates on the role of family and friends in the same. The purpose of legal professionals like advocates and charities is also discussed in this section

The fourth chapter - 'Hospital Care,' talks about the various aspects of hospitalization during a manic episode of the patient. This chapter answers 12 questions about psychiatric hospitals and hospital care. This section aims at educating the readers about sectioning procedures, types of sections, 'informal' patients, nearest relative, and others. It also focusses on the patient's rights when they are sectioned and discusses the pros and cons of being treated in a psychiatric hospital.

The next chapter - 'Lifestyle Choices,' highlights healthy lifestyle choices which can reduce the chances of relapse into a manic episode. It emphasizes the healthy lifestyle choices which can prevent extreme mood swings even when a person has a predisposition to bipolar disorder. This section focusses on the benefits of regular sleep patterns, a healthy diet, and complementary therapies. It also discusses mind meal and nutritional supplements which can minimize the symptoms of bipolar disorder. 'Lifestyle Choices' also discusses the effect of nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, and smoking on the severity of the symptoms of the disorder.

The last chapter - 'Living with Bipolar,' talks about the life one lives with bipolar. Section focusses on the different aspects of life that are affected by bipolar. These aspects include employment and the relations with one's employer, lasting power of attorney, driving, and an approach towards pregnancy. It also answers an important question – how to explain a child about their parent's mental condition. This chapter also addresses the stigma around the disorder and what the future holds for the patients of the same.

The book ends with a long list of extra resources, which includes several helplines and charities that help people with bipolar disorder. These resources are followed by a list of recommended reading by the authors which can help the readers have a grounded understanding of the bipolar disorder. The recommended reading is supporting by 'Glossary' which has the definitions of all the technical terminologies used throughout the book. This makes it easier for the audience who do not have psychology or medical background to understand the disorder and all its aspects.

'Bipolar Disorder - The Ultimate Guide' is right to its title and has proved to be the ultimate guide for anyone who

wants to understand bipolar. This book can profoundly help a patient and their loved ones to identify their symptoms and seek help for the same. It gives a holistic understanding of the disorder and several treatment measures. It helps us identify, clarify, and reflect upon the several aspects of life that are affected by the disorder and directs us to find a way to deal with them. This book is not the usual problem-solution guide, but it also addresses the emotional strain and the stigma that is faced by the patient and their caregivers. The quotes from the personal experiences of the interviewees in the book bring the first-hand experiences of both the patients and their caregivers to the readers. This book is recommended not only to the patients and their caregivers but also to the professionals who work with these patients to have a more in-depth look into the lives of the patients.

REFERENCES

1. National Alliance of Mental Health (2017) Bipolar Disorder.
2. Owen S, Saunders A (2019) Bipolar Disorder - The Ultimate Guide. London: OneWorld Publications.