

# Why are Borderlines so Sexual?

The Why's of Sex, Promiscuity, and Borderline Personality Disorder  
July 19, 2011: By Haven at [beyondtheborderlinepersonalitydisorder](http://beyondtheborderlinepersonalitydisorder)

Why are you so sexual my dear Borderline? That's a good question isn't it? One that does not come with a quick answer. This is a first. I've found almost no information on why sex seems to be such a prominent feature of Borderline Personality Disorder. What I have found has been only a paragraph or a sentence here or there. So let's look at what I've found, what I feel, and what some of my own theories are.

One of the more obvious theories as to why people with BPD have such reckless sex lives is the fact that they constantly feel emotional emptiness. "Even when they find a stable emotional relationship their fear of abandonment causes them to become paranoid about the stability of their relationship and the validity of the love coming from their partner. A possibility for the reasoning behind sex and borderline personality disorder is that the sufferer of BPD actually tries to self-sabotage their relationship in order to end the relationship before they are actually abandoned by their partner. Another theory as to reckless sex and borderline personality disorder is that the BPD sufferer actually gets an emotional high from bonding with the sexual partner even if only for a short time. They are literally trying to fill in emptiness inside themselves and they try and try to fill that void with sex. After having a sexual affair the person with borderline personality disorder may not have the same amount of guilt as someone with non-BPD. The reason is projection; oftentimes people with borderline personality disorder project their negative behaviors onto others including their partners. This means that someone with borderline personality disorder who is having a reckless sexual affair may have a tendency to build a fake affair that their spouse or loved one is having in their head. They literally make themselves believe that their partner is also cheating and that they are therefore justified in having their reckless sexual affair."

A previous article I mentioned notes that there may be a number of reasons for the more negative attitudes about sex. "First, many women with BPD are survivors of child abuse, which may contribute to overall negative reactions to adult sexual experiences. Also, women with BPD are more likely to experience a great deal of conflict in their relationships, so they may feel less positive about sex because relationships in general feel less fulfilling."

Having these negative attitudes doesn't however, justify why we may still have an attitude directed towards reckless sex. I would take this from a different angle and say that perhaps due to previous abuse there is a subconscious need for approval where it was not given, withheld, or used against us. Overt sexual behavior may be a way of taking back control, exerting control in the present where control was once absent.

Also, knowing that we have the ability to interest and consume someone with our sexuality or ability to seduce them is a form of validation of our own self-worth. Those are my thoughts currently. I'm sure I'd have more but I'm utterly brain fried from today and yesterday at work. I'll be sure to post more on this if the thoughts should arise.

So there's that. To fill an emotional emptiness with a physical, well, I don't have an argument for this. I also believe that when it comes to sex, people with BPD are more likely to be sexually open and adventurous. We can be virtually uninhibited. Or exactly the opposite. I've noticed a trend towards the extremes. Either we're all or nothing. So you may have borderlines like myself that are ALL for sex or those that have severe issues from resultant traumatic experiences and avoid it whenever possible.

Another theory comes from Thomas R. Lynch, a psychologist at Duke University. He and his colleagues found a clue in the reading of facial expressions. "The researchers asked 20 adults with BPD and 20 mentally healthy people to watch a computer-generated face change from neutral to emotional. They told subjects to stop the changing image the moment they had identified the emotion. On average, the people with BPD correctly recognized both the unpleasant expressions and the happy faces at a much earlier stage than the other participants did. The results suggest that BPD patients are hyperaware of even subtly emotive faces—problematic in people who are intensely reactive to other people's moods. So, for example, a hint of boredom or annoyance on a person's face that most people would not notice might produce anger or fears of abandonment in a person with BPD. Conversely, someone with BPD might see a happy expression as a sign of love and react with inappropriate passion, leading to the whirlwind, stormy romances that rock the lives of people with BPD."

I've talked about hypersensitivity before. It's very easy to read too much into what we see in someone else and I do think this theory has some validity, but I don't think it's substantial all on its own. This may be a contributing factor but not the main reason.

I've said before that I use sex as a means to be close, but not too close. It's comforting. It allows that very real, very human connection that makes me feel less hollow and alone, while maintaining my safeguards. I've been so hurt and traumatized due to past abuse and experiences that while some part of me does need this closeness, at the same time I do not trust it. There's something more personal about letting someone into my mind, than into my body. If I can distract them with my body, they'll have proven themselves not trustworthy enough to get into my mind, but at the same time, I have someone near. I'll have validated my own paranoia and satisfied my need to not be alone. How's that for messed up. When I'm alone I feel empty. Sex is one of those ultimate expressions of being not alone. Having your life literally intertwined in the arms and legs of another, it's an encompassing experience, without being completely consumed. There's the ability to maintain a distance while holding someone close. Or maybe there's some overdeveloped primitive instinct that if we find a partner, let them into our lives in such a way, we will develop a bond. And from there maybe a lasting one. The more partners, the greater the likelihood of this happening.

<https://beyondtheborderlinepersonality.wordpress.com/category/promiscuity/>