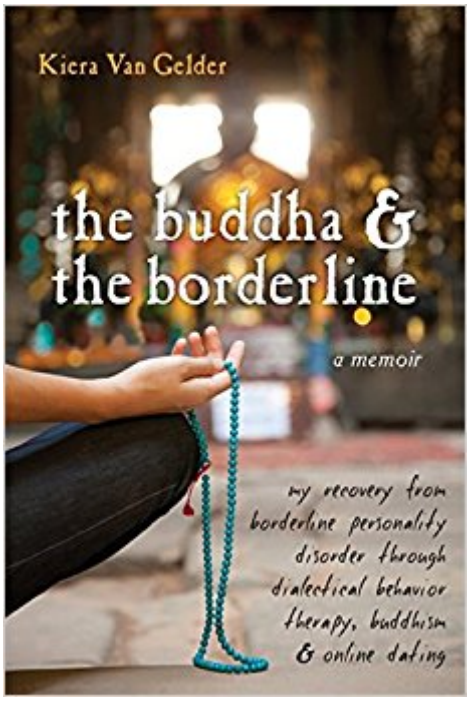
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The Buddha And The Borderline: My Recovery From Borderline Personality Disorder Through Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Buddhism, And Online Dating



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Synopsis

Kiera Van Gelder’s first suicide attempt at the age of twelve marked the onset of her struggles with drug addiction, depression, post-traumatic stress, self-harm, and chaotic romantic relationships-all of which eventually led to doctors’ belated diagnosis of borderline personality disorder twenty years later. The Buddha and the Borderline is a window into this mysterious and debilitating condition, an unblinking portrayal of one woman’s fight against the emotional devastation of borderline personality disorder. This haunting, intimate memoir chronicles both the devastating period that led to Kiera’s eventual diagnosis and her inspirational recovery through therapy, Buddhist spirituality, and a few online dates gone wrong. Kiera’s story sheds light on the private struggle to transform suffering into compassion for herself and others, and is essential reading for all seeking to understand what it truly means to recover and reclaim the desire to live.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Discovering the enlightenment of Buddhism comes pretty late in this shaky, ultimately triumphant account of coping with an elusive mental disorder. Van Gelder had been plagued by suicidal tendencies, drug addiction, chronic instability, feelings of entrapment, and mood swings since she was a young teen growing up in Concord, Mass.. Although off drugs for more than 10 years and a veteran of therapy and hospitals, Van Gelder was only diagnosed with borderline personality disorder (BPD) when she was 30 and seesawing wildly in a relationship. Finally putting a diagnosis to her illness was "like a religious conversion," and she instantly delved into the literature and treatment, including a rigorous multistage process of dialectal behavior therapy, conducted in

groups. The first half of this densely detailed memoir chronicles the authorÃ¢â Â¢s continued yo-yoing into self-destructive behavior and hospitalization; eventually, with intensive BPD treatment zoning in on her six-year-old self molested by a babysitter, she moves through issues of trauma and vulnerability to a desperate need for validation from her parents, divorced early on and in deep denial about her psychic neediness. Studying Tibetan Buddhism confirmed her desire to embrace a nurturing community of compassionate seekers away from hospitals and diagnoses, well documented in this useful work. Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"The Buddha and the Borderline is a cross between Girl, Interrupted and Bridget JonesÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Diary.While reading it, I found myself admiring KieraÃ¢â ¬â„¢s talent for vividly describing borderline hopelessness and pain while keeping me laughing with her tales of life as a Ã¢â ¬Ëœlonely and increasingly horny receptionist.Ã¢â ¬â„¢ While this book has something for everyone, KieraÃ¢â ¬â„¢s detailed account of how she recovered from this deadly disorder will be enormously inspiring to people with borderline personality disorder and their family members." Ã¢â ¬â •Randi Kreger, author of Stop Walking on Eggshells and The Stop Walking on Eggshells Workbook"With wit, clarity, and candor bout her sex life, Kiera chronicles her coping with the pain and emptiness of borderline personality disorder while proving that the road to recovery is usually under construction." Ã¢â ¬â •Jim Payne, board member of the National Alliance on Mental Illness"Kiera creates a window into the soul of one coming to grips with severe mental illness. Fully exposed, she shows us the pain, pleasure, and finally, the redemption of the borderlineexperience. Her gripping story sheds new light upon one of the most misunderstood and stigmatized of all human conditions, and for that, I am deeply grateful. Her words will quite possibly be shocking to some, but will validate and comfort those with the disorder and those who are tryingto understand them. Welcome to our world: the pain, shame, and pleasure, and then, finally, the insight and skill-building that leads to healing, love, and happiness. Kiera captures the experience brilliantly." Ã¢â ¬â •Tami Green, internationally recognized speaker, life coach and advocate for those in recovery from mental illness"The Buddha and the Borderline is a strikingly candid and comprehensive account of the authorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s personal experiences of the effects of borderline personality disorder spanning more than two decades. Van Gelder is a very well informed, engaging, and talented writer. She reveals the multiple and complex symptoms of borderline disorder as manifested in her life with great honesty,revealing the devastating pain with moving and insightful vignettes that are tempered on occasion with a finely tuned sense of humor. This is a

must-read for people with this disorder, their families and loved ones, and mental health professionals." Ã¢â ¬â •Robert O. Friede, MD, author of Borderline Personality Disorder Demystified"The Buddha and the Borderline is a masterpiece. Kiera shares her road to recovery in a captivating way that brings a unique understanding to a confusing, challenging, and controversial disorder. Having the privilege to personally know Kiera, I applaud her on so many levels, least of all this must-read book. She is an inspiration to all who strive and hope for recovery from borderline personality disorder." Ã¢â ¬â •Perry D. Hoffman Ph.D., president of the National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder (NEA-BPD)"KieraÃ¢â ¬â„¢s book is destind to become a classic in the growing literature on borderline personality disorder. I expected to get a somber account of a transformation from suffering to enlightenment,but the book I read was not only entirely entertaining and revealing, but also had me up way past my bedtime in stitches. The Buddha and the Borderline is seriously funny, authentic, and sublime in its wisdom. The book embodies the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism and integrates the world of core unrelenting suffering with the world of freedom from suffering. Transcendent stuff." Ã¢â ¬â •Blaise Aguirre,MD, medical director of the Adolescent Dialectical Behavior Therapy Residential Program at McLean Hospital in Belmont, MA"The Buddha and the Borderline is a gripping, authentic, and ultimately inspiring portrayal of one womanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s triumph over borderline personality disorder. An intriguing, riveting, and compelling read, the depth and complexity of both character and story are to be savored. Kiera Van Gelder has shared the private depths of her heart and soul and, in doing so, has bestowed upon the reader a great and sacred gift." Ã¢â ¬â •Roy Krawitz, author of Borderline Personality Disorder: The Facts"A very educational and insightful look into the inner world of borderline personality disorder and its treatment. Kiera Van GelderÃ¢â ¬â„¢s witty tone and engaging journey brilliantly chronicles the dialectic of profound suffering and how that suffering can be transformed into a life worth living." Ã¢â ¬â •A.J. Mahari, author of Life Coach and Mental Health Coach"The Buddha and the Borderline by Kiera Van Gelder is captivating, literary, and insightful. Van GelderÃ¢â ¬â„¢s use of metaphor enhances the haunting nature of her journey through life. As I read the book, I recognized her pain, and cheered her on. Her insights led me to a better understanding of myself and the nature of borderline personality disorder." Ã¢â ¬â •Lisa Dietz, owner of www.DBTSelfHelp.com"Out of a profoundly painful experience, Kiera Van Gelder has written a brave and hopeful book exploring her recovery from borderline personality disorder. Kiera’s story will undoubtedly touch countless lives and be a source of inspiration to those who have been diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, their families, and the mental health professionals who play a crucial role in the complex nexus of education, treatment, and support. The Buddha and the Borderline is a compelling and

invaluable narrative for anyone wanting to learn more about the difficult, yet ultimately rewarding, process of recovery." Ã¢â ¬â •Amanda L. Smith, Florida Borderline Personality Disorder Association

This is by far my favorite book on recovering from Borderline Personality Disorder. Dialectical Behavior Therapy is my saving grace. This book gives hope when I had none. Kiera Van Gelder is such an inspiration. There's a video on YouTube titled, Back from the Edge. Kiera Van Gelder is interviewed. It also has the woman who created DBT, Marsha Linehan.This book was so helpful. A lot of the time I feel alone, or like I am the only one like this. I could relate so well with her story that it let me know, I am not alone!

As a parent of a young adult with BPD, I found this very helpful and encouraging. It was also an engaging read, which is more than I can say about most of the books on the subject. Now if I can only decide whether or not to have my BPD child read it. The chameleon tendencies of those with BPD may lead to them actually trying some of the destructive behaviors the author experienced on her journey. Argh!

Over the past week every moment I could find I would pick up this book to learn more and more. I bought the book after a woman in my Single Mom's Group recommended it to understand what she was going through with her daughter. After I started to read it I knew it was for much bigger reasons. I have had several clients over the years that suffer from anxiety, depression, cutting, suicide attempts eating disorders- you name it.I am so grateful that Kiera put herself out there and pushed her way to wellness. I am so inspired by her story. Is there a follow up?Well done Kiera- you wrote a life changing book. You give hope to people with BPD, families or BPD and insight to therapists/coaches!

This book was initially among course requiements for my MS degree in Mental Health, and boy am I happy I discovered it. As a mental health professional, understanding BPD made the DSM a small child in describing the condition compared to the actual reality of it. By the end of the book, not only did I feel like I understood Kiera and BPD, but also even got to love her for who she described herself to be! Therefore, as a person, on the other hand, I felt grateful to be allowed insight into such a real life struggle and life lesson - labels aside, human experience doesn't come with a training manual upon birth, so sometimes we have to look to others and their experiences and learn from

their struggles, as a way of honoring them and ourselves. What an amazing book!

the book quality including paper quality of the pages was superior, this book was entertaining in terms of being honest about what the author went through with this disorder, getting into and having trouble leaving relationships that were not helping her move forward-the clinging and attachment that is harder for people with this disorder-the traits are perhaps extremes of the very understandable suffering that we all face as humans, and the quest to grow up and out of behavior patterns that are counterproductive-this was also a nice introduction to DBT which even as a trained counselor I was not familiar with-thanks Kiera for sharing your story with the world. Your story reminds me that with vision and motivation we can all climb out of our holes no matter who/what contributed to falling in the first place. Bravo to you.

The Horror of Borderline Personality DisorderIf you're like most, you probably had not even heard of "Borderline Personality Disorder" until you came into face-to-face contact with it, and only came to understand it after watching its hellish, devastating effects in action on a friend or loved one.Anyone that has been in close proximity to someone afflicted with this devastating disorder knows just how incredibly frustrating it can be -- to feel engaged in a constant "push and pull" type psychodrama that can bring about "compassion fatigue" in even the most saintly person. You probably will never forget that first moment that you read the characteristics of Borderline Personality Disorder and it all "clicked" for you: the moment when you tied together all of the classic BPD loose ends: the abusive upbringing often marked by extreme physical and sexual abuse, the alcoholic father, the angry mother, the broken home -- an existence marked by never-ending torment growing up -- finally culminating in the incredible sadness knowing that you can do little to help that person. You undoubtedly felt completely and totally powerless as you tried to reach out only to have her push you away, leaving you with the feeling of utter helplessness and darkness. It's safe to say that most people involved in relationships with Borderlines, no matter how brief, can safely divide their subsequent lives into "pre-Borderline involvement" and "post-Borderline involvement" phases. Your life will never be the same again.While there are some excellent books out there that write about BPD in a clinical, detached sense, this was the first one that I read that is a first-person account of it, and it's safe to say I'll always have a soft spot for the author. The book is extremely well written, evidenced by the fact that the author can write about even seemingly banal details of her dating life and arouse interest. You get a real glimpse into the chaotic nature of BPD that is difficult to pin down, and why this disorder is so frustrating because it can be so "chameleon-like" and take on so

many different tones. So, if you’re really just trying to unravel the Gordian knot that is Borderline Personality Disorder, don’t necessarily start here. I recommend "I Hate You, Don’t Leave Me" by Kreisman and Straus to get a good overview of BPD, then diving into first-person accounts like this one.I was really sitting on the fence about whether to rate this book four or five stars, but I opted for the former since someone looking for a work that fingers every possible cause of this disorder and attempts to synthesize some sort of "thesis" regarding it will end up frustrated: for starters, the author does not start the narrative until she is well into adulthood (this aroused some curiosity in me: she makes a reference to doing crystal meth as a young woman, but there’s really a large blank space between her childhood and the time she starts to get treatment.) What happened in her 20’s? Was that entire decade (certainly the most formative decade in terms of shaping adult identity) really worth glossing over? True to the disorder itself, even after getting a massive first-person account of it I was still left with an enigma.Is BPD rooted in genetics, or is it strictly the result of a traumatic upbringing? Kiera undoubtedly had "issues" growing up, but her family life was still markedly less hellish than what I have witnessed personally. She seems to have at least a nominal support network in adulthood which undoubtedly helped quite a bit. One of the cruel ironies of Borderline existence is that they are people most in need of a support network, but usually come from unloving, abusive families that hardly provide support, and their penchant to "shut people off" immediately upon being threatened or hurt results in a trail of "burned bridges" in other interpersonal relationships as well.This book ends on a cautiously optimistic note, but there are still no easy answers to the BPD puzzle. Hopefully, as this disorder becomes more understood more BPD sufferers will be able to get the help they need. This book shows that there are really some amazingly creative, artistic people out there that are suffocating without getting help. I hope Kiera Van Gelder can find some peace and joy in her life at least commensurate with the light she is shedding on this horrific disorder.

Thoughtful mÃƒÂ©moire on what it’s like to have BPD. Wish she’d gone more into her relationship with Taylor, all the reasons she decided it wouldn’t work out, and whether she now thinks it was for the best since this was the most intimate relationship described in the book, and the only deep one post-recovery. This is admittedly a self-serving wish, as I recently had to end a relationship with a woman I love but can no longer endure without her getting proper treatment. It is a little disappointing that the story ends with her still struggling more than I’d hoped, but it is honest, thorough, and very much appreciated.

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