

## ESSPD Academy Newsletter, May 2021

Dear ESSPD members,

With this newsletter, we would like to give you an update of our ESSPD activities:

**Riga goes virtual:** Soon, our workshops on personality disorders: skills training for effective treatments with leading experts will take place virtually on June 3–5, 2021: Arnoud Arntz, Bo Bach, Antony Bateman, Stephan Doering, Michaela Swales, and Svenja Taubner will share their expertise with you. Please spread the word and register here: [workshop conference](#).

In case you missed our webinar “Perspectives from European experts on euthanasia and assisted suicide in people with personality disorders” in January, you can still access the video [here](#).

Another topic we are discussing at ESSPD is how to involve users (patients, relatives) more in our activities. We are planning a “users’ day” at our 2022 Antwerp conference. We appreciate your ideas and input about more ways to involve users and patient representatives – please email [secretary@esspd.eu](mailto:secretary@esspd.eu) with your suggestions.

As you know, the ESSPD promotes and supports young researchers in the field of personality disorders. To be more inclusive, we have changed our Young Researchers’ forum into Early Career Investigators’ (ECI) forum: we support ECI with the Summer School and the ESSPD Early career investigator award. This award will be presented next time in October 2022 in Antwerp. Please spread the word that ESSPD encourages early career researchers to join the [ESSPD ECI forum](#) on Facebook.

We also welcome Early Career Researchers to become Junior Members of the ESSPD. Please check the eligibility criteria on our website.

As announced the ESSPD is expanding ways to communicate with you. Check out and follow the latest news on Twitter [@ESSPD](#). We have opened the ESSPD Facebook page to non-members and we also have a closed page for discussions on Facebook here. You can join or invite non-members to join our activities via our [sections](#).

In order to provide high quality and up to date content through our social media channels, we have established a new social media task force – if you like to participate please contact [ester.digiacom@yahoo.com](mailto:ester.digiacom@yahoo.com)

We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter!

With best wishes,

**Babette Renneberg**  
President of the ESSPD



**Babette  
Renneberg**

# Riga goes virtual: ESSPD Workshops for Personality Disorders

June 3-5 2021 on Zoom



Dear ESSPD members,

It is our pleasure to invite you to participate in a virtual version of the ESSPD clinical workshops. Unfortunately we can't meet in Riga, Latvia, as planned, but we are gathering via **Zoom on June 3-5, 2021**.

For the fourth time we have invited six top experts in the treatment of personality disorders:

- Anthony Bateman – Structured Clinical Management
- Arnoud Arntz – Schema Therapy
- Bo Bach – ICD-11 Classification of Personality Disorders
- Michaela Swales – Dialectical Behaviour Therapy
- Svenja Taubner – Mentalization-Based Treatment
- Stephan Doering – Transference-Focused Psychotherapy

Click below for detailed schedule and registration:

[To the event page](#)

Looking forward to meeting you virtually!

Yours sincerely,  
Babette Renneberg  
ESSPD President



# Borderline Personality Disorder and Emotion Dysregulation (BPDED)

Dear ESSPD members,

The Editorial Board of the society's journal *Borderline Personality Disorder and Emotion Dysregulation* (BPDED), is pleased to share the latest success metrics of the journal with an invitation to the personality disorder research and clinical communities to submit their work for consideration.



Christian Schmahl

## About the journal

*Borderline Personality Disorder and Emotion Dysregulation* focuses on the psychological, social and neurobiological aspects of emotion dysregulation and borderline personality disorder, broadly defined. Therefore, alternative conceptualizations of the disorder are also welcome. As an open access, online journal, BPDED provides a high visibility forum for the fast dissemination of high quality research across a range of disciplines, from genetics and pathophysiology, to assessment, treatment and epidemiology.

- Indexed in PubMed, PubMed Central, Web of Science (Science Citation Index Expanded, SCIE) and Scopus
- The first open access journal focused on Borderline Personality Disorder

## 2020 Metrics (also on the journal website)

### Speed

- 53 days to first decision for reviewed manuscripts only
- 48 days to first decision for all manuscripts
- 111 days from submission to acceptance
- 35 days from acceptance to publication

### Citation Impact

- 2.067 - 2-year Impact Factor

### Usage

- 275,074 Downloads
- 176 Altmetric mentions

## Funding for open access articles

<https://www.springernature.com/gp/open-research/funding/articles>

- a list of research funders and institutions worldwide that fund open access article-processing charges (APCs)

## Open access agreements

<https://www.springernature.com/gp/open-research/institutional-agreements>

- Authors may be able to publish their article in BPDED with fees covered if their institution has a fully open access agreement with Springer Nature

## Membership

<https://www.biomedcentral.com/about/institutional-support/membership>

- Authors affiliated with these member institutions may receive a discount on article processing charges (APCs)

## General information on APCs and waivers:

There are three waivers for ESSPD members

<https://www.biomedcentral.com/getpublished/article-processing-charges>

Christian Schmahl

## ESSPD Research Update

This newsletter and the next are commenting upon the themes of *lived experience* and *PD in pandemic times*. It contains a review of the two most innovative contributions to the recent literature. The corresponding scientific writer is Sophie Liljedahl, PhD.

Email: [dr.s.liljedahl@gmail.com](mailto:dr.s.liljedahl@gmail.com)



Sophie Liljedahl

## The weirdness of having a bunch of other minds like yours in the room. The lived experiences of mentalization-based therapy for borderline personality disorder

**Gardner, K. J., Wright, K. M., Elliot, A., Graham, S. & Fonagy, P. (2020).**  
*Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, 93, 572–586  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/papt.12243>

**Aim:** To illuminate the lived experience and change processes associated with participating in mentalization-based therapy (MBT).

**Background:** Historically, research conducted on MBT has used quantitative methods. While RCT research is essential to establish effectiveness of psychotherapeutic interventions, it does not speak to narrative and dimensional change, such as evolution of one's sense of self and experience of the therapeutic process. To continue to refine treatments, it is useful to understand what it is like to be a service recipient of a given treatment. Herein lies the value of qualitative studies that are targeted towards lived experience.

**Methods & Procedure:** In this qualitative study a total of eight MBT recipients were interviewed using an open-ended semi-structured interview for the duration of approximately 60 minutes. Interviews were recorded and analyses were conducted using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Participants were female adults (between 22 and 64 years old), having participated in MBT for at least six months within the last year. These inclusion criteria were selected to facilitate a discussion of the experience of treatment and change during treatment.

**Results & Discussion:** Primary themes derived from the interviews were experiences of “being borderline”, experiences of “being in the group” and experiences of “being on a journey”. “Being borderline” had to do with how it felt to receive the BPD diagnosis. Some felt it was affirming to receive the diagnosis while others felt it confirmed that there was something fundamentally wrong about them. “Being in the group” was experienced as powerful both in positive and negative terms, with value placed on the broadened perspective that resulted from group participation. The type of change experienced in relation to “being on a journey” was also an important area of discussion amongst study participants, who noted that changes resulting in symptom remission could feel painful at the time during which change was enacted. How, and the speed with which participants experienced change varied considerably, as did the experience of change in relation to oneself and one's life. Some participants reported reductions in self-harm and behaviours with the potential to be self-damaging while others reported improvements in relationships, increased mood stability and generalization of skills outside of therapy.

Other participants, however, reported a sense that they could not manage themselves outside of psychiatry, feeling fundamentally different from others including a sense that they could participate in society.

The authors observed that qualitative lines of inquiry into lived experiences have the advantage of contributing nuanced perspectives of meaning and impact of psychotherapeutic interventions for BPD, complementing RCT research on treatment efficacy and effectiveness.

## Personality Disorders in Time of Pandemic

**Preti, E., Di Pierro, R., Fanti, E., Madeddu, F., & Calati, R. (2020).**

*Current Psychiatry Reports*, 22(12), 80.

<https://doi-org.ludwig.lub.lu.se/10.1007/s11920-020-01204-w>

**Aim:** The aim of this study was to generate hypotheses related to PD functioning in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on effects of quarantine and adherence to containment efforts.

**Background:** Very little research has been published on PD functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic, although research on general mental health functioning has demonstrated a negative impact. This paper describes and summarizes PD phenomenology in relation to Cluster (A-C), presents the existing research on the effect of the pandemic on mental health functioning based on PD and then proposes PD-specific hypotheses in relation to the negative effects of the pandemic as well as anticipated participation in efforts to contain the virus. This paper is the first review conducted with the aim to generate hypotheses about clinical functioning of PD individuals during the pandemic.

**Method:** The authors reviewed the literature with a focus on PubMed publications released until July 2020. Themes of search terms were broadly COVID/outbreaks, compliance/adherence, and personality disorder/temperament.

**Results & Discussion:** Results grouped the existing literature by PD cluster, specific PD, PD symptoms, Alternative DSM-5 model for PDs and mental health impact in relation to pandemic and quarantine. Cluster A individuals were hypothesized to have increased anxiety and depressed mood alongside avoidance and suffering from loss of social contact. Cluster B individuals were similarly expected to have increased mood and anxiety difficulties alongside increased suicidality, emotion dysregulation, substance abuse and eating disorders. Cluster C individuals were hypothesized to be at increased risk for suffering from symptoms of post-traumatic stress, mood, and anxiety difficulties as well as worries about health, difficulty sleeping, and compulsive symptoms. Cluster A individuals are expected to be more compliant with containment efforts compared to Cluster B individuals who may struggle with impulsivity which matters in relation to social inhibition and consistent hand hygiene. Cluster C individuals were proposed to demonstrate mixed behaviours with respect to containment, as greater fear is associated with adherence to pandemic guidelines, but rigidity might make some restrictions a challenge to follow. In sum, this paper generated hypotheses for future study based on the authors' clinical understanding of PD traits and behaviours applied to their review the limited research on the impact of the pandemic specific to PD individuals.

## Social media and science communication team: Call for participation!

The importance of communicating scientific findings is increasingly acknowledged, especially when it comes to mental and physical health. The board believes the ESSPD community has great potential to contribute to this matter and is **looking for volunteers** to build an active social media and science communication team that manages the ESSPD twitter account.

You will get the opportunity to work in a team that shares and highlights the latest personality disorder-related content you are passionate about. We plan to have admins of the twitter account change approximately monthly. You will get recognition as a member of ESSPD's social media and science communication team and receive a discount for the fees for the upcoming ESSPD conference.

If you are interested in joining, please contact [Ester di Giacomo](#)

**Ester di Giacomo, MD, PhD**

## Early Career Investigator

The Young Researcher Section was founded during the 5th International Congress on Borderline Personality Disorder and Allied Disorders held in Sitges (Barcelona, Spain) in September 2018. Its creation aimed at including and supporting young researchers in the field of personality disorders. Starting from the creation of a Facebook group dedicated to the recruitment of members and as platform to share information and confront each other, it initially included 43 researchers. Through an on-line poll, the group elected a formal representative within the ESSPD Board.

The COVID-19 pandemic limited the possibility of a face to face meeting at the Congress that was originally scheduled in Antwerp, but we did not give up and decided to write a research paper to contribute as a group. Recently, the ESSPD Board suggested that we modify the name of this group to Early Career Investigators to be more inclusive, and the suggestion was more than welcome.

**Ester di Giacomo, MD, PhD**



**Ester di Giacomo**



For the second time, ESSPD offers a one-week-long residential program for young researchers interested to learn research methodologies that are useful in the domain of personality disorders, to be taken place in the retreat house of Crêt-Bérard, Switzerland. The deadline for application is now closed and we are very happy with the interest among young researchers in this program, in particular about the rising interest in Eastern Europe. Excitingly, this year, we are about to give out five stipends, financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation, to excellent young researchers from Eastern Europe. Given the pandemic, we will finalize our decision very soon whether we can hold this event as planned in August 2021, or whether we will postpone it to August 2022.

**Ueli Kramer**

## 6<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Borderline Personality and Allied Disorder in Antwerp, October 10-12, 2022



We are planning the **6<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Borderline Personality and Allied Disorder in Antwerp, October 10-12, 2022**. The purpose of the ESSPD International Congresses is to encourage creative and innovative research efforts, stimulate theoretical reflections and cross-cultural interchange, and suggest new research directions, which can contribute to and enhance the understanding of the borderline personality and allied disorders.

With the title of our conference in 2022, **Change for a better future: Perspectives beyond Symptoms - Helping patients to build a life worth living**, we want to expand traditional ways of thinking in science and practice. Planned plenary sessions focus on “Perspectives from Positive Psychology: Determinants of Well-Being” and “A life worth living. Lessons learned from working with suicide prevention in high risk clients”. In our presidential debate we will discuss “What does Change for a Better Future Mean in Borderline Personality Disorder?”

In addition to our usual program, we are planning a session for users: patients, relatives, patient’s representatives.

At this time, we are positive that we can meet in person in Antwerp and are very much looking forward to a stimulating conference and a fruitful exchange among researchers, clinicians and users.

We are looking forward to meeting you all in Antwerp!

**Babette Renneberg on behalf of the conference team**



**Svenja Taubner,**  
**ESSPD**  
**Newsletter Editor**

### ESSPD Academy Newsletter Submissions

Submissions to the *ESSPD Academy Newsletter* are accepted on an ongoing basis. Subject areas may include issues from clinical practice, views and comments on current development within PD, reports from affiliated societies, member information, national and international events and conferences, research updates on personality disorders and more. We are interested in submissions from practitioners and researchers from within and outside of Europe. The length of submissions should be from 300-800 words and formatted in Word. We suggest that the authors limit their use of references. Please enclose author photos with the text.

The Newsletter Editor is Svenja Taubner. Submissions should be emailed to at: [svenja.taubner@med.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:svenja.taubner@med.uni-heidelberg.de)

The corresponding scientific writer is Sophie Liljedahl, Ph. D.,  
Email: [dr.s.liljedahl@gmail.com](mailto:dr.s.liljedahl@gmail.com)



**Bo Bach, ESSPD**  
**Editorial Board**



**Matilde Elices,**  
**ESSPD Editorial Board**



**Michaela Swales,**  
**ESSPD Editorial Board**

# Membership Nomination Form

|                 |       |          |
|-----------------|-------|----------|
| Nominee's name: |       |          |
| Title:          |       |          |
| Affiliation:    |       |          |
| Email:          | City: | Country: |

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND (psychiatrist, psychologist, nurse, social worker, other):

NOMINATION CATEGORY (mark with X)

|            |                          |           |                          |         |                          |                |                          |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Researcher | <input type="checkbox"/> | Clinician | <input type="checkbox"/> | Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other, specify | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|

MAIN FIELD(S) OF INTEREST (NEUROSCIENCES, ASSESSMENT, TREATMENT, PREVENTION, OTHER)

ACHIEVEMENTS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, INNOVATIONS, DISCOVERIES (list 3 most important)

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- 
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PUBLICATIONS (list 3 most important last 5 years)

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- 
- 

HONORS, AWARDS (list 3 most important)

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- 
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leadership roles (list 3 most important current or past roles)

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What you believe nominee will be able to contribute to the ESSPD

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|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Names of two nominators (printed letters): | Signatures of two nominators: |
| <br><br>                                   | <br><br>                      |
| Place                                      | Date                          |