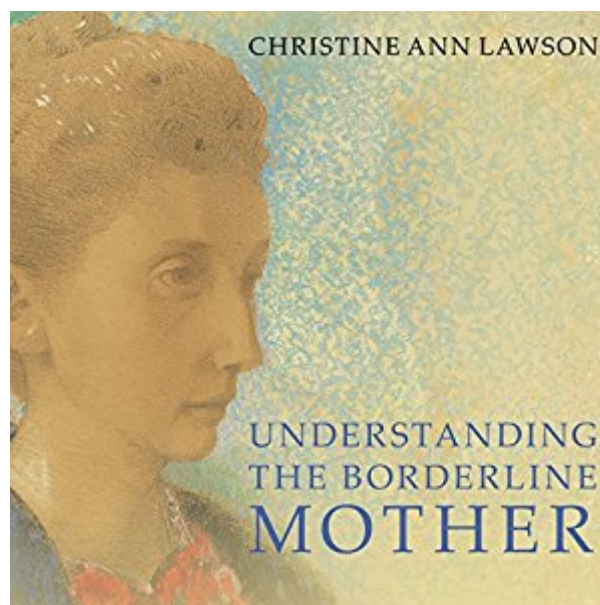




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# **Understanding The Borderline Mother: Helping Her Children Transcend The Intense, Unpredictable, And Volatile Relationship**



## Synopsis

The first love in our lives is our mother. Recognizing her face, her voice, the meaning of her moods, and her facial expressions is crucial to survival. In this book, Dr. Christine Ann Lawson vividly describes how mothers who suffer from borderline personality disorder produce children who may flounder in life even as adults, futilely struggling to reach the safety of a parental harbor, unable to recognize that their borderline parent lacks a pier, or even a discernible shore. Four character profiles describe different symptom clusters that include the waif mother, the hermit mother, the queen mother, and the witch. Children of borderlines are at risk for developing this complex and devastating personality disorder themselves. Dr. Lawson's recommendations for prevention include empathic understanding of the borderline mother and early intervention with her children to ground them in reality. Addressing the adult children of borderlines and the therapists who work with them, Dr. Lawson shows how to care for the waif without rescuing her, to attend to the hermit without feeding her fear, to love the queen without becoming her subject, and to live with the witch without becoming her victim.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If I could give this book a thousands stars and then take the author to lunch I would. I cannot tell you what this book offered in terms of emotional relief but I will try. This book was like reading about most of my childhood. I finally at 34 years old had the epiphany that if this book was right then logically there was credible evidence that I was not actually a bad person. I realized at core that I

believed I was bad. Truly bad. How can you see anything realistically or find happiness if you are bad at your core ? The felt what I would describe was an opening inside my heart. A space created to allow me to look over things that have happened differently. I feel quiet. For the first time perhaps ever ( while not on drugs ) I am quiet inside. There is no guilt, shame, self loathing, and feeling of pouncing on someone for putting me down. Just quiet. I feel nice. I feel quiet. These last 6 days have been so lovely. I am half way through the book and can't wait to see what it says next. Thank god for this book. I have hated myself for most of my life and tried destroying myself to make the self loathing end for so long. But I'm not bad. I don't know what I am but not being bad is a really nice start. Thank you Chrisrine Lawson. Thank you.

My third copy of this wonderful book. When I share with someone - it doesn't come back. I just miss all my notes to myself. But happy to share this insight with others in the same nightmare of borderline land. My mom, 'the Queen' has much less power over me after reading, understanding and putting some better tools in my bag!

Let's imagine your parents never taught you to walk or even exposed you to the concept of walking, and you spent the last 40 years crawling on your hands and knees. You would definitely wonder why everyone else seemed to ambulate more efficiently, but you'd lack the mental framework to identify the difference between walking and crawling, as this concept had never been taught to you in the early years when it most mattered. Seeing people move about using only their feet would definitely fascinate you, and you'd want to try the concept, but after 40 years on hands and knees, you'd probably fall down a lot, and it might be difficult to automatically develop a sense of balance without some guidance. Learning to love and trust after growing up in a BPD household is not that different. It's easy for the armchair quarterbacks to suggest that those traumatized by BPD parents should just quit their dang whining, snap out of it and get with the program, but those traumatized by a BPD parent have a very different definition of love (and a painful one at that) than those reared in more authentically and altruistically loving households. I would wager that 100 out of 100 BPD-traumatized people would trade a kidney for the capacity to just "snap out of it," as the internal work that needs to be done is arduous and sometimes even more painful than what happened as a child. Stopping the cycles of abuse requires recognition of the problem and modifications to behavior. This book is a good beginning. My copy of the book was published in 2000, when bookshelves were not as well stocked for quality personal psychology books but were certainly rife with plenty of flim-flam pop psychology. In the sixteen years since, the decreasing stigma for mental

health issues as well as ever-expanding media resources have increased the public vocabulary in the area of psychology. There has been additional research on BPD since 2000 with many publications for patients taking a more clinical tone than this book, but considering this book in context, it is a smart, well-written volume for the 2000 audience, utilizing archetypes to illustrate different types of BPD in mothers. Some reviewers claim the archetypes seem a bit harsh, but if the title was "Understanding the Borderline Co-Worker" instead of "Understanding the Borderline Mother," I suspect there would be fewer complaints of that nature. The concept of motherhood has been sanctified for so long that it's difficult to take mothers (even those that have inflicted harm) down from the pedestal to analyze behavior in a constructive way. The celebrity examples do seem a bit out of context, both in 2000 and in 2016, and seem a bit exaggerated relative to the other examples of behavior. If you're dealing with, or suspect you're dealing with BPD in your family, the best case scenario is to have a good therapist as your Sherpa as you navigate those waters. At the very least, you'll have an objective voice of reason in your exploration; ideally, your experienced therapist has helped others through all stages of healing and will have insight to expedite your path to health. BPD is heavy stuff, and even if you've dealt with other major issues in therapy in the past, BPD weighs in so much more exponentially. This book will likely validate your childhood experiences that previously did not make sense. There are passages that will help you identify what's missing in your early childhood development and will clarify what you can do as an adult to rectify that lack of early development and move toward a life of love and trust. I would not attempt to use this book as my sole source in healing myself and/or my relationships with those who have BPD, but it will help as a complementary part of education and therapy. The book is NOT meant to nit-pick the parenting of the majority of the population. For those affected by BPD, this book is not "just another excuse to whine," and it's highly insensitive and demonstrates ignorance (or perhaps denial?) of the diagnosis to suggest it is. Ironically, it's the very absence of a lifetime "whining" or even uttering a single complaint for most BPD-traumatized individuals that has ultimately produced the most dysfunction in their own lives. Many have suffered in silence from their abuse, assuming the definition of "love" they were given in childhood required them to accommodate abuse from others. There's no retirement plan for martyrs, and this book will let you know you're not alone if that was your history. I hope it helps and hope there are brighter days full of love ahead for you.

As a 20 something female who suffered with being raised by a borderline mother, I found this book extremely helpful in finding peace of mind. With a disorder that is so widely unknown, no one believes a kid who claims her mother goes crazy at random times for no reason. I really enjoyed

learning more about the disorder and understanding where my mom comes from with her rage, as well as the different subcategories of types of borderlines. I found my mother to exhibit the "Witch" traits. This book was written in a way that is easy to understand and gives you verification about the terror you dealt with as a child. While my mother will never seek help for herself, I now have the courage and wisdom to accept what happened to me as a child and the ability to walk away, no longer needing her love or approval as a mother. This book saved me years of time and energy that would have been wasted on trying to understand why my mother doesn't love me and waiting for her to become a true mom.

This book should be a textbook in college courses relating to psychology! It is the only book we have found that breaks down borderline personality disorder into distinct categories, and more importantly, offers approaches to dealing with borderlines with compassion. This is a really difficult disorder to deal with, and many therapists do not want to treat them. This book can be transformative for anyone who is dealing or has dealt with someone who is a borderline,

I grew up with an undiagnosed BPD mother. My childhood home was a chaotic, emotional obstacle course depending on the day and my mother's moods. Not knowing that there was anything truly wrong with my mother, I just figured there was something rotten in ME that was making her so difficult. As a young adult I tried to 'fix' her, and spent SO MUCH TIME and effort on a lost cause. This book was not only validation, it was a complete eye opener for me. Suddenly, my mother and entire confusing childhood was in the black and white pages of this book. Suddenly I was able to see IT NEVER WAS MY FAULT and I can't fix her. I had a name that explained it all to me: Borderline Personality Disorder. What's more, I was also able to start seeing my father (the Huntsman) as her codependent and come to terms with his inability to see her illness or her abuse of others, including himself. This book is simply PRICELESS.

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