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Once again this week I came across another label which had been given to a young person who had suffered a bereavement of someone close.

The label this time? EUPD, which stands for 'emotionally unstable personality disorder'. So yet another young person has been labelled. This will undoubtedly grow the thought in their mind that they are somehow broken or unfixable. When people are told by 'experts' that they have a disorder, they genuinely believe that they are faulty in some way.

It's already well researched that we tend to become what is expected of us and the similar outcomes as with the placebo effect. Therefore, it would be very likely that this person will give in to the symptoms and characteristics and become the disorder and give up on being 'normal'.

This can be catastrophic.

These 'disorders' are diagnosed via a series of questions which are very much one size fits all: based on the medical model which is already vastly outdated and rarely accurate, given that we are completely unique human beings with a completely unique set of circumstances and experiences.

When I work with people who have been given a label by a psychiatrist or psychologist or doctor - for example borderline

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personality disorder (BPD) - I find in 99% of cases that the label has no justification and that what is causing distress, anger or irrational behaviour is normal distress given the circumstances, and that we are human beings capable of human emotions! To label something that is quite normal, then follow it up

# Labels and the damage they can do

Labelling normal emotions and reactions as mental health problems can damage rather than help people, says King's Lynn based psychotherapist and counsellor **Amanda Jayne**.



with drugs, not only does not help but can exacerbate the very issue.

Let's go back to this young person. If anyone has ever suffered a sudden death of a close sibling, spouse, parent or friend, you will remember the crucifying grief that goes with it. Sometimes you feel unable to cope. Sometimes you feel you are going mad with grief.

It is normal to go through crushing, terrible feelings which leave you lost, feeling like you are going mad; unable to cope. You may do something completely out of character; have irrational thoughts; you cannot think straight; you can't stop crying; you feel your life is over.

In these circumstances, time is the healer that will make it more manageable. And time will enable you to return to a new normality where you can live the rest of your life, accepting that things have changed but that's okay.

However, if you are 20 and you are told you have some kind of 'disorder', without any proper

consideration being given to the circumstances, you are going to believe that you are somehow broken! So instead of being understood and being helped to understand your feelings are completely normal, imagine what impact that has through your life.

If you or any of your family have been given a label that does not feel right or has worried you, I would urge you to go and see an independent counsellor/ psychotherapist (not psychologist or psychiatrist) to talk through the issues which lead to the diagnosis.

You maybe worrying about something needlessly and you may be carrying a burden which should never have been loaded on to you.

Remember that it is normal to get a second opinion when there is a medical illness. Therefore you should feel okay about getting a second opinion on mental health. Just because a so-called 'expert' in a white coat says you have a disorder doesn't necessarily mean that it's true. 