A Guide to Bipolar Treatment Centers

by BETHANY HEINESH

What is a Bipolar Treatment Center?

I believe those of us who have bipolar disorder have a place in our minds that I like to call the brink. I just like the word. It has a nice ring to it. A brink is defined as an extreme edge before a steep or vertical slope. Surely, you have heard the term, "the brink of insanity." Many of us have been there, and many of us have crossed over to the other side. For example, debilitating depression and mania can cause us to go over the brink.

Finding and Rescuing From Yourself

When you cross over the brink, you have lost touch with reality. You want nothing more than to make sense out of all the nonsense.

If you are depressed, you genuinely believe suicide is the answer and that the world would be better off without you. If you are manic, you are vulnerable to all kinds of false beliefs. In either case, your world becomes distorted, confusing and downright maddening. You want out!

To complicate matters further, only you possess the key to your escape but you can't remember where you put the damned thing!

People like us often cannot find our way back from illness to wellness. Once we crossover the brink, we usually need a rescue team to come in, find us and bring us back to who we really are. There is no shame in this. It is an unfortunate circumstance that often accompanies bipolar disorder.

In this article, I want to talk about bipolar treatment centers. Sometimes, whether we like it or not, we need to go to one to find our way back from the other side of the brink.

What is a Bipolar Treatment Center?

In short, a bipolar treatment center is a residential mental health facility that treats people who have bipolar disorder and other mental health issues. Most people have misconceptions about these places. They think of them as the "looney bin" or the "nuthouse." Not so!

Most bipolar treatment centers are designed to feel like home – not hospitals. Many of them are like luxury resorts with five-star accommodations and amenities, while others are more modest. Each one is designed to be a safe place where patients can be restored to a place of wellness.

If you decide to go to a bipolar treatment center, you will live there for a specified amount of time. Your stay could be anywhere from a few days to three months, depending on your circumstances and how much you can afford.

It is not uncommon for those of us with bipolar disorder to resist going to a bipolar treatment center. However; we

are almost always grateful if we make the brave decision to go on our own.

Bipolar Treatment Centers Explained

Healing is what happens at a bipolar treatment center. Bipolar disorder is a serious mental illness that can wreak havoc on the lives of individuals and their families. Most of the time, we can manage our disorder and cope with day to day living. However, there may be times when we need to turn our care over into the hands of professionals.

A bipolar treatment center is a safe and secure facility monitored around the clock by mental health professionals, doctors and nurses. These treatment centers allow patients a feeling of reassurance. We often lose trust in ourselves when we have a depressive or a manic episode. Knowing that we are being looked after by people who have our best interest at heart can be a very comforting experience.

While staying at a bipolar treatment center, patients will usually participate in group therapy, individual therapy, medication management and other activities oriented toward wellness. These may include yoga, meditation, or acupuncture.

Therapy and the Value of Daily Medication Management

There are two important components of bipolar treatment – therapy and medication management. Both of these are offered when you stay at a bipolar treatment center.

Most of us know how difficult the medication journey can be. Finding the right combination of medicine is challenging. At a treatment facility, patients have full access to a psychiatrist around the clock. An individual's medication regime will be closely monitored and adjusted as needed. This greatly improves the chances of finding the medication sweet spot.

Also, there are a variety of therapies available at bipolar treatment centers across the country. The type of therapy you will be exposed to depends on which facility you choose to attend. Here are just a few examples of the therapeutic approaches you might expect at a bipolar treatment center:

- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT – also known as talk therapy).
- Dialectic behavioral therapy (DBT – teaches skills to manage bipolar disorder).
- Equine therapy (working with horses).
- Art therapy (working with a licensed art therapist to resolve personal issues).
- Peer group therapy (led by a therapist, working with other people with bipolar).
- Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR – helps resolve trauma).
- Yoga (this ancient practice eases distressing bipolar symptoms).
- Meditation (helps to quiet the mind and allows you to be fully present).
- Acupuncture (alleviates stress).

These are just a few of the many positive therapies you might participate in if you choose to go for bipolar treatment.

The Benefits of Going to a Bipolar Treatment Center

In my estimation, if you feel you need to go inpatient for bipolar disorder treatment, you should trust your instincts. Likewise, if your family expresses concern for your safety and suggests you check yourself in somewhere, you should probably listen to your loved ones.

Whether you are engulfed in a deep depression or excited from mania, bipolar disorder can have dangerous consequences. For your safety – and the sake of your healing – I genuinely believe good things come from going to a bipolar treatment center.

Staying inpatient allows you to focus solely on your health and wellness. You will learn tools that will help you cope with bipolar disorder in the real world. You will meet other people who share your experiences, which is very cathartic. Also, participating in therapy will allow you to address the parts of yourself that may be triggering your episodes.

I believe staying at a bipolar treatment center can be beneficial for anyone who wants to learn to gain a greater sense of stability in their lives.

The Potential Drawbacks of Going to a Bipolar Treatment Center

Deciding to go into a bipolar treatment center is a major decision. Many people feel that getting treatment represents a type of personal failure. It can feel like admitting defeat. But, nothing could be further from the truth. Reaching out for help is one of the strongest things we can do when bipolar disorder is getting the best of us.

Just like with any situation in life, there are pros and cons to undergoing inpatient bipolar treatment, I have already listed some of the benefits. Let's talk about a few potential drawbacks:

- You will have to leave your family for an extended amount of time.
- You will have to take a leave of absence from work if you are employed.
- Going into a place where you don't know anyone can be scary.
- You might have a roommate you don't get along with.
- You might have to wake up early to participate in therapy.
- You may not love the food.

Sure, there may be some cons when it comes to going for bipolar treatment, but the benefits far outweigh any possible disadvantages. Staying at a residential facility can be one of the best things you ever do for yourself. It's a time to regroup and reevaluate your life. You will come out better and stronger than you were when you first went in. I believe this!

How to Find a Bipolar Treatment Center

Choosing the right bipolar treatment center is essential to your success. I highly recommend that you get a referral from a doctor or someone you trust.

You can always Google *bipolar treatment centers*. You will find some near you and others you might be interested in across the country. Be sure to read any reviews that are available online from former patients. Also, make sure the place you choose offers you what you are looking for exactly. For example, you might want to go to a treatment center that provides equine therapy or art therapy. Be thoughtful when choosing where you will stay.

All the Best on Your Healing Journey

If you decide to stay at a bipolar treatment center, I applaud you. It takes significant strength and courage to get help. I wish you health, healing and happiness on your journey!