

Bipolar Summary

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Bipolar disorder is associated with episodes of mood swings ranging from depressive lows to manic highs. Manic episodes include symptoms of high energy, reduced need for sleep, and loss of touch with reality. Depressive episodes consist of symptoms such as low energy, loss of interest in daily or pleasurable activities, and low motivation. These mood episodes last days to months at a time. The instability of individuals' mood often leads to impaired social and employment functioning. Mania consists of unusually high and persistent energy and irritability. This lasts at least one week and is present most of the day. Characteristics of mania include inflated self-esteem, racing thoughts, distractibility, risky behaviors, pressured speech, and decreased need for sleep. This mood disturbance necessitates hospitalization to prevent harm to themselves or others. Some experience auditory or visual hallucinations. The depressed episode typically lasts for two weeks. Symptoms may include sadness, hopelessness, diminished interest in things the individual enjoys, loss of appetite or overeating, insomnia or hypersomnia, moving faster or slower than normal, fatigue, inability to concentrate, indecisiveness, and suicidal ideation.

In the case example video, the client named Gil displayed various symptoms of Bipolar. He had an inflated sense of self, elevated mood, irritability, pressured speech, distractibility, and inability to concentrate well. Gil spoke continuously without giving the therapist much opportunity to speak and he often interrupted the therapist. He believed he was an expert at playing the violin even though he had only learned two months prior. He stated that he did not need more than three hours of sleep. His manner of speaking was theatrical with dramatic

mannerisms and singing. He admitted to risky sexual behaviors. This client admits to having visual and auditory hallucinations and states that he “blacks out”. This client admits to substance abuse and alcohol abuse.