

Abstract

The aim of the diploma thesis is to survey characteristics in the experience of people with bipolar disorder. The choice of the topic is based on the lack of research of the experience of people suffering with bipolar disorder in the Czech environment. The aim of this thesis is to comprehend the life of people with bipolar disorder.

The theoretical part of the thesis is focusing on the description of the historical and contemporary concept of bipolar disorder including the so-called bipolar spectrum. This part presents treatment options as well as comorbidities which are often a part of the clinical course of the disease. The aim of the theoretical part is to introduce the reader to the issue of bipolar disorder which allows a better understanding of the empirical part. In the empirical part, six respondents were interviewed to collect data. The grounded theory method was chosen for data processing and the Atlas.ti software was used for coding purposes. As a result of the data processing a process of learning how to live with bipolar disorder has emerged. The process of learning how to live with bipolar disorder is an active process that leads to a deeper understanding of the disease and skill gains mitigating manifestation of the disease.

At the beginning of the learning, there are motivation categories that determine the direction of the learning process. This is followed by a selection of a type of learning which has its own sources of gaining knowledge and skills. The final phases are learning outcomes.

The process of learning how to live with bipolar disorder is preceded by a pre-diagnostic phase. It is a period of emerging mental changes, which the individual does not yet understand and does not know their cause. The changes are increasing over time and they interfere with the daily life of the individual, who is subsequently forced to seek professional help. The endpoint of the pre-diagnostic phase is a diagnosis of bipolar disorder accompanied by feelings of relief.

The results of the data processing are very specific as the research actors are also participants in the AKIBIPO400 clinical study which primary outcome is a relapse prediction in bipolar disorder. For this reason, the respondents have an approach where they consider the bipolar disorder to be a medical condition that requires treatment. For

people who view bipolar disorder in different ways, the learning process will not coincide with the results of this research.