

For the general public, bipolar disorder is usually one of the “scary” brain-based disorders—a misperception cemented by media reports about violent acts that jump quickly to the perpetrator’s assumed diagnosis and movies/TV shows that depict “crazy” manic behavior.

*bp Magazine* exists to dispel that kind of stigma. This pioneering publication, which hit the 50th issue milestone with the Winter 2017 edition, is the first—and still the only—magazine dedicated to providing **accurate, educational, accessible information** about how to thrive while living with bipolar disorder.

This mission goes back to the magazine’s debut issue in Fall 2004, which featured Carrie Fisher on the cover. The idea was to create a newsstand-style consumer so that **someone reading *bp* on a plane or on their lunch hour wouldn’t feel stigmatized**.

Publisher Joanne Doan set out to provide inspiration and hope to people who had been marginalized and dismissed … “to create a sense of community among its readers, helping those who live with bipolar disorder realize that they are not alone, that others understand their journey, and that **proper diagnosis, treatment and support are the keys to achieving wellness**.”

And that’s what *bp Magazine* does—not in a one-off article during Mental Health Month, but consistently in four issues a year, on its website (bphope.com), and through social media.

Just look at the content in the 50th issue:

• The cover story on Maestro Ronald Braunstein details how poorly controlled bipolar symptoms derailed his international conducting career—and **how fully accepting his illness and committing to a new medication regimen** (along with other aspects of self-care) led to a new and successful “second movement” in both his professional and personal lives.

• Both the feature on Maestro Braunstein and the “My Story” profile of lawyer and activist Lauren Burke sketch out **well-rounded portraits of individuals with lived experience**: What they were able to achieve with undiagnosed bipolar disorder; the sometimes painful impact of bipolar symptoms on their work, relationships and psyches; and how they are moving forward with better knowledge about how to manage the chronic condition.

• **First-person columns by individuals with lived experience** offer “been there, done that” advice and insight. Stephen Propst compares the sympathetic, helpful reactions when his injured hand was in a splint to the often ignorant and hurtful responses to his bipolar disorder, always fueled by stigma. Julie Fast shines a light on often overlooked symptoms of depression, such as irritability. Melody Moezzi notes the importance of a strong support system in writing about her husband’s steadfast role as her partner in recovery.

• The articles “Getting a Grip on Mania” and “Routine Maintenance” (about circadian rhythms and the importance of daily structure) take **an in-depth approach** to aspects of managing bipolar disorder.

As in all our articles, leading experts (including Shefali Miller of Stanford University, Murray Enns of the University of Manitoba and David J. Kupfer of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center) provide **a factual framework**, buttressed by background material on recent research. That’s **balanced by input from real people sharing insight from their daily lives**.

• **Columns by professional experts also present clear, factual information** on aspects of living with bipolar disorder. In this issue’s “Ask the Doctor” column, Simon Evans, PhD, looks at what current research tells us about the relationship between nutrition and mood. In the “bp Kids” column, Adelaide Sherwood Robb, MD, reviews clinical differences between pediatric bipolar and ADHD.

As you’ll see from reviewing the Winter 2017 issue submitted with this nomination, **bp Magazine’s very existence works to reduce stigma**. (Note: We also have provided three previous issues, sent to Erin Wallace via email, so you can get a better sense of the work we do.)

Getting an independent niche publication to 50 issues deserves recognition, especially when the subject matter is something that is more typically relegated to secrecy and shame.

Despite the challenges of publishing a magazine that faces its own brand of stigma in the business world, despite the limited pool of CNS pharmaceutical advertisers, despite the economic downturn that pushed many media outlets onto shaky ground, *bp Magazine* is still here.

Along the way, its platform expanded as technology and information sharing evolved. There is now a digital edition, an active online community, and outreach via social media, all under the *bp* umbrella.

It’s not unusual to hear **sentiments like this from *bp’s* readers** and online followers: “Your magazine is truly a lifesaver. … Being able to read the articles and participate in the online forum and discussions is better than therapy. Talking through the magazine with others who live your life and share your joy and pain is so helpful.”