STEPPS to Address BPD

Part 1

Presented by

Nancee Blum, MSW
STEPPS™
Systems Training for Emotional Predictability and Problem-Solving

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Don St. John, PA-C
Bruce Pfohl, MD

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Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine
The University of Iowa
A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO TREATMENT:
BORDERLINE
PERSONALITY
DISORDER
SKILL
TRAINING
MANUAL

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THERESA D. COTTY, L.C.C.S.W.
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The University of Iowa
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Where Is STEPPS?

U.S. - 48 States
Canada - 20 Locations
Argentina
Australia
Belgium
Denmark
England
France
Germany
Italy
Japan
Kenya
New Zealand
The Netherlands
Norway
Scotland
Spain
South Africa
The Netherlands
Puerto Rico
England
France
Germany
Who Uses STEPPS?

- Outpatient clinics
- Inpatient units, Partial hospital
- Day treatment
- Residential treatment
- ACT (Assertive Community Treatment)
- HIV+ patients (for anger control)
- Corrections (prisons and community)
- Primarily used with adults
  - Adolescent version in preparation
The STEPPS Program for BPD

- Group format
- Psychoeducational approach/manual-based
- Cognitive behavioral model + skills training
- Confronts early maladaptive schemas (cognitive filters)
- Includes reinforcement team
- Teaches a common language
A “value-added” (supplemental) treatment
May help to decrease frequency of individual therapy
Supported by managed care
Evidence-based practice (NREPP)
STEPPS

- Focuses on the present
- Patients learn to manage their disorder
  - Move away from being a victim
  - Do not blame others
- Do not expect other people or things to rescue them (e.g., MD, medications)
- Teach skills to others in their system
- High level of patient and therapist acceptance
Selecting Group Members

- Two important elements in STEPPS:
  - Learning to share time with others
  - Learning to limit discussion of individual problems to those elements that serve educational goals of STEPPS

- Consider motivational interviewing
Who Is Not A Good Candidate for STEPPS?

- Individuals who are extremely narcissistic
- Individuals who deal with conflict by physically threatening or intimidating others (marked ASPD traits*)
- Avoid having only one male

*ASPD traits did not necessarily predict poor outcome in RCT
Recommended Format

- Weekly sessions (20 weeks)
- Two hour sessions
- Two trainers/6-10 trainees
- Reinforcement team
  - Treatment system personnel
  - Other providers
  - Family and friends
- May repeat basic group or go on to STAIRWAYS
Three Step Program

- Awareness of illness
  - DSM criteria
  - reframe as emotional intensity disorder (EID)
  - identify cognitive filters (schema)

- Emotion management skill training

- Behavior management training
Emotion Management Skills

- Distancing
- Communicating
- Challenging
- Distracting
- Managing Problems
Behavior Management Skills

- Goal Setting
- Eating
- Sleeping
- Exercise
- Leisure
- Physical Health
- Abuse Avoidance
- Interpersonal Relationships
Emotional Intensity Continuum

1 = Baseline
2 = Beginning of Intensity
3 = Development
4 = Pre-blow-up
5 = Blow-up
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**Emotional Intensity Continuum**

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**Filters:** Abandonment  Entitlement  Emotional deprivation  Subjugation  Mistrust  Failure to achieve  Unrelenting standards  Vulnerable to harm  Defectiveness  Self-sacrifice
# Emotional Intensity Continuum

Event: What happened?

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End - Part 1

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