STEPPS to Address BPD

Part 2

Presented by
Nancee Blum, MSW
Measures of Emotional Intensity
Baseline (1)

- warm
- relaxed
- happy
- calm
- positive attitude
- self-confident
- positive self-image

- socializing
- reading
- listening to music
- making plans
- sign up for classes
Measures of Emotional Intensity
Blow-Up (5)

- rage
- hopeless
- abandoned
- helpless
- racing thoughts

- screaming
- throwing
- hitting
- self-harm
- suicidal behavior
Measures of Emotional Intensity
Pre-Blow-Up (4)

- anger
- despair
- depression
- extreme anxiety
- severe withdrawal
- suicidal thoughts
Measures of Emotional Intensity Development (3)

- frustrated
- nervous
- fear of unknown
- tired/sleep all day
- miss appointments
- start isolating
- nit-picking
Measures of Emotional Intensity
Beginning of Intensity (2)

- irritable
- restless
- insomnia
- nightmares
- decreased motivation
- fears beginning
Cognitive Filters

- Important beliefs about oneself/world
- Accepted without question
- Self-perpetuating
- Very resistant to change
- Usually outside of awareness
- Operate in subtle ways
- Activated by events
Common Maladaptive Filters

- Abandonment
- Emotional deprivation
- Defectiveness/Shame
- Vulnerability to harm & illness
- Unrelenting/unbalanced standards
- Entitlement/insufficient limits
- Trust/mistrust
The Goal: Replace Negative Filters with Positive Ones!

- Play is healthy
- Feeling good is an acceptable goal
- Altruism
- Caring
- Relationship stability
- Trust
- Socialization
- Self-acceptance

- Achievement
- Competence
- Self-help
- Efficacy
- Boundaries
- Self-control
- Emotion management
Why Are Filters Important?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>What did I feel?</th>
<th>Physical Sensations</th>
<th>What was my body doing?</th>
<th>Thoughts</th>
<th>What was I thinking?</th>
<th>Filters</th>
<th>Which were triggered?</th>
<th>Action Urges</th>
<th>What did I want to do?</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>What did I do?</th>
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<td>content, happy</td>
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<td>things are good.</td>
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<td>self control</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>anxious</td>
<td>muscles tense</td>
<td>He's late again!</td>
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<td>Pacing - Call his cell phone</td>
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<td>irritable</td>
<td>butterflies in</td>
<td>He's never coming back.</td>
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<td>abandonment</td>
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<td>Call his office, friends, family</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>frustrated</td>
<td>sweating</td>
<td>He's found someone else.</td>
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<td>abandonment</td>
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<td>Cry - look for a razor</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>suicidal</td>
<td>heart pounding</td>
<td>I'll never have another boyfriend.</td>
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<td>abandonment</td>
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<td>screaming, throwing things cutting</td>
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**Skills:** Distancing, Communicating, Challenging, Distracting, Managing Problems, Abuse Avoidance

**Event:** What happened?

- He's late again!
- He's never coming back.
- He's found someone else.
- I'll never have another boyfriend.

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

**Behaviors:**
- Listening to music, reading
- Pacing - Call his cell phone
- Call his office, friends, family
- Cry - look for a razor
- Screaming, throwing things, cutting
Essential STEPPS Elements

- BEST (or QuEST) self-rating scale
- Criteria for BPD
  - reframe as emotional intensity disorder (EID)
- Emotional Intensity Continuum
- Cognitive (Thought) Filters
- Emotion Management Skills
### BEST® (Borderline Evaluation of Severity over Time)

For the first 12 items, the highest rating (5) means that the item caused extreme distress, severe difficulties with relationships, and/or kept you from getting things done. The lowest rating (1) means it caused little or no problems. Rate items 13-15 (positive behaviors) according to frequency.

**Circle the time period you have been asked to rate:**
- Last 7 Days
- Last 30 Days
- Other

**Circle the number that indicates how much the item has caused distress, relationship problems, or difficulty with getting things done.**

### A. Thoughts and Feelings [ ]

1. Worrying that someone important in your life is tired of you or is planning to leave you
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

2. Major shifts in your opinions about others such as switching from believing someone is a loyal friend or partner to believing that person is untrustworthy and harmful
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

3. Extreme changes in how you see yourself. Shifting from feeling confident about who you are to feeling like you are evil, or that you don’t even exist
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

4. Severe mood swings several times a day. Minor events cause major shifts in mood
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

5. Feeling paranoid or like you are losing touch with reality
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

6. Feeling angry
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

7. Feelings of emptiness
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

8. Feeling suicidal
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

**Total Score:**

**Date:**

### B. Behaviors (Negative) [ ]

9. Going to extremes to try to keep someone from leaving you
   - None, Slight
   - Mild
   - Moderate
   - Severe
   - Extreme
   - 1 2 3 4 5

10. Purposely doing something to injure yourself or making a suicide attempt
    - None, Slight
    - Mild
    - Moderate
    - Severe
    - Extreme
    - 1 2 3 4 5

11. Problems with impulsive behavior (not including suicide attempts or injuring yourself on purpose). Examples: overspending, risky sexual behavior, substance abuse, reckless driving, binge eating, other (circle those that apply)
    - None, Slight
    - Mild
    - Moderate
    - Severe
    - Extreme
    - 1 2 3 4 5

12. Temper outbursts or problems with anger leading to relationship problems, physical fights, or destruction of property
    - None, Slight
    - Mild
    - Moderate
    - Severe
    - Extreme
    - 1 2 3 4 5

**Circle the number that indicates how often you used the following positive behaviors**

### C. Behaviors (Positive) [ ]

13. Choosing to use a positive activity in circumstances where you felt tempted to do something destructive or self-defeating
    - Almost never
    - Most of the time
    - Sometimes
    - Half of the time
    - Almost always
    - 5 4 3 2 1

- **% Noticing ahead of time that something could cause you emotional difficulties and taking reasonable steps to avoid preventing the problem**
  - 5 4 3 2 1

- **% Following through with therapy plans to which you agreed (e.g., talk therapy, “homework” assignments, coming to appointments, medications, etc.)**
  - 5 4 3 2 1

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Excerpted from STEPPS™, Group Treatment Program for Borderline Personality Disorder

www.steppsgroup.com
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 - Awareness of Illness</th>
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**Name:** [Sample]

**Record of BEST Scores** (Use this chart to record your BEST score each week)

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A Typical Session

- Fill out BEST form
- Relaxation exercise
- Review Emotional Intensity Continuum
- Review Skill Monitoring Card
- Review homework assignment
- Introduce and read through new lesson
- Assign homework
Purpose of Family/Staff (Reinforcement Team) Education

- Provide information
- Empowerment
- Consistent responses
- Provide guidelines for coping
- Develop working alliance
Educating Reinforcement Team

- Includes family members, therapists, health care providers, significant others
- One two-hour evening session
- May attend any two regular sessions after evening session (with permission)
- Patients report increased support
Helping a Family Member or Friend with a Mental Disorder

Nancee Blum, MSW, LISW

Understanding Borderline Personality Disorder

Nancee Blum, MSW, LISW
Bruce Pfohl, MD
Responding to Person with BPD

- Where are you on emotional intensity continuum (1-5)?
- Have you used your notebook?
- What skill can you use in this situation?
- How will you use it?
- If person cannot think of skill, ask about each one on the list
Responding to the Person with Emotional Intensity Disorder:

1. Where are you on your Emotional Intensity Continuum (1-5)?
2. Have you used your notebook?
3. What skill can you use in this situation? How will you use it?
4. If the person cannot think of what skill to use, ask about each one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion Regulation Skills</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Distance: Step back</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Communicate: Put words on it</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Challenge: Think about it differently</td>
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<td>4. Distract: Get Involved</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Manage Problem</td>
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</table>

Behavior Skills:

1. Take Medications as Prescribed
2. Use Relaxation Technique
3. Use Self-Soothing Activity
4. Use Distraction Activity
5. Use Emotional Intensity Continuum
6. Use Reinforcement Team Member
7. Interpersonal Relationship Skill
8. Balanced Eating
9. Regular Sleeping
10. Regular Exercise
STAIRWAYS™: The Next Step in BPD Skills Training

- Setting Goals
- Trying New Things
- Anger Management
- Impulsivity Control
- Relationship Behaviors
- Writing a Script
- Assertiveness Training
- Your Choices
- Staying on Track
**STAIRWAYS**: The Next Step in Borderline Skills Training

- Reduces abandonment fears
- Decreases intensity of service
- Meets two times per month - 2 hours per meeting
- Work on additional skills that affect their lives
- Reinforces previously learned skills
Facilitator Training

- Master’s level with experience
- 2-day intensive workshop
- Ongoing follow-up and consultation by internet (SKYPE), email, phone
- Ratings of videotaped sessions for therapist fidelity to model
Research Studies

- RCTs completed in Iowa* and The Netherlands** (references below)
- Multiple non-RCTs from US, England, Italy, Scotland, Netherlands published
- STEPPS reduces global severity, BPD symptoms, and depression
- Prison studies (non-RCT) show ↓ self-harm, suicide attempts, disciplinary infractions

**van Wel, et al. Dutch J Psy 2009
Thank You!

Nancee Blum, MSW, LISW
Department of Psychiatry
Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine
The University of Iowa
nancee-blum@uiowa.edu