

# STEPPS to Address BPD

## Part 1

Presented by

Nancee Blum, MSW





# **STEPPS™**

## **Systems Training for Emotional Predictability and Problem-Solving**

**Nancee Blum, MSW, LISW**

**Norm Bartels, MA, MPH**

**Don St. John, PA-C**

**Bruce Pfohl, MD**

**Department of Psychiatry**

**Roy J. and Lucille A.**

**Carver College of Medicine**

**The University of Iowa**



**A SYSTEMS APPROACH  
TO TREATMENT:**

**BORDERLINE  
PERSONALITY  
DISORDER  
SKILL  
TRAINING  
MANUAL**

NORMAN E. BARTELS, M.A., M.P.A.  
THERESA D. CROTTY, L.C.S.W.



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**With special thanks to Donald Black, MD**  
**Professor of Psychiatry**  
**Roy J. and Lucille A.**  
**Carver College of Medicine**  
**The University of Iowa**



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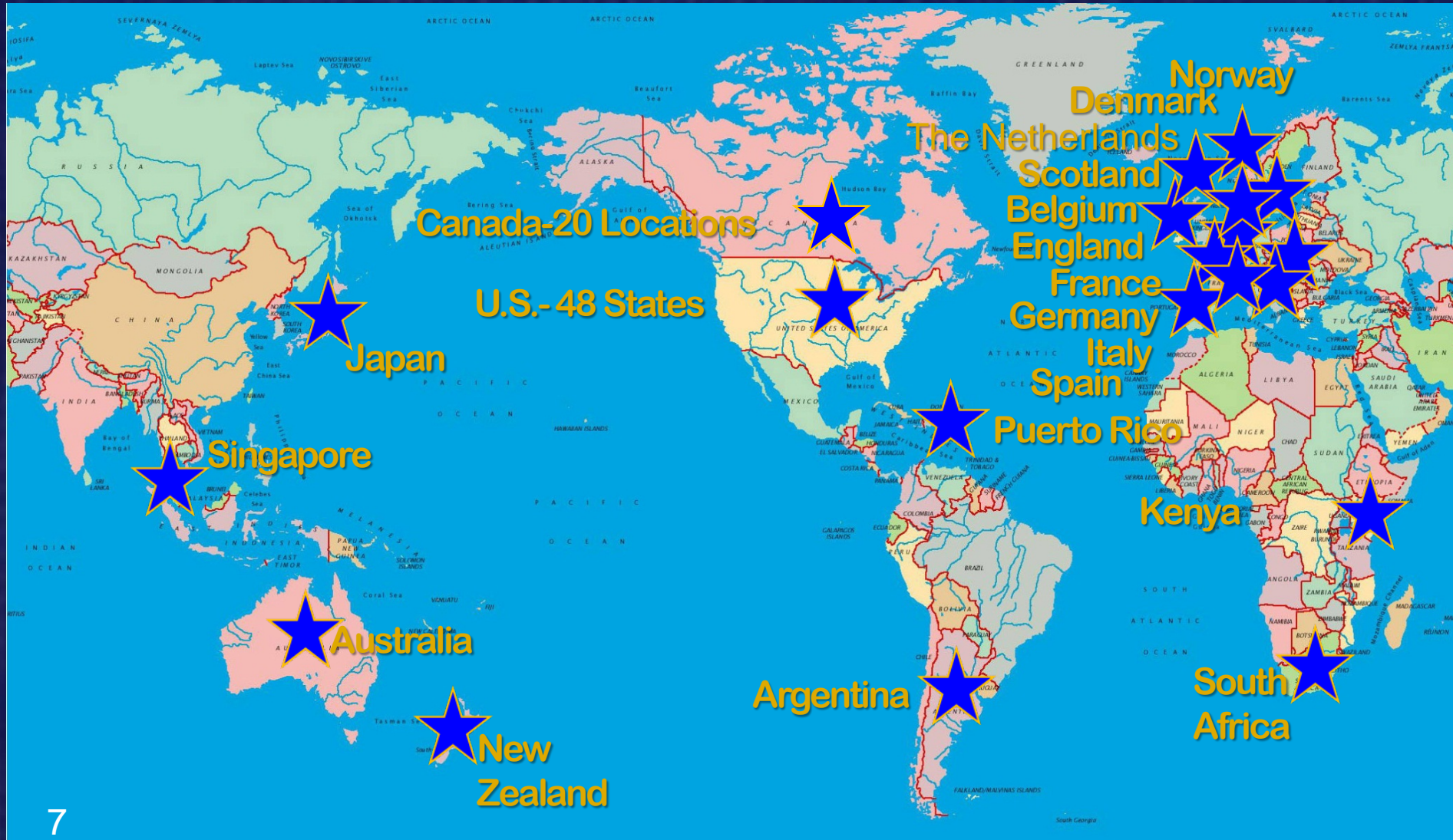
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# Where Is STEPPS?



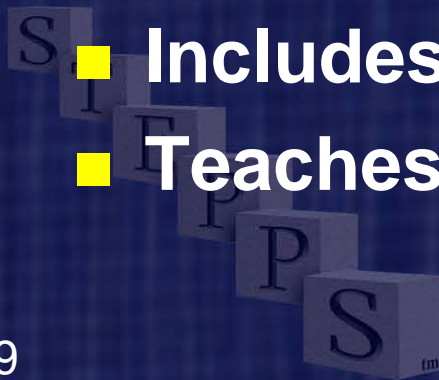
# Who Uses STEPPS?

- 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



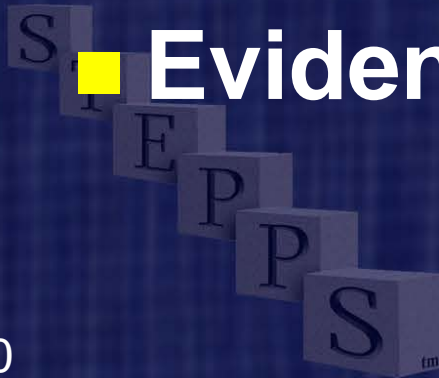
# The STEPPS Program for BPD

- Group format
- Psychoeducational approach/manual-based
- Cognitive behavioral model + skills training
- Confronts early maladaptive schemas (cognitive filters)
- Includes reinforcement team
- Teaches a common language



# STEPPS

- 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

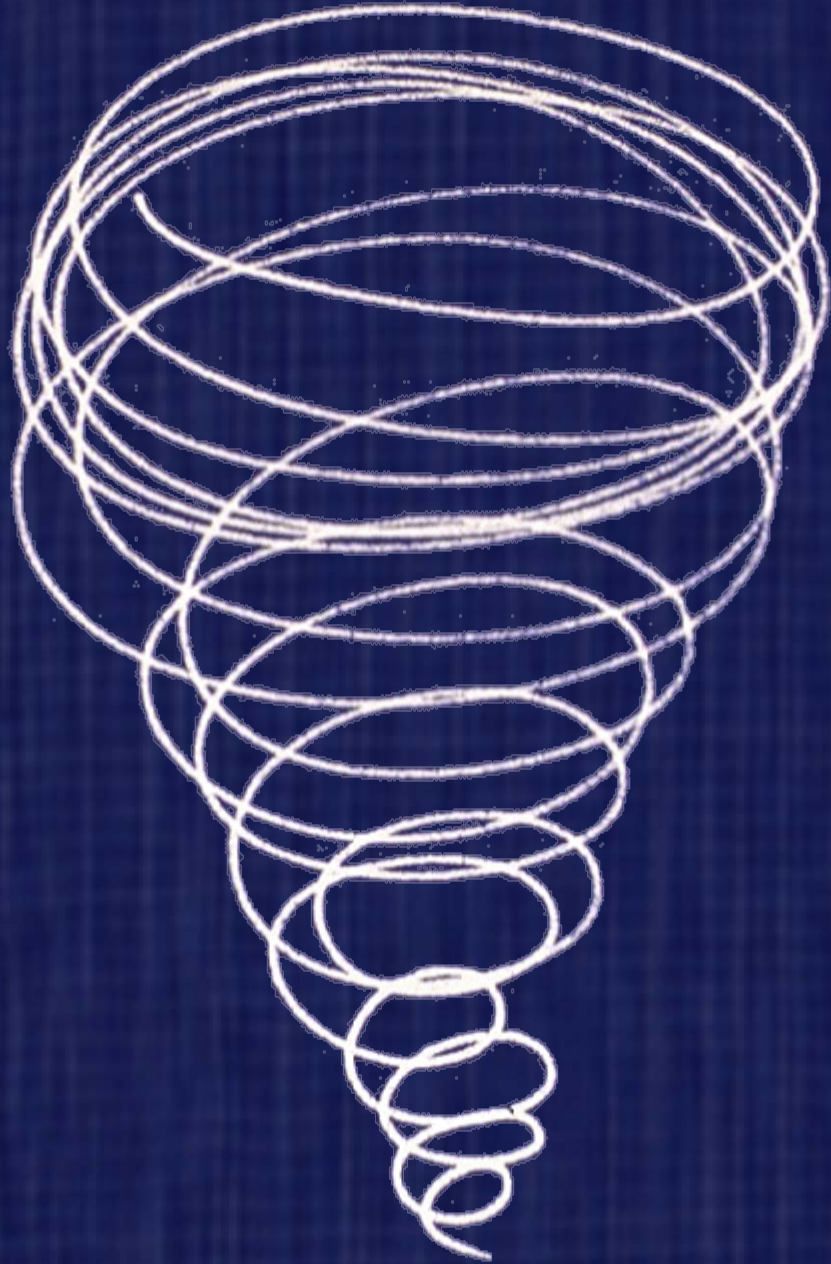




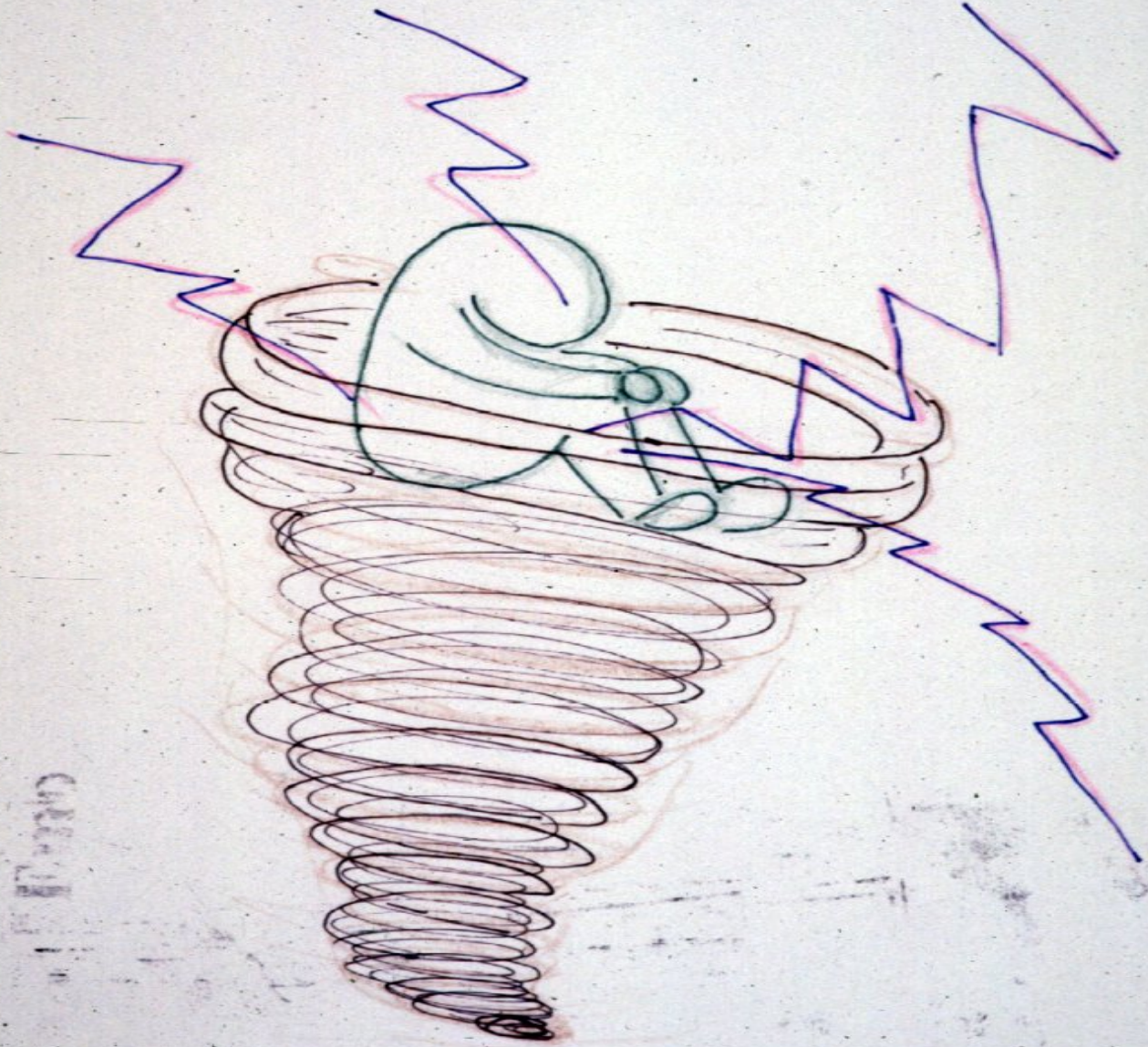
# Behavior Management Skills

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





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# Emotional Intensity Continuum



**1=Baseline**

**2=Beginning of Intensity**

**3=Development**

**4=Pre-blow-up**

**5=Blow-up**



Event: *What happened?*



**Skills:** Distancing   Communicating   Challenging   Distracting   Managing Problems   Abuse Avoidance

	1	2	3	4	5
Feelings <i>What did I feel?</i>					
Physical Sensations <i>What was my body doing?</i>					
Thoughts <i>What was I thinking?</i>					
Filters <i>Which were triggered?</i>					
Action Urges <i>What did I want to do?</i>					
Behaviors <i>What did I do?</i>					

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

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End - Part 1

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