

STEP: Manualized Treatment for Survivors of Domestic Violence

Survivors of domestic violence have many psychological effects similar to other trauma victim/survivors, particularly those who have experienced gender-based violence such as sexual assault, rape, sexual exploitation, trafficking, and child sexual abuse. Although many different types of psychotherapy and other interventions have been described in the literature, the consensus is that trauma-specific treatment has the best efficacy in helping victims become survivors with new resilience. Using an evidence-based, trauma-specific treatment program, the Survivor Therapy Empowerment Program (STEP-2) helps move victims to a survivor status with a tripartite program. The three areas are psychoeducation to assist in the understanding of the various trauma responses, a period of discussion where the impact of these trauma responses are understood from an individual perspective, and a skill-building period where new skills are learned and old skills reinforced. The transparent intervention program has 12 units that can be broken down into smaller sessions if necessary. Goals are negotiated with the clients as part of modeling the empowerment process necessary to heal from trauma. Rebuilding lost resilience is included as a part of healing from PTSD.

Topics include safety planning, relaxation training, cognitive restructuring faulty cognitions, boundaries and assertiveness, cycle of violence, trauma and PTSD, numbing behaviors and substance abuse, attachment and emotional re-regulation, impact of domestic violence on children, dealing with legal issues, grieving and letting go of old relationships, and building wellness and resilience. Each STEP can be used in a group or individually, in sequence or using each unit as its own stand alone section.

Target Audience

Psychologists Social Workers Counselors
Therapists Psychiatrists Nurses

Course Level: Intermediate

Learning Objectives

At the end of this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Define the elements of a trauma-specific treatment program
2. Explain 3 new skills to a domestic violence survivor
3. Describe a safety plan a client can use for protection
4. Define the important psychoeducation about trauma, PTSD & domestic violence.
5. Adapt the STEP-2 program to their own practice

Outline

Begin 1 PM ET
What is STEP-2
Group Dynamics
12 Steps
Sessions vs. Units
Labeling
Relaxation Training
Cognitive Restructuring
Boundaries
Break 2:30-2:45 PM ET
Battered Women Syndrome
Trauma Triggers
Numbing Behaviors
Empathy
Impact On Children
Legal Issues
Grieving
Wellness
Data
Self-Care
End 4:15 PM ET

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The Presenter

Lenore Walker received her doctorate at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey in 1972 and immediately went on the psychiatry faculty at the then CMDNJ Rutgers Medical School where she began her research about the psychological effects of domestic violence on women and children. In 1978 Walker received an ROI research grant from NIMH to study what she named "Battered Woman Syndrome". She continued that research on the faculty of Nova Southeastern University Center for Psychological Studies where she is the Coordinator of the Clinical Forensic Psychology Concentration in the doctoral program and Director of the Masters in Forensic Psychology program. During the almost forty years, Walker has engaged in clinical and forensic practice and policy issues around the world in the area of gender violence, published twenty books and authored numerous chapters and articles, and is working on the fourth edition of *The Battered Woman Syndrome*. She is known internationally for her keynote speeches and workshops to professionals as well as expert witness testimony in high publicity legal cases.

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This seminar has been reviewed and approved by Keith Hannan, Ph.D., Laura Davie, LICSW, Tina Jenkins, Psy.D., and Loreen Yearick, MSN, RN. This approval expires on March 1, 2028.

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