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## **BPS (Basic Psychological Support®): Psychological emergency protocol designed to the early management of panic attacks and acute anxiety**

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For many years now, all over the world, the life-saving Basic Life Support and Defibrillation (BLS-D) is considered the most common protocol of intervention, thanks to which deaths and damage caused by cardiac arrest have lowered remarkably. The success of this first aid technique, in terms of outcomes and dissemination is attributable to the simplicity of the intervention and to the fact that anybody, including untrained individuals, can learn it and use it. The principle that every human being can, essentially, save the life of another human being has been a real revolution, not only in the medical field, but also from a social point of view. However, the same revolution did not take place in the field of psychological well-being. According to the World Health Organization, mental pain is a worrying health emergency, showing impressive, steadily increasing figures (World Health Organization, 2001; 2013). The panic attack, specifically, is an increasingly frequent phenomenon in the population and, despite it isn't considered as a real disease, it is often associated with many mental disorders, further aggravating the clinical picture. Providing first aid to somebody who is experiencing a panic attack in its acute phase is a very strong and intense situation. It's scary, and it makes somebody feel completely disarmed and helpless sometimes. Moreover, without a proper training, the help provided may be ineffective or even counterproductive. That's why the BPS (Basic Psychological Support®) was designed, as an intervention protocol for rescuers based on scientific evidence and consisting in simple procedures and behaviors aimed at the early management of panic attack and of acute anxiety, waiting of specialist rescue operations. A protocol designed for everyone, easy to learn and easy to use that aims to provide to the citizens of some skills which are simple but with a very strong social impact, and that represent a real innovation in the field of international psychology.

### **Biography**

Paolo Scapellato graduated in Psychology at the University of Bologna in 1998 and then specialized in Cognitive-Behavioral Psychotherapy at the Skinner Institute in Rome. He is active in psychotherapy privately in Macerata, where he lives, and since 2006 is a Contract Professor of Clinical Psychology and Fundamentals of Clinical Investigation at the European University of Rome. He is Professor and Supervisor of the School of Specialization in Psychotherapy of the Skinner Institute in Rome and Naples. In Macerata, he is President of the Association of psychologists and pedagogues "Praxis" since 2002 and technical consultant for the Court. He is the author of numerous national and international publications and books *Attacchi di panico e ansia acuta, supporto psicologico di base* (Giunti ed., 2017), *Fondamenti di Investigazione Clinica* (Editori Riuniti, 2014) e *Prevenzione e trattamento delle dipendenze* (Editori Riuniti, 2014).

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