



HOW MRT AND DV-MRT PROGRAMS CAN ASSIST IN SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES IN THERAPEUTIC COURTS

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Goals of Drug & Therapeutic Courts

DRUG COURTS

- * Reducing Recidivism
- * Promoting Treatment and Rehabilitation
 - * Increasing Public Safety
 - * Providing Accountability
 - * Reducing System Costs
 - * Improving Quality of Life

THERAPEUTIC COURTS

- * Addressing Underlying Causes of Criminal Behavior
 - * Reducing Recidivism
 - * Improving Public Safety
 - * Supporting Rehabilitation
- * Promoting Accountability and Compliance
 - * Reducing System Costs
 - * Improving Life Outcomes

Moral Reconciliation Therapy (Regular MRT)

MRT is a cognitive-behavioral therapy aimed at reducing recidivism by increasing moral reasoning and helping individuals make better life decisions. It was developed in the 1980s by Correctional Counseling, Inc and is widely used in criminal justice settings, particularly with individuals in substance abuse programs and those in therapeutic courts.

MRT therapy is aimed at decreasing the likelihood of someone returning to abusing substances or alcohol. It teaches people in the criminal justice system with substance use disorders to focus on the moral aspects of their illness, and the social consequences that may be associated with using drugs or alcohol.

Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT)...cont

It is a widely cognitive-behavioral approach that treats substance use disorders, trauma, domestic violence, and more.

(Show workbooks)

MRT therapy is aimed at decreasing the likelihood of someone returning to abusing substances or alcohol. It teaches people in the criminal justice system with substance use disorders to focus on the moral aspects of their illness, and the social consequences that may be associated with using drugs or alcohol.

The Moral Reconation Therapy program,

How to Escape Your Prison:

used with all types of clients including those in jails, community corrections, halfway houses, drug/mental health/DUI courts, substance use programs

has 16 steps with 12 of these typically completed in 30 group sessions depending on implementation of the site's own needs

can be held once or several times per week

all MRT groups are open-ended meaning that new clients can enter an ongoing group at any time

all exercises are prepared by the participant prior to the group and then presented and processed during the group in compliance with the underlying issue of the exercise by a trained facilitator

Domestic Violence Moral Reconation Therapy (DV-MRT)

The DV-MRT model is a cognitive –behavioral program designed to change how batterers think (belief systems) therefore leading to changing the batterers' behaviors from any types of abuse whether it is physical, emotional, or financial to behaviors which include equality and acceptance.

One of the major goals of the program is to increase the moral reasoning levels of participants based on Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Conation is closely associated with the use of will or the freedom to make choices about what to do. It is critical if an individual is to successfully engage in self-direction, self-regulation, and possess intentionality in behavior.

The Moral Reconciliation Therapy program, Bringing Peace to Relationships:

is a power and control program

is operationalized in an open-ended group and workbook driven format which can be completed in 24 weeks

all groups are facilitated by a trained facilitator (all Facilitators attend a required 32 hour training in the model)

the workbook, *Bringing Peace to Relationships*, contains cognitive-behavioral exercises which have a specific format and purpose

all exercises are prepared by the participant prior to the group and then presented and processed during the group in compliance with the underlying issue of the exercise by a trained facilitator

The Moral Reconciliation Therapy Program, Bringing Peace to Relationships:

is psycho-educational

confronts power &
control tactics such as
male privilege,
coercion, minimizing
behavior, and isolation

defines domestic
violence

assists the batterer in
taking responsibility

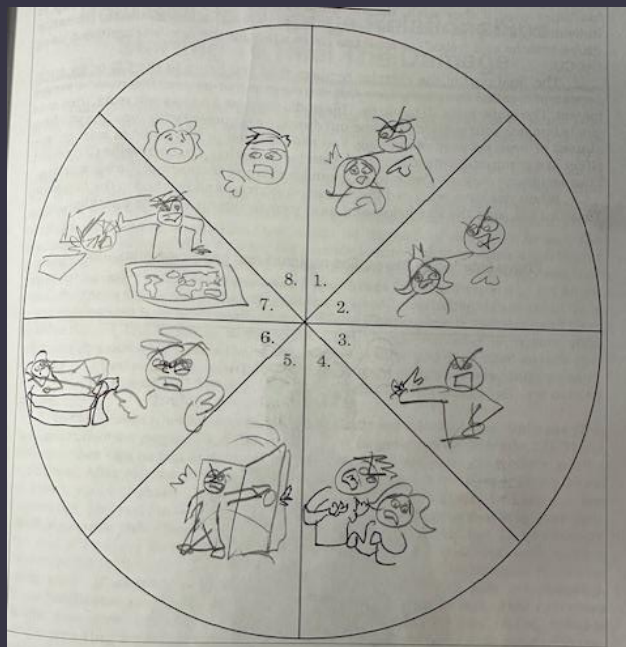
challenges role
expectations

teaches stress
management skills

teaches about the
cycle of violence and
requires the participant
to identify any cycles
within their relationships

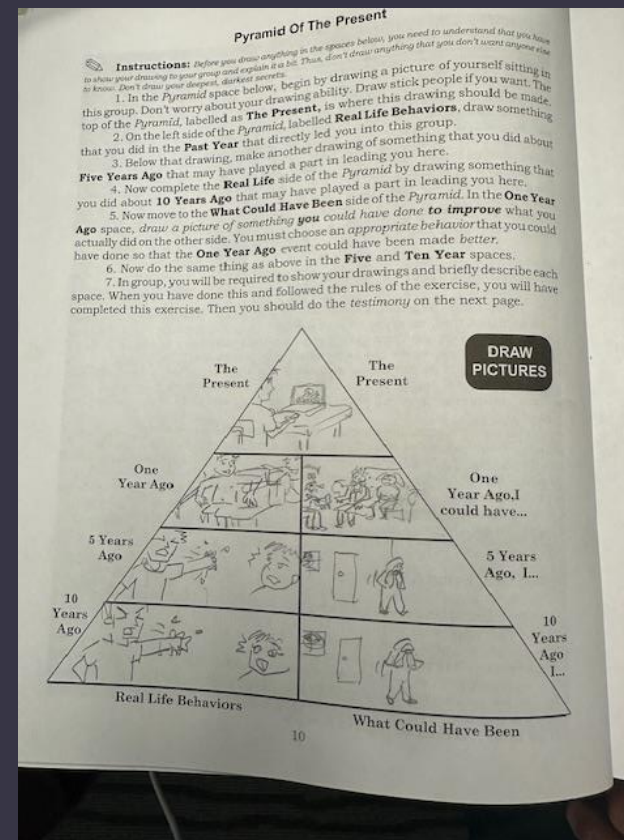
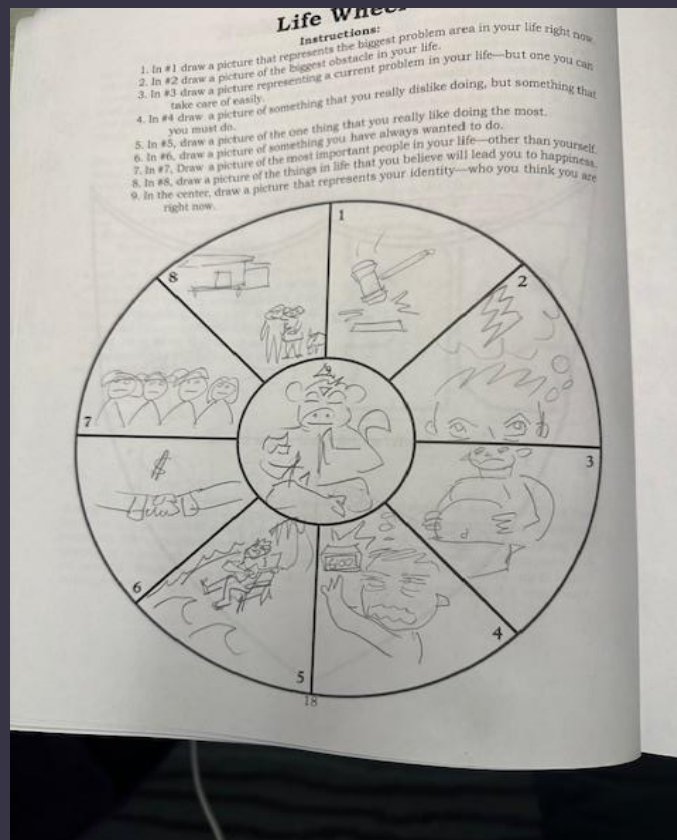
teaches the participant
tools to interrupt any
violence such as
learning to take a time-
out

explores the socio-
cultural basis for
domestic violence



Learning How To Relax During A Time-Out

The final exercise of this chapter is usually fun and relaxing. It begins with you listening to the audio, *5-Minute Stress Manager*, one time in group. This audio simply has you close your eyes, take three deep breaths, and mentally repeat the word "relax" to yourself. Your facilitator may wish to have you listen to a CD outside of group — that is permitted. However, you must listen to the CD only at a time when you can lean back in a comfortable chair, close your eyes, and relax for at least 5 minutes. Your



Sample lesson exercises

My Third Angry Situation

A. ACTIVATING EVENT
 Argument in the car while driving home. Was the time we'd had for a while. In a fit, caused me to hit a tree in my driveway. Wife demanded to call police.

C. MY BELIEFS
 These are the same fights we've had forever, she needs to forgive me I deserve to be forgiven. I have done so much to change. She should recognize I am a good person I have not done anything to deserve this. You can't treat me this way. People who love their spouse don't call the police. She should know me that I am some value to her.

MY FEELINGS
 Angry, betrayed, dismissed as being no value (hurt), desperate.

B. MY BEHAVIORAL RESPONSE
 Anger and yelling, pleading to not call the police, fled the house.

D. WHAT WAS AN APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORAL ALTERNATIVE?
 Admitting the mistake; stopping the car immediately and seeing if she was alright. Staying calm and listening.

D. HOW COULD I HAVE TAKEN A TIME-OUT?
 I could have taken the dog and gone for a long walk. I could have called my parents or a friend to get advice on how to proceed.

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Circle of Relationships

Instructions:

- In #1, draw a picture that represents the biggest relationship problem in your life.
- In #2, draw a picture of the biggest problem—or difficulty—in that relationship.
- In #3, draw a picture that represents a current problem that you have with someone—but one you can take care of easily.
- In #4, draw a picture of something you dislike doing with other people, but must do anyway.
- In #5, draw a picture of the one thing you like doing most with other people.
- In #6, draw a picture of something you have always wanted to do with another person.
- In #7, draw a picture of the most important person or persons in your life—other than yourself.
- In #8, draw a picture of the special relationship in life that you believe will lead you to happiness.
- In the center, draw a picture that represents your feelings toward other people right now.

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Circle of Relationships

A Moral Reconciliation Exercise
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Instructions:

- Draw a picture that represents the biggest relationship problem in your life.
- Draw a picture of the biggest problem or difficulty in that relationship.
- Draw a picture that represents a current problem that you have with someone—but one that you can take care of easily.
- Draw a picture of something you dislike doing with other people but must do anyway.
- Draw a picture of the one thing that you like doing with other people.
- Draw a picture of something that you have always wanted to do with another person.
- Draw a picture of the most important person in your life—other than yourself.
- Draw a picture of the special relationship in life that you believe will lead you to happiness.
- In the center, draw a picture that represents your feelings toward other people. That is, draw something that shows how you feel towards others now.

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Sample lesson exercises



1. What I thought when I first came in. The movie 24 was the movie I referred to. How the ticking sound in between scenes slowly ticked and tocked. each passing second felt like that. I was resentful. I wasn't supposed to be here. I resented the judge, I resented my lawyer, I resented my ex and resented the world for placing me in this position....



2. The importance of honesty, openness and trust....Just like the show 24, I started to get drawn into the program. Even when I didn't want to do the homework or pay attention in class, I was somehow being drawn in. And slowly I started to understand the importance of these 3 things. **Honesty** requires us being truthful. At all times. Being truthful is not easy but if we can speak our truth, it leads to openness. **Openness** means we are willing to be transparent - which suggests that no matter what you see when you look at me, my honesty and truthfulness would be seen and gives the person or people around us, the willingness/opportunity to trust us. **Trust** being the ultimate of the 3 (in my opinion) means that they can put their faith in us. And its this faith that allows for happiness to rain, creation of children and families, and love exist.



3. What you have learned about your inner self. I sucked at life. I sucked at being a human being. Not like in a terrible way, but when I reflected on the pedestal that I once placed myself, thinking I was such a "great human", I was really was just lying to myself. When I thought I was being transparent, in reality I was as transparent as mud. When I thought I was being loving, I was only "selfishly loving" - to secure my own happiness. But I realized that it was ok. I had another chance of making this next phase of my life a lot better. I believe that I am capable of change.

Sample Testimony

- 4. How some of your beliefs were wrong and self defeating

90% of what drives me are my beliefs. I was raised Muslim and from Africa and I have some deep-rooted beliefs. My parents, peer groups and community did a great job making sure they stayed rooted. My laziness also watered these beliefs. My reluctance to think beyond my shallow understanding of life prevented me from seeing a different version of life. I came to realize that a lot of my beliefs were wrong and detrimental to my development as a human being. Not only do I have to unlearn these beliefs but I have to relearn a new way of viewing and living life.

- 5. How taking a time-out is important. Taking a time out to me - means processing data or information (my idea of it). Even computers when inputted with data take time to process the information before providing an answer or suggestion. So why shouldn't I process information if that was a feature even built into the world's greatest and fastest computers. We have seen what happens when we don't take the time to process/cook food. We get the shits!! So with that said, I realized that I need to process my thoughts, process my feelings, process children's actions, process my mothers feelings, process why the guy in the yellow truck just flicked me off. Even if its just for 2 minutes. In two minutes we can create life. Also in two minutes we can destroy life. I don't always have to win. I don't always have to come up on top of every situation. I don't have to respond to every finger in traffic.

- 6. How have you committed to being non-abusive and nonviolent

I know better now. I am better now. I should do better now. I look to mend broken relationships and also be open to the other party not willing to accept my apology because I know that time is needed to process any type of information - even an apology. "Why not try out this new way of life and see where it gets me" - this is what I told myself. And somehow I see things getting better. Just each passing day when I decide to do the opposite of what I would typically do, I see a different outcome. A more positive outcome. An outcome that somehow gives me inner peace. And I really like the feeling :)

- 7. What a healthy family is to you.

Trusting others. Being patient with not just my immediate family, but also my extended family and the society I live in. Be caring for others by treating them with love and kindness. Avoid being toxic to people :) Respect one another and the choices we make. Address everyone calmly. Take the time to listen. Unite instead of divide. And being aware that our purpose while alive is to serve as good humans. This I believe is the foundation of a healthy family.

Questions:

How can MRT and DV MRT reduce recidivism?

How can MRT and DV MRT be used and be incorporated in therapeutic courts?

Who offers these programs and how can an agency establish one?

Are these programs offered in Spanish or any other language?

Where can I get more information about these programs?

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