

# Evaluating Cognitive Change in Batterer Intervention Program Participants: *You Can Only Manage What You Measure*

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# Introduction / Objectives

Speaker background

Participant experience

Objectives:

- Review measurement instruments to assess program effectiveness and participant's cognitive changes

- Review victim-centered/ trauma-informed curriculum using evidence-informed interventions

# Challenges for Batterer Intervention Programs

Offender Typologies

Attachment Issues

Past Trauma Experience

Victim Involvement

Financial Constraints

Co-occurring Substance Abuse

What is “Change” — How do we know it’s “working”?

# Common Issues in Batterer Intervention Programs

Participants enroll with HIGH levels of denial and LOW levels of acceptance of personal responsibility for the violence they have committed

Research shows HIGH drop-out rates and HIGH levels of reoffending, even after program completion

Lack of continuity and consistency among program—training, curriculum, time frames

No established definition of “success”

Others????

# Prison /Community Pilot Project

## Prison Pilot Project

- No voluntary dropouts

- Desire to continue program

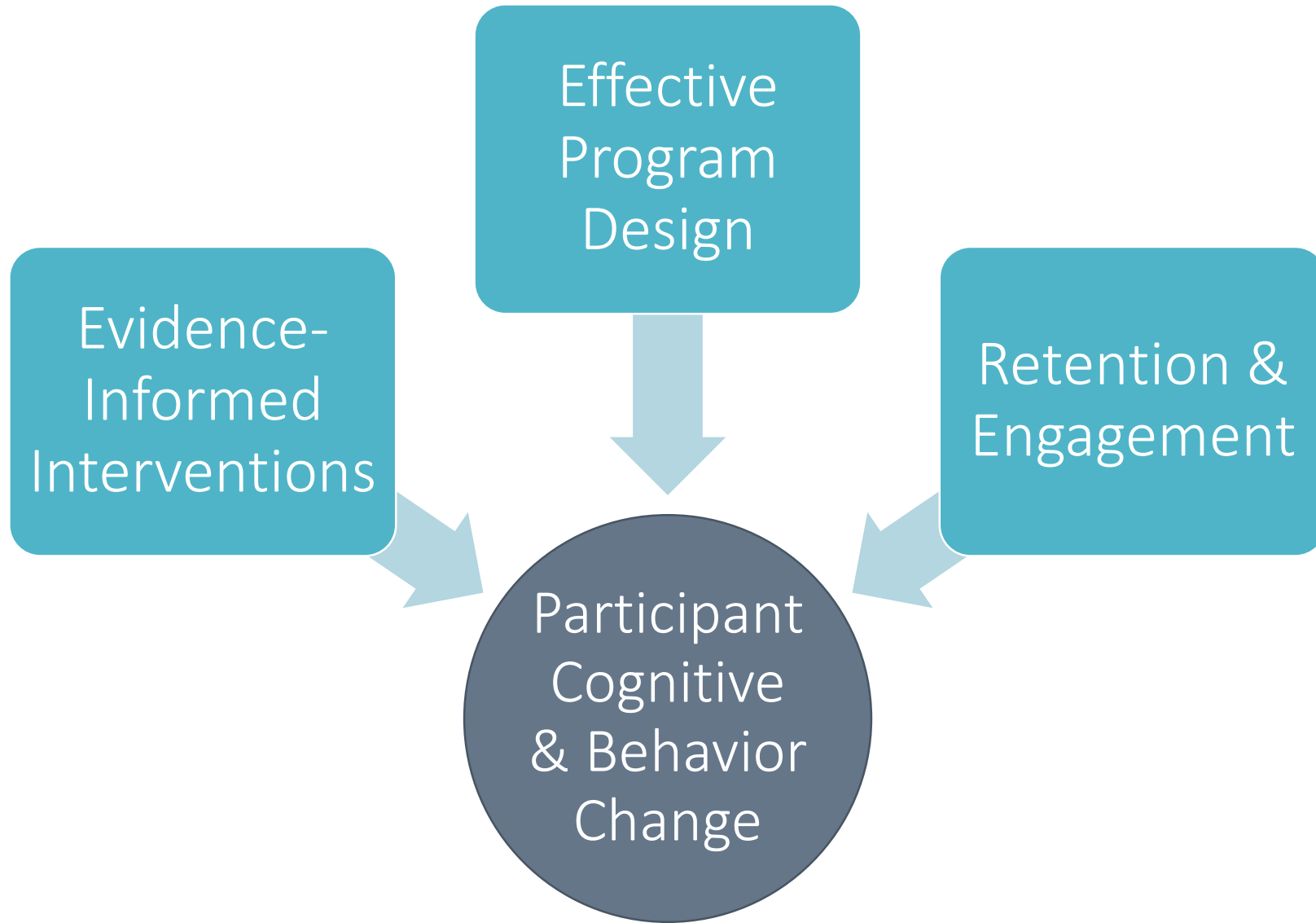
- Statistically significant reductions in denial and increased personal responsibility

## Community Pilot Project

- 90% retention at 90-days

- 68% graduation rate after 52-weeks

- Zero new arrests for DV 18-months post graduation (vs 30% for non-graduates)



# Participant Cognitive / Behavior Change

## Objective Measurements

*Recognitive & Personal Responsibility Scale (RPRS)*

*Criminal Thinking Scales (TCU-CTS)*

*University of Rhode Island Change Assessment (URICA)*

## Subjective Measurements

*Participant Program Evaluation*

*Process Group/Facilitator Evaluation*

## Recidivism Follow-up

*Arrests vs. Convictions*

*Victim Reports*

# Objective Measurement Goals

**RPRS—focuses on levels of denial and acceptance of personal responsibility**

5 categories—goal for scores to increase (=diminishing level of denial)

Need to develop confidential code /Discreet collection of assessments

**CTS—focuses on criminal thinking**

6 categories--Scores increase or decrease depending on category

Reverse scoring used

**URICA—focuses on motivation levels**

4 categories—scores increase/decrease depending on category



# Recognition & Personal Responsibility Scale (RPRS)

Based on the Abusive Behavior Inventory (Shepherd & Campbell, 1992).

36 Questions-Designed to measure psychological and physical abuse with victims.

Redesigned to measure levels of denial and minimization among batterers. Added a few questions based on experience as a victim advocate—combined some questions and reworded others.

*Used to measure program effectiveness in helping batterers reduce denial and increase acceptance of personal responsibility. **BEST USED ANONYMOUSLY***

# Criminal Thinking Scales (TCU)

Six Subscales

- A. Entitlement
- B. Justification\*
- C. Power Orientation\*
- D. Cold Heartedness \*
- E. Criminal Rationalization
- F. Personal Irresponsibility \*

*Available in Spanish*

# University of Rhode Island Change Assessment (URICA)

32-item assessment

Various versions for drug/alcohol, psychology, etc. / Available in Spanish

4 categories

- A. Precontemplation
- B. Contemplation
- C. Action
- D. Maintenance

# Additional Measurements

Subjective Measurements:

*Participant Program Evaluation*

*Process Group/Facilitator Evaluation*

Recidivism Follow-up

*Arrests vs. Convictions*

*Victim Reports*

*What else????*

# Evidence-Informed Interventions

Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions

*Connecting Thoughts, Feelings, Behaviors*

Motivational Interviewing

*Readiness to Change Model*

Dialectical Behavioral Interventions

*Mindfulness / Self-Soothing*

Trauma-Informed Design

*ACE's / Resiliency / Solution-Focused Homework*

# Effective Program Design

Opportunities to Maximize Healthy Socialization

*Room set-up / Group activities*

Identify the Negative—Teach to the Positive

*Power & Control Wheel / Equality Wheel*

“No Shame” Zone

*Shame vs Guilt—unintended consequences*

Acknowledge Past Grief /Loss /Trauma experiences

*Increase personal awareness & Increase victim empathy*

Meaningful Homework

*Solution-focused vs Worksheets*

# Retention & Engagement

## Adult Learning Principles

*Learning Preferences*

*Bloom's Taxonomy*

*R.I.D.E.M*

*Brain Science Principles*

## Attachment Issues

*Safety & Security*

## Batterer Typologies

*Physiological Responses /*

*Violence Motivation*

## Financial Barriers

*Strategies to Reduce (Jail*

*Programs/ Private-*

*Government Grants, et al)*

# Questions

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