Domestic Violence Offender Treatment: Differences and Results
How to Talk about BIP Efficacy and Examine Our Assumptions about Batterers and Batterer’s Intervention

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Every Journey Must Have A Destination

OUTCOMES

What you understand and believe will guide your interventions.
(for better AND for worse)
If we knew what we were doing, we would not be calling it research
~Albert Einstein

BATTERING IS:
Instrumental, strategic, and purposeful behavior designed to bring about an outcome.

Battering is; Functional Behavior
Instrumental, strategic, and purposeful behavior designed to bring about an outcome.

Batterer’s Deserve Full Credit For What They’ve Done!

What is the difference?
The difference is much less than what most people want it to be.

Men Who DO Batter
Men Who DO NOT Batter
Batterers are not all that different than the rest of us...similar, but turned up
1. I want what I want, when I want it and I am willing to get it at another’s expense!
2. Who has not thought about hitting another person...men who batter, have the same thought, but think it is a good idea!
3. Justifications abound!
"You can't talk your way out of something that you behaved your way into"

"So what happens now?"
"We chase the lie 'til it leads to the truth."
Gil Grissom
(Fahrenheit 9/11)
"I was out of control"

LISTEN:
You will find the exceptions to the rule

"When I get drunk there's no telling what I'll do"
Why does he do this?

First we need to consider WHERE...he does this...

Domestic violence takes place in our culture which promotes, tolerates, endorses, condones, celebrates, and encourages violence against women.

Program Design

Options
- The process of looking back in order to move forward toward an accountable, non-violent lifestyle.
- Guideline: By Session 10

Tactics
- Exploration of core beliefs that allowed me to choose battering behavior and identifying alternative accountable options.
- Guideline: 8-30 Sessions

Foundations
- Explores the choice model, power and control wheel, accountability plan, and SDR.
- Guideline: 4-16 Sessions

Discovery
- "What specific behaviors did I do that give me a reason for being in this program?"
- Guideline: 2-8 Sessions
Research—are BIPs working? (combined with monitoring, judicial review, etc)

- What is working?
- Who obtains what information?
- What is the yardstick?

Briefly the different models out there and that different models are sometimes for different offenders (especially mentioning Duluth, NRT-b, DBT, Cognitive Behavioral approaches, etc.)

- What is your child’s name?
- Different names for the same or similar things
- Questions?
- The more important questions are:
  - Is the program connected?
  - Who is the program connected with?
  - How has the program developed over time?

High risk offenders (what works)?

- High risk according to whom?
- History known and unknown
The AQUILA Working Group is dedicated to providing accurate, evidence-based information about batterer intervention programs and their impact on men who batter. We are committed to enhancing dialogue and public awareness about these programs and about the potential for change for men who have a history of domestic violence.

We support and promote program practices that:

- Center on the safety and well-being of adult victims/survivors of intimate partner violence and children.
- Promote responsible, safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate relationships for men who have a history of domestic violence.
- Encourage multi-institutional, community, and family capacity to hold men who batter accountable for their conduct and encourage them to change.
- Acknowledge that many men who attend batterer intervention programs face multiple obstacles to long-term change (such as poverty, addiction, and disproportional impact of our systems), and promote holistic services to help men deal with issues that destabilize the change process.

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aquila2008/join

Access us on the web

http://www.biscmi.org/aquila/

Where do you get stuck when asked “Do BIPs work?”
To date there have been more than 35 evaluations of batterer intervention programs. They have yielded inconsistent results.

“Damn it Jim!...I’m a BIP Facilitator... not a researcher”

Issues with BIP Research

- Mixed research results
- False hope for victims
- May need to match batterer to specific intervention to maximize positive outcomes
- Misunderstanding of effect size
- Issues that compound the problem: substance abuse, mental disorders, poverty

Issues with BIP Research

- Variable standards for programs;
- Lack of cultural competence
- An integrated justice response (law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, defense lawyers, probation officers, judges, BIPs) increases the possibility of a positive outcome
- Court mandated participants = lower motivation to change
Methodology dilemmas

- Defining a BIP
- Defining success
- Defining abuse
- Defining re-abuse
- True random sampling
- Identifying outcome measures
  - Victim feedback
  - Criminal recidivism
  - Validated measures
- Varying philosophies & methods of BIPs
- Regionally influenced confounds
- Generalizing results

Q. Success in a BIP is defined as...

- The perpetrator of DV will NEVER EVER, EVER, EVER use any battering tactic or abuse anybody EVER in their life again.
- An improvement from a baseline measure.
- Victims’ perception of safety.
- Something else.

Defining Success

The Community
Social Policy
The Abuser
The Survivor
Often times the OUTCOMES have been “hijacked”

The Criminal Justice System may define the outcome as program completion…if this is what we want…then…

- Design programs that are easily completed
- Develop curriculum that focus on things that _______________________________ (fill in the blank)

We not only believe that men can change and stop their violence and abuse…but that they can develop and nurture the presence of attributes which are antithetical to DV

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Incident Vs. Context

The language of recidivism is linguistically steeped in an incident based analysis

The criminalization of men’s violence against women brought with it some unintended consequences.

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Acute v. Chronic

**Acute and Chronic Health Effects**

Acute health effects are characterized by sudden and severe exposure and rapid absorption of the substance. Normally, a single large exposure is involved. Acute health effects are often reversible. Examples: carbon monoxide or cyanide poisoning.

Chronic health effects are characterized by prolonged or repeated exposures over many days, months or years. Symptoms may not be immediately apparent. Chronic health effects are often irreversible. Examples: lead or mercury poisoning, cancer.
Acute v. Chronic Considerations ...through whose eyes?

Men's Violence Against Women is a Chronic Problem that comes to the attention as an Acute Episode

The Problem: We have created systems of response to an acute episode and may be lulled into a perception that men's violence against women is an acute problem, when in fact it is a chronic problem

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- Varying lengths of program participation
- Standardized format for intake assessment
- Integrated information from multiple sources:
  - Initial partners
  - New partners
  - Police reports
- Integrated other data sources:
  - Program participation
  - Counselor ratings of progress, etc.
Edward Gondolf

- Results of Research (after 48 months)
  - Completers re-assaulted at a lower rate than drop out comparison group
    - 48% vs. 70%
  - Of the 48% who re-assaulted:
    - 22% did so repeatedly (cause 80% of injuries)
    - 26% did so once
    - 10% did so within the 1st month after completion
    - 90% did not re-assault in the last 12 months
- Results of the Research (after 15 months)
  - Partners reported general decrease in non-physical abuse
    - Down from 82% to 44%
  - Majority of women reported being “better off” or “feeling safe”

Etiony Aldarondo

- 22 Individual Outcome Studies
  - Follow up time: 7 weeks to 3 years
  - Recidivism Rate: 7% to 47% (average 26%)
    - In Average:
      - Police Records: 15%
      - Self Report: 24%
      - Victims Report: 34%

Etiony Aldarondo

- Seven Quasi-Experimental Evaluations
  - According to Police Reports
    - Follow up time: 4 months to 11 years
    - Sample size: 100 to 840
    - Recidivism Rate for Completers: 0% to 18% (average 9%)
    - Recidivism Rate for Dropouts: 10% to 40% (average 26%)
Six Quasi-Experimental Evaluations
According to Abuse Victims Reports:
- Follow up time: 5 months to 1 year
- Sample size: 68 to 840
- Recidivism Rate for Completers: 26% to 41% (average 32%)
- Recidivism Rate for Dropouts: 40% to 62% (average 46%)

Three Experimental Studies
- Follow up time: One year
- Sample size: 56 to 644

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BIP</th>
<th>Control</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police Records</td>
<td>4-18%</td>
<td>4-31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Report</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Reports</td>
<td>15-29%</td>
<td>22-30%</td>
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Limitations
- Controlling for error across studies
- Different conditions having different impacts
- Measurements were not consistent across sites
- Effect size is larger but controlling for differences reduces accuracy of reporting
- More difficult to make generalizations
- Only a summary of the completed research
Massachusetts Certified Batterer Intervention Program Study

Random sample of 2,045 defendants from 1998 to 2004


- Rate of restraining order violations more than doubled for those offenders who did not complete a Certified Batterer Intervention Program.
- 62% of a random sample of 2,045 offenders successfully completed a BIP when actively supervised; only 30% of unsupervised did.
- More than 50% of sample were violence-prone, poorly-educated, under-employed, indigent, and had serious substance abuse issues.

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Longitudinal, quasi-experimental study of four sites across the US with a sample size of 840, with follow up time of 15, 30 and 48 months

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- **Re-assaults** (48 percent):
  - Nearly ¾ in first 15 months
  - 20% Repeat-reassaulters = 80% of injuries
  - Length (more than 3 mo) and content of programs didn't seem to matter
- **But systems DID matter.**
  - Enter program within 2 to 2.5 weeks
  - Court monitoring of attendance
  - Swift response to noncompliance

**Limitations of Research Design**

- Unable to identify key aspects of the BIP intervention that were effective
- Not able to account for changes in programs and program structures
- Unable to clearly isolate effects to program participation (i.e., what was learned)
- Because not randomly assigned to groups cannot be generalized without some caution
- Social factors that impact the research

**NIJ Special Report: Batterer Intervention Programs, June 2003**

- "In both studies (Broward and New York City Experimental Evaluations), response rates were low, many people dropped out of the program, and victims could not be found for subsequent interviews."*
- The tests used to measure batterers’ attitudes toward domestic violence and their likelihood to engage in future abuse were of questionable validity.
- In the Brooklyn study, random assignment was overridden to a significant extent [an 8 week program was substituted for the control of no treatment]. Which makes it difficult to attribute effects exclusively to the program."*
EVIDENCE OF PROGRAM EFFECT

Other indicators

• Deterrence (perception of sanctions) not a predictor of reassault

• Majority of men’s and women’s program recommendations are positive

• Majority of women attribute men’s change to the program

• Men identify program lessons as a means of avoiding abuse

• Numerous personal accounts of program-based change

Summary

• Experimental evaluations have major shortcomings that contribute to misleading interpretations.

• Longitudinal outcomes suggest de-escalation of abuse following criminal justice/batterer program intervention.

• Complex analysis of established batterer programs show moderate “program effect.”

• Program context (e.g., court linkages) influences program outcomes, especially “swift and certain response to non-compliance.”
ONE CONCLUSION

- Some batterer programs contribute to reduction of abuse and violence
- Improve outcomes with on-going case-management of "repeaters"
- Increased CCR needed to reinforce programs and conduct risk management

NIJ Research Summary for Judges (Worden, 2003)

Despite an accumulation of studies evaluating programs for domestic violence offenders, rigorous studies are few, and firm conclusions cannot be made yet about intervention effectiveness (Saunders & Hamill, 2003). One of the biggest problems with this sentencing option is compliance, which remains the responsibility of the courts or probation officers (Worden, 2003).

If we’ve left you with more questions than answers:

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