

Moral Reconciliation Therapy

An evidenced-based, curriculum focused behavioral counseling intervention. MRT utilizes a series of open-group and individual counseling sessions and prescribed homework assignments designed to reduce substance abuse, criminal thinking and ideation, and risk-taking behaviors. Therapy is a systematic, cognitive behavioral treatment approach that addresses beliefs and reasoning to positively restructure and target destructive patterns of thinking, while offering solutions which improves functioning and reduces recidivism. MRT seeks to change how clients make decisions and judgments by enhancing moral reasoning based on Dr. Lawrence Kohlberg's Theory of Stages of Moral Reasoning.

Program Components

- Group process facilitated by Bachelor's level QMHP staff who have completed the 32-hour MRT Facilitator Training.
- Fidelity monitoring
- Open groups composed of male and female youth ages 12-17 years.
- MRT workbook, group counseling, and individual counseling using structured group exercises and prescribed homework assignments.
- MRT is designed to be completed in a group setting 1 to 2 times a week in 24-36 sessions.

Intervention Strategies

- Objective criteria used to evaluate participants' successful completion of each of program step.
- Systematic, cognitive behavioral treatment approach
- Youth complete exercises prior to group attendance and process their exercises in group or exercises are given to the facilitator for review and approval.
- Use of MRT workbook structured around a total of 16 steps focused on 7 basic treatment issues:
- Confrontation of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors
- Assessment of current relationships
- Reinforcement of positive behavior and habits
- Positive identity formation
- Enhancement of self-concept
- Development of frustration tolerance
- Development of higher stages of moral reasoning

Targets

- Decreased Risk Factors and Increased Protective Factors.
- MRT specifically targets YASI priorities and criminogenic need areas:
 - Skills training
 - Substance use
 - Family
 - Mental health
 - Violence/aggression
 - Employment/free time
 - Attitudes
 - School
 - Community/ peer relationships

Immediate Outcomes

- Completion defined by successfully passing MRT's 12th Step
- Decreased conduct problems
- Improved prosocial behavior
- Enhanced/increased moral reasoning and judgements about right and wrong
- Improved anger control
- Changed behavior and decision-making errors
- Decreased risk and increased protective factors

Long Term Outcomes

- Lower levels of recidivism (rearrest and reconviction)
- Lower misconduct rates
- Treatment retention
- Reduction of criminal thinking and involvement
- Enhanced understanding of moral reasoning
- Improved personal morality with a greater internal locus of control
- Better understanding of the root of the behaviors and beliefs which lead to continual use of drugs or alcohol, committing crimes, and engaging in self-destructive or risky behaviors.
- Positive sense of self-esteem and self-worth to support a healthier lifestyle and decision making.
- Skills to manage frustration, stress, and any other dissatisfactory emotions that lead to unhealthy coping mechanisms.