

# People who are hard to engage

David S. Prescott, LICSW  
Welcome!

## 17th century: Pascal's Pensees


"People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered, than by those which have come into the mind of others."

## Criminology, 1974

**Does nothing work?**

*Do all of these studies lead us irrevocably to the conclusion that nothing works, that we haven't the faintest clue about how to rehabilitate offenders and reduce recidivism? And if so, what?*

## 1979: Edward S. Bordin



- Therapeutic alliance:
  - Agreement on relationship
  - Agreement on goals
  - Agreement on tasks
  - (Norcross, 2002, would add client preferences)
- Over 1,000 studies have emphasized the importance of the alliance in psychotherapy since (Orlinsky, 1994)

## Salter, 1988 (p. 93)

- (T)he process of treating child sex offenders is heavily weighted in the direction of confrontation. Treatment requires continual confrontation.
- *No I don't trust you and you would be pretty foolish to trust yourself.*
- *Give me a break. What do you mean one drink can't do any harm?*
- However, later says that treatment should not be hostile. How do we reconcile this?

## 1998

Psychology, Public Policy, and Law  
1998, Vol. 4, No. 1/2, 214-235

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### THE CONTAINMENT APPROACH: An Aggressive Strategy for the Community Management of Adult Sex Offenders

Kim English  
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Most convicted adult sex offenders remain or return to the community. This article

Parhar, Wormith, et al., 2008

- Meta-analysis of 129 studies
- *In general, mandated (coercive) treatment was found to be ineffective ... particularly when the treatment was located in custodial settings, whereas voluntary treatment produced significant treatment effect sizes regardless of setting.*



These days

- We know better
- We do worse

Mood Tense on 20th Anniversary of Ohio Prison Riot

By JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press  
COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) —

It's been two decades this month since the longest deadly prison riot in U.S. history broke out in southern Ohio and there's trepidation in the air.

A prisons chief in Colorado and a district attorney in Texas and his wife have been slain.

The ratio of inmates to guards inside Ohio's prisons has crept up again after a dip that followed the 11-day siege at Lucasville's Southern Ohio Correctional Facility in 1993.

Double-bunking inmates, a trigger in the uprising that left one corrections officer and nine inmates dead, is back in use at a prison in Toledo. Serious assaults requiring outside medical attention have jumped from an average of three per year to 16 last year, and gang membership, while down slightly, stands at 16 percent.

Paul Goldberg, past executive director of the Ohio Civil Service

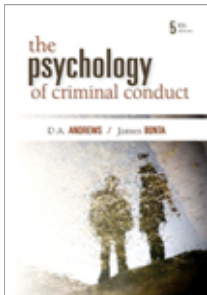
The Big Question

- *Do we want them to re-offend or not?*
- *What should we do?*
- *Who should we be?*

Andrews & Bonta (2010)

Three Principles:

- Risk
- Need
- Responsivity



Effective Programs

**RISK Principle**

- ❖ effective programs match the level of treatment intensity to the level of risk posed by the client
- ❖ high risk = high intensity
- ❖ mismatching can result in increased risk

## Effective Programs

### NEED Principle

- ❖ effective programs target identified criminogenic needs
- ❖ People who have sexually abused require sex offender specific treatment programming
- ❖ other programs may result in some ancillary gain, but risk for sexual re-offense likely will not be reduced

## Effective Programs

### RESPONSIVITY principle

- ❖ effective programs are those which are responsive to client characteristics
  - cognitive abilities
  - maturity
  - motivation
  - mode of intervention
  - scheduling concerns
  - Neurological impact of trauma

## How do people change?

- Challenging “distorted cognitions”?
- Completing assignments?
- Following the manual?
- Through their experiences and discoveries?
- Or via a relationship experience where hope and possibility are renewed... or born.

## Empathic, attuned interventions

- Rarely expected
- Always welcome
- Most likely to reduce suffering

## What we need

- Mindset
- Heartset
- Spirit
- Attitude
- Intention

## Compassion




### Political climate

- Coercion
- Shame
- Blame
- Threats
- Punishment



### We can leave no one behind



### Neuro-research reminds us:


- Compassion
- Respect
- Social justice for all, including our clients
- Prizing differences
- Human potential
- Collaboration

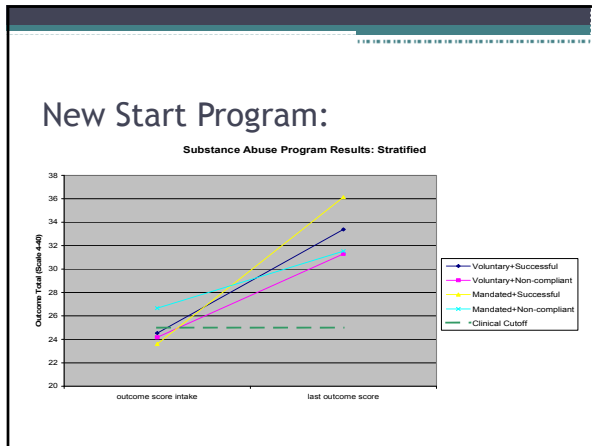
### People who are hard to engage: Part 2

Rob Axsen, Senior Associate & Certified Trainer, ICCE  
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Welcome!

### FIT practice improves engagement with those clients that traditional systems have difficulty engaging.

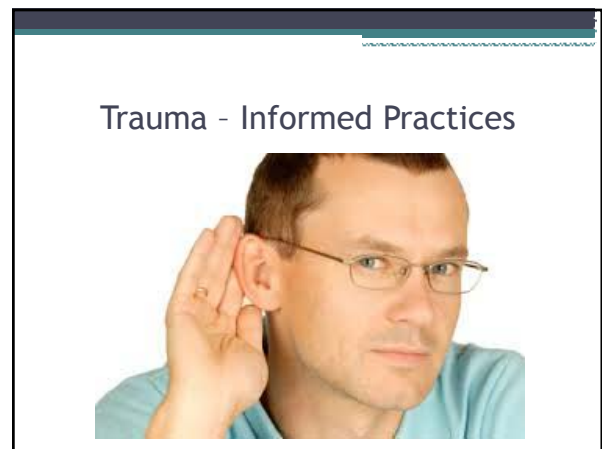
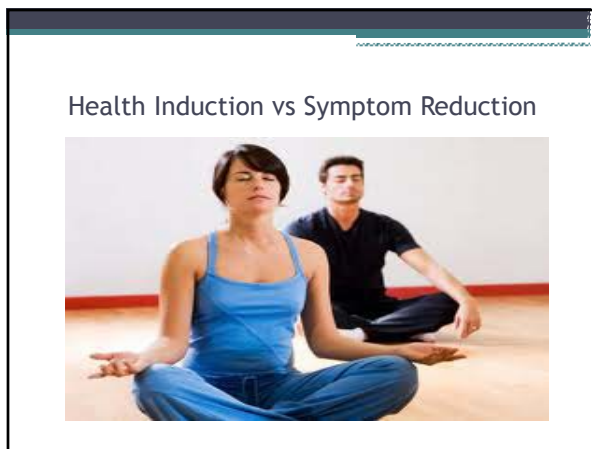
### Disagreement about:



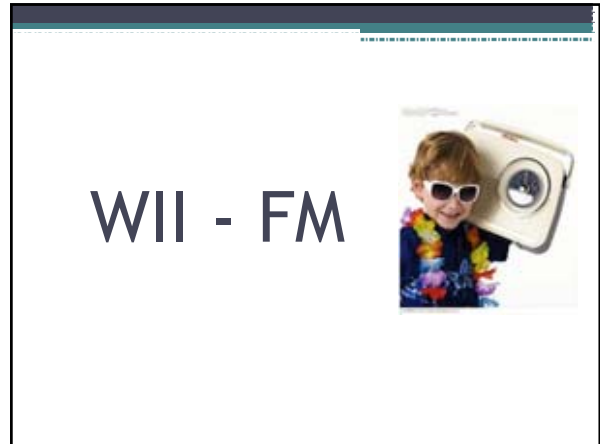


Improvement in Distress  $\neq$  Goal Attainment

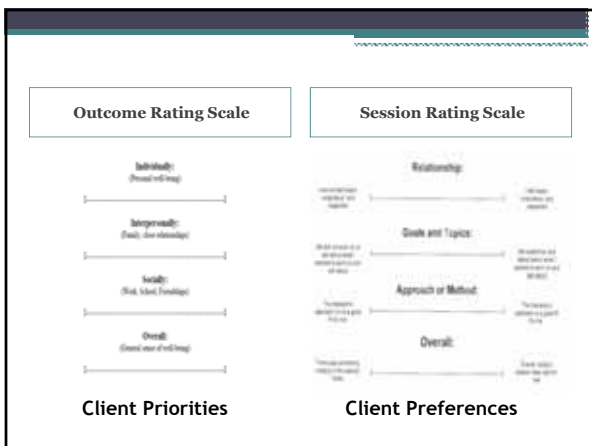
Engagement



Addressing autonomy and self - determination is a significant strategy in enhancing engagement



FIT Practice helps with engagement by addressing autonomy issues



FIT Practice may need to be adapted with specific clients that systems typically have difficulty engaging.

- Verbal Administration
- Scoring Overlays
- Shrink onto Smaller Cards

FIT Practice may need to be adapted with specific clients that systems typically have difficulty engaging.

**Child Outcome Rating Scale**

The diagram shows four horizontal lines representing different levels of engagement. Each line has a yellow circle with a score of 25 at both ends. The levels are:
 

- Me** (How am I doing?)
- Family** (How are things in my family?)
- School** (How am I doing at school?)
- Everything** (How is everything going?)

FIT Practice may need to be adapted with specific clients that systems typically have difficulty engaging.

The graph plots a score over 10 sessions. The y-axis ranges from 0 to 40 in increments of 5. A dashed horizontal line is drawn at the 25 mark, labeled 'OES Goal'. The data points are approximately:
 

Session Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Score	10	15	12	18	22	24	25	25	25	25

 A legend on the right indicates that the dashed line represents the 'OES Goal' and the solid line represents the 'OES Score'.

As practitioners, we can participate in Deliberate Practice to help improve our abilities to engage clients

Think  
Act  
Reflect

FIT practice improves engagement with those clients which traditional systems have difficulty engaging.

**Work With Clients**      **Do to Clients**

The first photo shows a woman and an older man sitting at a round table, looking at a document together. The second photo shows a woman pointing at a computer screen while another woman looks on attentively.