

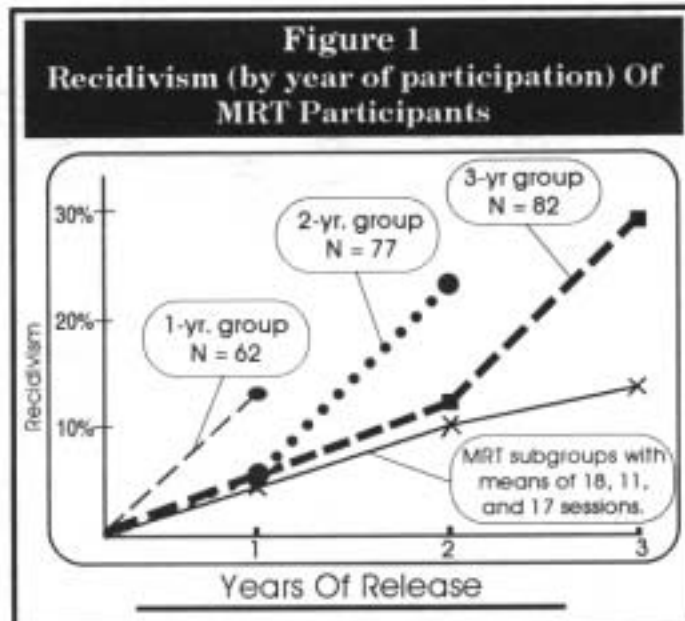
Three-Year Recidivism of MRT™-Treated Offenders In A County Jail

by Sally Krueger

During the three years of 1992 to 1995, a total of 6,727 people were booked into the Wayne County (Ohio) Jail. Fourteen percent of them were charged with felonies, 58% had a record at other jails, and 51% were repeaters at the Wayne County Jail. MRT™ is one of several programs offered for inmate participation at the Wayne County Jail and it was initiated in early 1992. It is a popular program and there is often a waiting list to join it. Other programming provided at the jail includes educational, vocational, alcohol-chemical dependency, and religious groups/classes. This brief report summarizes participation, step completion, and recidivism data on three groups of offenders (divided by year of program participation) who were housed at the Wayne County Jail and participated in MRT for any time period. Data for all MRT participants is presented including inmates who were incarcerated for only relatively brief time periods.

Method

As the third year of MRT implementation in the Wayne County Jail concluded in March 1995, rearrest data on participants was collected and examined. During this three year period, a total of 221 people participated in MRT individual and group sessions (197 male and 24 female inmates) and were subsequently released. These 221 participants were divided into three groups of treated releasees: a three-year release group (n = 82); a two-year release group (n = 77); and a one-year release group (n = 62).



Results

Figure 1 shows recidivism (rearrest) data on all three treated groups based on participants' year of release. Figure 1 also compares recidivism of participants who completed relatively more MRT groups and steps to all group participants.

The 3-year MRT group of 82 people averaged 9 group sessions and completed an average of 2 steps of MRT's 12-step program. This group experienced a rate of rearrest of 6% after one year, 12% after two years, and 29% after three years. By comparison, a subgroup of 27 of these 82 people participated in 10 or more group sessions. The subgroup averaged 17 group sessions and completed 4 steps of the program. This subgroup experienced a rate of rearrest after three years of 13%.

The 2-year MRT group of 77 people, averaged 9 group sessions, and completed an average of 1.6 steps. As a group, they experienced a rate of rearrest of 6% after one year, and 23% after two years. By comparison, a subgroup of 30 of these

77 people attended 10 or more group sessions. They averaged 11 group sessions and completed 3 steps of the 12 step program. This subgroup experienced a rate of rearrest after two years of 10%.

The 1-year MRT group of 62 people, averaged 7 group sessions, and completed 2 steps of the program. As a group they experienced a rate of rearrest of 13% after one year. By comparison, 20 of these 62 people attended 10 or more group sessions. They averaged 18 group sessions and completed 4 steps of the program. This select group experienced a rate of rearrest after 1 year of 5%.

Summary

In summary, it appears that those inmates treated with MRT have a significantly lower rearrest rate than those who do not. Those MRT-treated inmates who participated in 10 or more group sessions and completed 2 or more steps appear to have a much lower rearrest rate than those who participated in less than 10 MRT group sessions. This finding is consistent with numerous studies showing that rearrest and reincarceration rates significantly decline if clients have the opportunity to complete more than three steps. In addition, since the Wayne County Jail houses 58% recidivists (with 51% recidivating in the Jail itself), the comparatively low recidivism rate of MRT-treated participants is promising and encouraging.

In a county jail that holds about 100 inmates on 4 floors, among

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7 cellblocks, word travels fast. MRT is a program that is talked about as being fun, interesting, and personally beneficial. The MRT group is described as a safe place to talk about current and personal issues as well as related emotional distress. As the group facilitator, it has been rewarding for me to observe improvement in group members' self-esteem, communication, problem-solving skills, stress management, and emotional adjustment during all phases of incarceration. Finally, the recidivism data that has been collected over this three year period appears to indicate that MRT group sessions do motivate inmates to learn and apply moral values to live successfully by the basic rules of society.
