U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs

The Wisconsin Drug Abuse Treatment Unit

Bureau of Justice Assistance

MONOGRAPH

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Bureau of Justice Assistance
633 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20531
(202) 514-6278

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The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) shares the commitment of the President, the Attorney General, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy to support effective treatment programs. One of the primary ways that BJA is involved is in the documentation and assessment of programs, so as to identify those which can be considered effective.

Although research does not prove that drugs alone directly cause crime, or that crime would disappear if only we could eliminate drug abuse, research does point out the important role that the criminal justice system can play in compelling offenders into treatment. In turn, this promotes user accountability and law-abiding behaviors. As noted in the National Drug Control Strategy, "a majority of current drug users can benefit from appropriate treatment . . . . [but] [t]oo few addicts seek treatment voluntarily."

The leverage of the criminal justice system can require users to account for their illegal behavior, and prisoners can be compelled to enter and remain in treatment programs. Of course, prisons serve many purposes -- foremost to enhance public safety -- and should not be expected to transform into drug treatment centers at the expense of their other roles. Similarly, hospitals and treatment clinics can assist criminal drug abusers but should not be considered as substitutes for correctional facilities.

BJA's experience with a wide range of demonstration programs has indicated, and continues to indicate, that the effectiveness of intervention is largely dependent upon four factors: the extent to which the intervention occurs early in drug/crime behavior, the extent to which intervention is based on assessment of offender characteristics, the extent to which the threat of sanctions is real and formal, and the extent to which the treatment process maintains unbroken contact with the offender.

This monograph on the Wisconsin Drug Abuse Treatment Unit (DATU) is the first in what I hope will be a series of BJA monographs addressing the different approaches for intervening effectively in the criminal careers of drug abusing offenders. It has been designed to meet two objectives. They were (1) to recognize and describe the Wisconsin program, as a solid model for intervention with certain criminal offenders, and (2) to provide a format within which to simplify and discipline future discussions of treatment programs for criminal justice populations.

For the special audience of those responsible for corrections policy, I hope this monograph will provide the information needed to consider adopting a program like the Wisconsin DATU. For the broader audience of all Americans who are concerned about the national drug problem, I hope it provides a structure for the informed discussion of treatment options in general.

Sincerely,

Gerald (Jerry) P. Regier
Acting Director

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The Wisconsin Department of Corrections and the staff of the Drug Abuse Treatment Unit - Excelsior House have expressed a willingness to respond to questions about this program. They may be reached at the following addresses:

Department of Corrections
Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs
P.O. Box 7925
1 West Wilson Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53707

Drug Abuse Correctional Center
Drug Abuse Treatment Unit - Excelsior House
P.O. Box 36
Winnebago, Wisconsin 54985

Introduction

A decade of research and program experience has shown that drug use by criminal offenders today far exceeds that of the general population; recent drug testing efforts across the United States have found roughly three out of every four arrestees positive for one or more illegal drugs. Most chronic offenders habitually abuse alcohol and other drugs and engage in a level of active criminal behavior proportional to their level of active drug use. Thus, although its precise nature is still subject to debate, the fact of a relationship between drug use and criminal behavior is clear and compelling.

Successful apprehension, conviction and incarceration of offenders engaged in both criminal and drug abuse careers offers only a partial solution, by temporarily removing these predators from society. Traditional incarceration approaches have had limited rehabilitative impact. Traditional treatment approaches, generally effective with mainstream society, have met with even less success. This is due, in part, to the fact that these offenders lack the very attributes on which traditional approaches have relied. They lack stable employment and the skills to maintain it; they lack permanent residence with its sense of place and belonging; they lack significant material possessions and the stake in society those possessions reflect; they lack strong family ties and the corollary sense of responsibility and support; and they lack the kind of social ties which would offer positive role models and peer pressure. In essence, these offenders lack the things which stimulate a sense of personal responsibility and upon which a productive sense of the future can be built.

This litany of "lacks" brings with it a litany of obstacles to effective treatment and rehabilitation. But they are only half of the problem. Of equal significance is what such offenders possess: a set of life patterns and value systems which are based on an orientation to reality which is profoundly different than that of mainstream society. They have a strong personal stake in maintaining this "criminal mentality," in maintaining contact with peers who reinforce it and glamorize it, in resisting information which would question it. Treatment programs which seek to alter the behaviors which constitute the identity of these offenders will invariably be met with hostility and with a deep-seated motivation to maintain this glamorized sense of self (as a daring adventurer battling against the victimization visited upon him/her by society) which has developed over years of drug abuse and crime.

These overlapping careers of aberrant behavior, drug abuse and crime present a depressing study in perverse complexity. The chronic offender's use of illicit drugs is but one of a myriad of deviant thought and behavior patterns, all of which are mutually reinforcing. To be effective with such a population, drug treatment programs must focus not merely on the drug using behavior but on the whole interlocking web of deviant thought and action. Such programs must be grounded on a mastery of the relevant theories of social learning and must be rigorously designed to confront and alter the elements of the career offender's lifestyle.

Fortunately some effective programs do exist, even for this apparently intractable population. Such programs share certain characteristics with all successful treatment programs. They are based on an established theory, grounded in empirical evidence. They are focused on a population assessed as appropriate for the intervention dictated by the theory. They are specifically designed to implement the adopted theory through steps of sufficient duration and intensity to effect a lasting change in behavior. They are supported with periodic drug testing to maintain program integrity. They are conducted by staff which have received adequate training and who continue to receive adequate supervision. They are characterized by the continued collection and analysis of program data to ensure both process and impact evaluation.

One such program is the Drug Abuse Treatment Unit (DATU) operated by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. This monograph briefly discusses the theories on which this program is based, the methods employed to implement those theories, and the program experience to date.

The Theoretical Basis of the Drug Abuse Treatment Unit

Wisconsin's Drug Abuse Treatment Unit (DATU) is a comprehensive approach to treatment that reduces recidivism among hard-core felony offenders. DATU serves the most difficult correctional client in the Wisconsin prison system -- the recidivist with a lengthy record and a documented history of serious substance abuse. This is an ambitious program; its goal is to enable career criminals to become responsible members of society.

All of the men admitted to DATU have made crime a way of life. Most have been involved in numerous drug treatment and other rehabilitation programs. They have manipulated and deceived their way through the system, wasting valuable treatment resources and exploiting the programs that were designed to help them. Enabling these men to change themselves from drug-abusing criminals to responsible citizens requires effecting a global change in their conduct, feelings, thinking, values, and attitudes. To this end, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections has developed a treatment program that combines an established drug-treatment theory with a proven method of addressing the genesis of criminal behavior. These theories inform all of DATU's policies and procedures, which are implemented by a well-trained, experienced staff. All of the inmates admitted to this intense, long-term program are carefully screened to ensure that this treatment regimen is appropriate for them.

DATU's success is based on two proven methods of addressing the complex, multi-problem behavior patterns of the drug-abusing criminal. It combines the structures and principles of the therapeutic community drug treatment model with the methods of understanding and altering the criminal personality developed by Dr. Samuel Yochelson and Dr. Stanton E. Samenow.

The Therapeutic Community

In many respects, DATU is typical of traditional therapeutic communities (TCs) for treating substance abuse, such as Daytop Village and Phoenix House. It offers long-term treatment in a residential setting. Like other TCs, its goal is to engender a complete change in life-style, replacing anti-social with pro-social behavior. In addition to abstinence from drugs, DATU is designed to foster the development of positive attitudes, values, and behavior.

The traditional TC treatment model regards drug abuse as deviant behavior. Addiction is viewed as a symptom of a pervasive, anti-social attitude. Recovery is the responsibility of the individual and is a process involving three interactive stages:

1. Compliance -- adherence to the rules and regulations of the TC as a means of avoiding negative consequences, such as disciplinary sanctions or discharge from the community;

2. Conformity -- adherence to the expectations and norms of the community to avoid loss of status or termination;

3. Commitment -- adherence to a personal resolve to change. (De Leon, p. 172)

TCs operate on the assumption that the possibility of changing behavior is greatly enhanced if the inmate's entire waking life is a corrective learning experience. Therefore, the program is rigidly structured. Each resident enters at the bottom of a carefully defined hierarchy and must progress through each level before "graduating." When he first enters the program, a new resident is assigned menial tasks and has no privileges. Higher statuses, with their attendant privileges, must be earned by demonstrating positive changes in attitude and behavior.

Confrontation is an essential element of the traditional TC. Most drug addicts have developed an elaborate denial system that protects them from taking responsibility for their destructive behavior. At the same time, they are extremely perceptive about the motives and actions of other drug abusers. This perceptiveness enables them to recognize and challenge the behavior of their peers. TCs operate as surrogate families. The residents are responsible for observing and confronting the behavior of other family members, as well as for altering their own behavior.

The community employs a well-defined set of "tools" to be used in confronting destructive behavior. The specific characteristics of these "tools" vary among

TCs, but they are always employed in a progression ranging in intensity from mild to severe. For example, a resident who displays a dysfunctional attitude or violates a rule will be "pulled-up" verbally by another resident or staff member. This verbal reprimand is given one-on-one at the time the behavior is observed. When the resident receives a specific number of pull-ups for one behavior, he is called on the "carpet" and reprimanded sharply in the presence of others. The next step might be for staff and senior family members to call for a "dump." During a dump, the offender must stand silently while his behavior is addressed, loudly and directly. If the dump is not sufficient to extinguish the inappropriate behavior, most TCs employ other tools, increasing in intensity, until either the behavior is corrected or the offending resident is dropped from the program. Many TCs require residents to wear props to dramatize particularly intractable dysfunctional behavior. These might include wearing signs or exaggerated items, such as an oversize dunce's cap.

The tools and props are designed to enable the residents to help each other address and overcome entrenched habits. Although many interactions are stern and confrontive, supportiveness and empathy also are encouraged. Honesty, openness, and trust among residents is a basic requirement and must be displayed in encounter groups, in group and individual therapy sessions, and in the interactive educational sessions that are integral to the TC regimen.

The Criminal Personality Theory of Yochelson and Samenow

DATU differs from traditional therapeutic communities in that it focuses specifically on criminal thinking patterns. This focus is based on the work of two clinicians, Yochelson and Samenow. Dr. Yochelson was a psychiatrist who dedicated his career to understanding and altering criminal behavior patterns. For the last seven years of his life, he and his protege, clinical psychologist Stanton E. Samenow, worked at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, a large psychiatric facility in Washington, D. C. During this period, they treated 255 adult male felons, testing and refining their theories on the root causes of criminal behavior. Their approach is detailed in a three-volume work, The Criminal Personality , completed after Yochelson's death. Dr. Samenow has continued to refine and implement these theories and to publish his findings.

Yochelson and Samenow were not interested in treating drug abuse per se but focused instead on observing, understanding, and changing criminal behavior. In their view, drug abuse is only one of a host of destructive behaviors exhibited by the career criminals. Drugs do not cause a person to commit a criminal act,

> [they] simply make it more feasible for him to eliminate fears for the time being in order to act upon what he has previously considered. That is, drugs intensify and bring out tendencies already present within the individual user . . . The criminality comes first, the decision to use drugs later. (Samenow, p. 128)

The techniques they developed for eradicating criminal behavior is based on the premise that criminals choose to commit crimes. They deliberately place themselves in conflict with society and are responsible for their actions, regardless of their backgrounds. Although criminals must be held accountable, Yochelson and Samenow's theory holds that putting habitual offenders behind bars is futile and without intervention, they resume their criminal careers when they are released. Their theory also holds that only way to change criminal behavior is to change the individual criminal's basic thought processes. In order to engender such a fundamental change, Yochelson and Samenow developed a demanding program for identifying and correcting criminal thinking patterns.

Characteristics of Criminal Thought. In the course of his work with male felons, Dr. Yochelson found that although criminals differ from one another in many respects, habitual offenders display similar thought and behavior patterns, patterns fundamentally different from those of responsible people. Thought patterns that are second nature to most people are foreign to the hardened criminal.

For example, Yochelson found that career criminals are narcissistic and grandiose. They "regard the world as a chessboard over which they have total control, and they perceive people as pawns to be pushed around at will." (Samenow, p. 20) Their actions are calculated. They know right from wrong; they simply believe that "whatever they want to do at any given time is right." (Samenow, pp. 10-11) This allows them to regard themselves as good people. They are abusive and intolerant of others but are unable to tolerate criticism. They have little understanding of cause and effect and expect their desires to be gratified instantly. The tough exterior they present to the world masks a consuming web of fear.

Yochelson and Samenow consider these traits to be the components of the "criminal personality," and the thought patterns that give rise to them to be the

underlying cause of criminal behavior. Before behavior can be altered, the thinking pattern must change. As Dr. Samenow explains in his book, Inside the Criminal Mind,

> Behavior is largely a product of thinking. Everything we do is preceded, accompanied, and followed by thinking. A train cannot fly for it is not so equipped. Similarly, as he is, a criminal is not equipped to be responsible. A drastic alteration must occur, and to accomplish this, a criminal requires help. The criminal must learn to identify and then abandon thinking patterns that have guided his behavior for years. He must be taught new thinking patterns that are self-evident and automatic for responsible people but are totally foreign to him. Short of this occurring, he will continue to commit crimes. (p. 6-7)

Their conviction that a drastic alteration in thinking patterns is the only way to produce significant and lasting change in criminal behavior led Yochelson and Samenow to develop a technique for teaching criminals to report their thoughts so they can be monitored and corrected. A program designed to change the way a person thinks may smack of brainwashing to some, particularly in a prison setting. Dr. Samenow is quick to point out that these techniques are not coercive:

> Change is possible only when a criminal makes a choice to participate in a program like [this], when he is fed up with himself and consents to expose his thinking to criticism and correction. In this program, decisions are not made for the criminal. The process of decision making is the focus, but the specific decision is up to the individual. A criminal maintains his own political and religious views, his aesthetic tastes and interests . . . Nothing in this program imposes a life style or value of a particular social class . . . In short, the change process calls for the criminal to acquire moral values that have enabled civilizations to survive. The objective is to teach them to live without injuring others. (p. 252)

Thinking Errors. The first step in the change process is for criminals to become aware of their thoughts. They are taught to keep a daily record of their thinking, which is then shared with others in group meetings. The habitual criminal has no means of distinguishing a functional thought from a dysfunctional one. All of his thoughts appear normal to him. Therefore, the men are instructed to record, not only their thoughts about committing a crime, but all of their thoughts. The most basic requirement of this program is that the each persons report his thinking accurately, without embellishing, editing, or omitting anything.

The second step is for the criminal to learn to distinguish functional thoughts from dysfunctional ones. Volume I of The Criminal Personality identifies 52 "thinking errors" to which the criminal mind is prone. DATU uses 30 of the most pervasive in its program. These are listed below. Those which are closely related have been grouped together to avoid repetition.

1. Closed channel thinking, concrete thinking, and fragmentation. The criminal closes himself off from anything that challenges his view of reality. He is not receptive to other points of view, nor is he self-critical. Criminals tend to see each of their actions in isolation. They do not make connections between similar events or understand how one event leads to another.

2. Victimstance. The criminal views himself as a victim rather than as a victimizer. He blames others and makes excuses for his actions. He takes full advantage of society's tendency to blame social conditions for criminal behavior.

3. The criminal's view of himself as a good person; failure to put himself in another's position; failure to consider injury to others; and sentimentality. Rather than acknowledging his destructive behavior, the criminal focuses on what he perceives to be his positive attributes. He fails to consider the thoughts and feelings of others, and does not recognize the harm his actions cause. He is often sentimental ("I always send my mother flowers on Mother's Day") and uses such sentimental gestures to reinforce his view of himself as a good person.

4. Lack of effort; failure to attempt to endure adversity; and the "I can't" attitude. The criminal has boundless energy for illegal acts, but he is unwilling to do anything he finds boring or disagreeable. He'll say, "I can't," to justify his refusal to be responsible, when what he means is, "I won't." He is unwilling to risk failure. When faced with the slightest adversity, the criminal's response is to quit.

5. Lack of interest in responsible performance; failure to assume obligations; failure to assume responsible initiatives; and suggestibility. The criminal perceives the lives of responsible people as unexciting and unsatisfying. He has no sense of responsibility for others and will take a responsible initiative only if he is certain that the payoff will be immediate. He responds enthusiastically to suggestions of criminal activity but is impervious to suggestions that he

undertake responsible pursuits.

6. Lack of a time perspective. The criminal lives in the present and neither learns from the past nor plans for the future. He wants what he wants when he wants it, without any regard for the consequences his actions may have for himself or for others. He does not set realistic, long-term goals. If he sets goals, he expects to attain them instantly, failing to understand that goals are most often realized in increments over a long period. He expects others to act on his demands immediately.

7. Fear of fear, criminal pride, zero-state thinking; and lack of trust. Although the criminal acts tough, he suffers from numerous irrational fears. Many of these fears result from his pervasive fear of injury or death. He has an inflated sense of pride, which emanates from his lack of self-confidence. He tells himself that he is unique and powerful, and cannot bear to have this illusion challenged. If it is challenged successfully, he immediately goes to the other extreme, experiencing a "zero state" in which he feels worthless, believes others perceive him as worthless, and believes that this state is permanent. He trusts no one and cannot be trusted, yet he demands the total trust of those around him.

8. The power thrust; anger; and refusal to be dependent. The criminal must be in control of every situation and person and is always manipulating to seize and retain control. Anger is one of his key strategies. He perceives dependence as loss of control and refuses to be dependent on others unless he can take advantage of them.

9. Uniqueness; super-optimism, pretentiousness, and perfectionism. The criminal perceives himself as better than other people. Because he is unique, the rules do not apply to him. He expects others to meet high standards of honesty, trust, and loyalty, while holding no such standards for himself. He believes himself capable of accomplishing anything; this super-optimism enables him to avoid both his fear of failure and his fear of the consequences of his criminal acts. If he cannot do something perfectly, he will not attempt it.

10. Ownership attitude and domineering sexual behavior. The criminal believes that all people and things are objects for him to possess and dispose of as he wishes. He demands that others respect his property and relationships, but has no concept of the rights of others. He regards women as possessions and uses them to bolster his self-image. He uses sex for power and control rather than for intimacy.

Correctives and Deterrents. Once he has learned to witness, record, and report his thoughts, the criminal can begin to learn how to change them. Yochelson and Samenow developed a corrective for each of the thinking errors. During the change process, the criminal is taught these correctives and how to apply them. For example, the corrective for the "victimstance" is for the criminal to stop viewing himself as a victim. This requires that the criminal:

- Examine the choices that led him to his current situation;
- Remember that other people who have had the same or worse misfortunes have chosen to become responsible citizens rather than criminals;
- Examine his actions and admit how much harm they have brought to others;
- Remember that it is impossible for a criminal who regards himself as a victim to become a responsible person.

After the criminal has learned to recognize, articulate, and correct his thoughts, he can begin to learn to deter them. Yochelson and Samenow developed five methods of deterring criminal thought and behavior. All require the criminal to think about his thinking.

- The first deterrent requires the criminal to stop and consider the consequences of acting on a thought. For example, when the criminal thinks about stealing some equipment from work, he must immediately think of the consequence of that action -- getting caught and returned to prison.
- The second deterrent is to dispose of a criminal thought by thinking it through carefully. The criminal must think about all of the problems similar actions have caused in the past and how bad these problems make him feel about himself. He then uses these bad feelings as a means of inducing himself to make another choice.
- The third deterrent is to learn to avoid trouble. For a criminal, every day is fraught with temptation. He is taught to figure out in advance with whom, where, and under what circumstances he might get himself into trouble; he then has the option of avoiding these situations or making a responsible choice when confronted with them.
- The fourth deterrent requires the criminal to take an honest look at himself and continue to do this until it becomes a daily habit. Criminals must learn to face themselves, recognize the pain and

disappointment they have caused, and then review the behavior changes that are necessary to ensure that they are no longer a source of pain for themselves and others.

Constantly practicing these four deterrents brings the fifth -- automatic deterrence -- into existence. In time, suppressing irresponsible and dysfunctional thinking becomes a habit and, although these thoughts continue to come, they are banished automatically, along with the criminal behavior that they generate.

Changing the Criminal Personality in a Therapeutic Community

The DATU treatment program skillfully applies Yochelson and Samenow's techniques for extinguishing criminal behavior within the structure of the therapeutic community. Every aspect of this program is designed to demolish old thinking patterns, to lay a new foundation by teaching new concepts, and to provide an environment in which the resident can put what he is learning into practice.

During the 6-to-12 month course of treatment, the resident's entire waking life is a corrective learning experience. From the 6:30 a.m. wake up to lights out, residents are required to stay out of their rooms and to involve themselves in the life of the community. The tools for confronting behavior that are typical of the therapeutic community are used to identify and correct the thinking errors to which the criminal mind is prone. Status in the community is a means of gauging and rewarding the resident's increased ability to take responsibility both for his own thinking and behavior and for confronting the thoughts and behavior of others. The inmate is ready to re-enter society when he has demonstrated consistently that he has learned to deter his entrenched criminal thought patterns and that he regards himself as responsible for his thoughts as well as for his actions.

The Clients and Staff

The DATU program is one of three substance abuse programs operated by the Wisconsin Drug Abuse Correctional Center (DACC). Although it is located on the grounds of a mental health center, the DACC is a minimum security correctional facility within the Department of Corrections' institutional system. The DACC's mission is to provide substance abuse treatment to male offenders committed to the state's correctional institutions. DACC accepts a limited number of offenders facing revocation of their probation or parole if the supervising authority will accept substance abuse treatment at DACC as a alternative to revocation (ATR). All DACC programs reserve a limited number of slots for ATR clients. DATU, which is a 23-bed unit, may have as many as five ATR admissions at a time.

Client Description

The goal of DATU is to bring about a significant and lasting change in criminal and drug-abusing behavior. Men admitted to DATU share several characteristics. Their drug habits tend to be expensive -- habits of $1000 a day or more prior to arrest are common. Many have a past or current addiction to cocaine or heroin, and most have an extensive history of polydrug abuse. Almost all of them have been in traditional treatment programs, to no effect. It is not uncommon for them to refuse treatment outright, and even if they enter conventional treatment programs, they leave after a period of passive compliance.

DATU clients tend to have lengthy criminal histories that include serious crimes--murder, rape, armed robbery, and a host of other felonies. These are the men that the justice system describes as "predatory," "high-rate offenders," and "career criminals." They do not exhibit severe psychiatric disorders (such as schizophrenia or manic depressive illnesses) or neuro-psychiatric disabilities (such as mental retardation, head injuries, or epilepsy). However, they often display behavior that might lead them to be classified as character disordered or psychopathic. Prominent among these features are egocentricity, impulsivity, sensation-seeking, low frustration tolerance, lack of empathy for others, and an apparent inability to learn from their mistakes.

Although these men usually have deficient academic records, their intelligence and verbal skills are average or better. Although they can be quite charming and engaging, they often become aggressive when these attributes fail to help them achieve their ends. Their work histories typically are marked by brevity, sudden changes, and conflicts with supervisors. Their interpersonal relationships follow a similar pattern -- most are superficial and exist to serve the needs of the offender. A common thread running through both their work-related and personal relationships is a lifelong habit of lying, minimizing, justifying, and denying the effect their behavior has on others. To be effective with these clients, a treatment regimen must set and enforce strict limits on behavior, thereby rendering their manipulative skills useless.

Selection and Screening

Before being sent to DATU, inmates are carefully screened to ensure that this treatment program will meet their needs. The Assessment and Evaluation Unit (A&E) conducts this screening at Dodge Correctional Institution, which functions as the reception center for all males entering the prison system. Inmates spend approximately one month there undergoing interviews and tests designed to develop a profile of their psychological, educational, vocational, and substance abuse treatment needs.

Each inmate is assigned a social worker who has primary responsibility for collating and evaluating all information on the inmate's needs and submitting program recommendations to the staffing committee. This committee reviews the information with the inmate and social workers and makes final decisions on custody level and program needs. Program review committees at other institutions monitor inmate progress on this plan, make adjustments when necessary and arrange placement in programs at the appropriate time.

The Department of Corrections has developed a uniform substance abuse screening instrument to guide this decision-making process. This instrument is administered to all inmates within 72 hours of their arrival at A&E. A battery of standardized psychological and educational achievement tests are administered in the days that follow. These include the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT). Specific guidelines on incorporating the results of the

substance abuse instrument into the results of the psychological tests have been developed to ensure that offenders designated for DATU exhibit high psychopathic tendencies and lack psychiatric impairment.

The substance abuse instrument consists of two discrete parts: (1) the Alcohol Dependence Scale (ADS), which measures severity of alcohol dependence within the past two years, and (2) the Offender Drug Use History (ODUH), which collects information both on lifetime use of ten commonly abused drugs or drug classes and on substance abuse treatment history. Need for substance abuse treatment is established by scores on either the ADS or the ODUH.

Determining which inmates exhibit the behavioral features relevant to DATU is currently accomplished by using the Megargee system for classifying offenders on the MMPI. Briefly, Megargee developed this system through a statistical cluster analysis of MMPI offender profiles and further clinical evaluation studies. Ten offender subtypes are identified in Megargee's system. Three of these manifest traits that overlap with the criminal personality and are regarded by clinicians as indicative of psychopath. Significant psychiatric impairment would be unlikely with such profiles. The social worker provides a final check on this process by reviewing all the information in an inmate's file, particularly the information submitted by field staff on the inmate's social history, substance abuse patterns, and performance while on supervision.

Inmates who conform to this profile and are designated by the A&E staffing committee as appropriate for DATU must attain minimum security classification or have his classification waived to minimum for treatment purposes. In addition, because DATU is a pre-release facility, an inmate must be nearing the end of his sentence or approaching the point at which he can be paroled so that there is a good chance that he will be released if he completes the program successfully.

The final criterion for eligibility is a desire on the part of the inmate to enter DATU. Participation is strictly voluntary. More than 50 percent of those eligible for the program refuse treatment. Those who volunteer can terminate their treatment and return to the general prison population at any time. They are not forced to stay. Many do not -- the dropout rate is approximately 45 percent.

Most of those who drop out do so within days of entering the program. There are several reasons for this. Inmates in the Wisconsin prison system with identified treatment needs are generally not granted parole until these treatment needs have been met. Therefore, most of those who enter DATU are motivated by a desire to get out of prison rather than by an interest in changing their behavior. Within hours of being transferring to DATU, however, it becomes apparent that this is not a place to do easy time. This program is intense in its confrontational approach; little room is left for the inmate to manipulate the staff or other residents or to fake participation. Many quickly conclude that this program is not for them and ask for a transfer. Of those who stay, 18 percent are terminated by the staff when their attitudes and behavior indicate that they are unwilling to do the work.

The Staff

DATU is usually staffed by five full-time social workers. The four current staff members are well-trained and dedicated. Two have been on the unit for six years; the other two for four years. Three hold Master's degrees; the fourth has a bachelors degree in social work and 15 years of experience in corrections.

The staff works as a team, covering the unit 14 hours a day, Monday through Friday. The normal staffing pattern is for three to be on duty from 7:45-4:30, with the other two coming in at 2 p.m. and staying until 10. One social worker covers the unit for 8 hours on Saturdays. No staff members are present on Sundays or major holidays, except in those rare instances when the residents are not functioning well as a family unit and stricter controls must be imposed.

DATU is a minimum security facility with correctional officers available to the unit. An officer counts the inmates before escorting them to meals, and again at 6 and 9 p.m. to make sure that everyone is present. An officer is on the unit from 10 p.m. to 7:45 a.m., and on Sundays and holidays.

The Program

All of the men who come to DATU have an entrenched habit of minimizing, justifying, and denying their behavior. By applying Yochelson and Samenow's criminal personality theories within the structure of the therapeutic community, DATU focuses on confronting and altering this habit as a means of eradicating the drug abuse and other criminal behavior patterns to which it gives rise.

Status in the Community

DATU has four resident statuses -- Newcomer, Big Brother, Junior Member, and Senior Member. The Newcomer status is the most crucial. It is here that the inmate learns the philosophy, policies, procedures, and tools of the program and demonstrates his willingness to govern himself by them. Many fail to do this and either drop out or are terminated before completing this phase.

Orientation. The process of examining his thoughts and learning to restructure his thinking and behavior begins as soon as the new resident is transferred to DATU. He is introduced to his Big Brother, who briefs him on the community structure, the chain of command, and the tools that will be employed during the change process. He is also given a Newcomer's Packet of material to read and absorb. This packet contains a complete description of the program, its rules and procedures, as well as a wealth of information drawn from the works of Yochelson and Samenow, including a detailed description of the thinking errors, their correctives and deterrents, and excerpts from The Criminal Personality, and other articles.

The Newcomer is introduced to the rest of the "family" in a community welcoming meeting shortly after he arrives. He is required to give the group a 5-minute autobiography that includes his family history, prison record, his drugs of choice, and what he expects to gain from treatment. This is an important step. One of the traits of the criminal personality is secrecy and the need to guard the image he presents to others. If he can appear before a group and tell the truth about his history, however briefly, the Newcomer has begun the practice of public self-revelation that is the backbone of this program.

Before he can become a member of the community, the Newcomer must pass a "role play" designed to test his understanding of the tools and his ability to use them. He has three days to accomplish this. Until he has, he is segregated from the rest of the community. He does not participate in any group activities and can talk only to his Big Brother. This procedure demonstrates at the outset that this is a strict community governed by unbendable rules, and that even the right to converse with others must be earned.

After he has completed his role play, the Newcomer is required to participate fully in all group meetings, therapy sessions, and other community activities. Permitting a Newcomer to join a group of men who are at different points in the change process allows him to see how others are functioning. It also allows the more senior members to see themselves all over again as they hear the denial, arguments, and excuses of what Samenow calls a "totally unchanged criminal."

According to Samenow, change is possible only when a criminal becomes fed up with himself and consents to expose his thinking to criticism and correction. All of the men in DATU have constructed elaborate defenses to protect their view of themselves as "good;" they believe they are unique and are proud of themselves and of their actions. This attitude must be demolished before even the most rudimentary change can begin.

One of the most effective ways of doing this is to confront Newcomers in front of the entire community and show them that they are ordinary and that their actions are predictable. This is a technique developed by Yochelson. Using one of the criminal thinking groups as a forum, the social worker will focus on two or three of the Newcomers who have committed property crimes (for example) and say:

> I'm going to tell you your life story -- if you disagree, let me know. You began playing one parent off against the other before you were old enough to go to school, trying to gain control by dividing and conquering. You began stealing money from them -- nickels and dimes at first -- and discovered that candy bought with stolen money tasted better than any other candy. Once you stole a bill so big that you didn't know what to do with the change that was left over after you

bought all the candy you wanted, so you threw it away or gave it to friends. By the time you were in school, you were a practiced vandal and shoplifter. You had to have the best bike on the block so you stole parts from other bikes to make yours better. You strong-armed your classmates and stole from them; you vandalized school property and construction sites. Then you progressed to breaking and entering and discovered you could get away with it. You began using alcohol and drugs between the ages of 11 and 14 and were a practiced burglar by then. By the time you were 16, your criminal patterns were established and you've been following that pattern ever since.

The effect of this is electric. Those being confronted often say that they think the social worker has read their minds. This experience shakes their belief in their uniqueness and opens a chink in their armor of defense and denial. It also makes them realize that their practiced strategy of manipulating and fooling treatment providers will not work here.

Every task the Newcomer is assigned chips away at his habit of hiding from himself and others. He is forced to begin to recognize himself for who he is -- a predator whose destructive actions have brought suffering to himself and others. Some of these tasks include:

- Completing a Personal Drug Usage Chart showing what drugs he has used and abused and when and how often he has tried to quit. He must also state how these drugs have affected his life and which drugs he plans on using when he is released.

- Initiating a half-hour conversation with eight people who are either staff members (including correctional officers and recreation leaders) or senior members. This forces him to reveal himself to others and begins to break down the wall of mistrust and secrecy that chronic criminals erect between themselves and those in positions of authority.

- Developing an Individualized Treatment Plan with one of the social workers. This requires the Newcomer to describe each of his problems, to state his long- and short-term goals, and to identify the steps he will take to meet them. This forces him to begin to shed his habit of expecting instant results and to begin to understand the importance of planning and patience. The initial entry in a treatment plan might read:

Problem Description: I deny problems by denying how I behave. I often minimize and justify what I do, which allows me to ignore the negative effects of my behavior on myself and others. As a result, I continue to experience unsatisfactory relationships with others and often feel helpless and inadequate.

Long Term Goal: I want to learn to admit my mistakes so that I can take action to correct them and feel better about myself.

Short Term Goals:

1. I will keep a log and when I minimize, justify or deny something, I will log it. Each night in last business, I will read at least 2 things that I minimized, justified, or denied that day.

2. I will talk with a social worker about denial and get information on denial.

Changing Status. Within 28 days of entering the program, the Newcomer will face a committee comprised of staff members, upper status residents, and his Big Brother to petition to become a Big Brother himself. He must tell the group how the community philosophy and the criminal thinking errors apply to him, and he must identify the treatment issues on which he will concentrate. If his petition is accepted, he becomes a Big Brother and his privileges and responsibilities increase.

A resident will typically spend 8 to 10 weeks as a Big Brother. During this phase of treatment, he learns to be responsible for another person -- the Newcomer placed under his care. This is a radical change, as one of the salient traits of the criminal personality is a refusal to accept responsibility for anyone. As a Big Brother, the resident must remain constantly aware of his Little Brother's problems and treatment needs and must know where is Little Brother is at all times. He writes progress notes on his Little Brother and presents them to the group at the Tuesday community meetings. He also may be called to serve on committees and to accept other responsibilities for various aspects of community life.

When he has demonstrated his ability to be responsible for others as well as for himself, the Big Brother petitions to become a Junior Member of the community. In this status, he learns to develop and use leadership skills. His responsibility for others in the community increases; he is expected to write progress notes on all lower status members for the Tuesday community meeting. He has off-grounds privileges and may be asked to go on speaking engagements with staff members. His petition to

become a Senior Member must address his proven leadership qualities and the organizational skills he has demonstrated. He must present a list of the goals he has met and those that he has updated and is continuing to work on, thus demonstrating that he has shed his habit of expecting instant results. He also must present his plans for life after release from prison.

Senior members are role models for all newer residents. They serve and vote on committees and participate in Community Management meetings. They are expected to keep groups running if the social worker conducting them must leave the room, and they may be asked to monitor the application of some of the learning tools if no staff member is present. Senior Members are actively involved in planning their life after release and are expected to contact schools, job services, and their parole agent. Senior members often visit their homes in the company of a social worker, and some are permitted short furloughs.

The Tools

Therapeutic communities typically employ a set of "tools" for confronting and correcting dysfunctional and disruptive behavior. The tools used at PATH are designed to heighten the resident's awareness of his thinking errors and irresponsible actions and to teach him responsibility and accountability.

The first four tools outlined below are used daily. They are employed in progression, as follows:

Pull-Ups. When one resident notices that another is exhibiting a criminal trait, he confronts the individual immediately, naming the thinking error and relating it to specific behavior. For example, during a group session, Tim asks Craig a question. Before responding, Craig stares at Tim in an intimidating manner. As soon as group is over, Tim pulls Craig up by saying, "I'm pulling you up for failing to put ourself in another's position (the thinking error) and for displaying negative non-verbal behavior." Craig responds by saying, "Thanks for the pull up, " and stating the corrective, "I will put myself in another's osition." Tim must then record the pull-up on a sheet posted for this purpose.

Carpets. If a resident receives three pull-ups for the same thinking error in one week, he is called on the "carpet." Unlike pull-ups, which are spontaneous, carpets must be scheduled and are given in the resence of a senior member or one of the social workers. The person who gave the third pull up gives he person being carpeted a concise, well-focused reprimand pointing out the thinking error, stating the corrective, and giving examples of the behavior. After the carpet is completed, the individual leaves the room. He can return if he wishes and state how he is feeling, although he cannot discuss the carpet because doing so gives him the opportunity to justify or deny his behavior. He is encouraged to say how he feels, however, because he must learn to recognize his feelings rather than resorting to his old habit of suppressing them.

Dump. Dumps are given in a public area called "Town Square," in a voice loud enough to carry throughout the unit. Like the tools that precede them, they focus on the thinking error and the need to change it.

Haircuts. A resident who persists in displaying a particular thinking error is given a "haircut" in a closed room. These are long, loud verbal reprimands focus on a particular thinking error, its correctives, and specific related behaviors. They are given by senior members or a social worker and can last as long as ten minutes.

Clean-up. This tool involves the use of props and is employed to emphasize a dysfunctional attitude or habitual rule infractions. For example, a resident who neglects to sign out when he is leaving the unit may be required to carry a two-foot cardboard pencil everywhere he goes for a period of 24 to 72 hours. Clean-ups are assigned by staff and senior members and may be lifted by them.

Use of these five tools is part of routine community life. If the community is functioning well and all the members are actively working on identifying their own thinking errors and those of others, the first two of these tools will be in almost constant use. If fewer than 10 pull-ups are booked each day, the social workers know that the community is not functioning well and will intervene to correct this.

Learning Experiences. The Learning Experience is the major house tool. It is a formal means of confronting a resident's lack of progress and of dealing with violations of the cardinal rules. Learning experiences are employed if, after the use of the other tools, the individual is still displaying the same behavior or if his misbehavior is so serious that it is obvious that the normal progression of tools will not extinguish it.

When such a situation arises, the staff and senior members form a committee to design a creative means of addressing the misbehavior. For example, if a resident is exhibiting the criminal traits of "extremism, hyperactive behavior, and perfectionism" the

committee might assign the following stipulations:

1. You must be the last person to arrive at group meetings, last in bed in bed at night, and last in line for lunch. (Indefinite)

2. You must be last for wake-up and showers. Set your alarm for 6:45 a.m. (The normal wake-up time is 6:30) (Indefinite)

3. You will be the "Extreme Coordinator." You will log all instances of extremism and perfectionism and hold a 10-minute daily confrontation in group with those displaying this behavior. (Indefinite)

4. You will carry the "hyperactive" prop (a rubber chicken's head). (5 days)

5. After each group, while walking down the hall, you will sing the "Extremism song." (2 weeks)

6. Each day after lunch, you will talk for 5 minutes in Town Square about the dangers of extremism. (Indefinite)

The Learning Experience stipulations are written down and read to the entire community. The person for whom the Learning Experience is designed must sign the stipulations and follow them for the period of time assigned. He must petition the committee to remove the stipulations that have been assigned for an indefinite period. If he does not follow these stipulations, the committee will reconvene and design new stipulations, require him to design his own stipulations, or vote to terminate him from the program. Refusal to follow Learning Experience stipulations is taken as evidence that the resident is refusing to change; almost half of those terminated from the program are dropped for failing to adhere to these stipulations.

Criminal Thinking Patterns

The program uses a variety of methods to change the resident's criminal thinking patterns. When they first enter the program, most residents are unaware of the extent to which their thoughts are occupied with criminal behavior. Those who are aware of this believe that responsible people have the same thoughts but lack the courage to act on them. The tools are only one of a variety of methods employed to enable the resident to recognize how irresponsible and dysfunctional his thinking patterns are.

All residents must keep a log of their criminal thoughts. Newcomers are required to complete two criminal thought logs a week; the rest of the community must complete three. These are filed in a book in the group room, where everyone can read them and are used as the basis of discussion in criminal thinking groups. The social worker leading the group selects several for scrutiny. The group will discuss the thinking errors identified by the resident, show how they are related to other thinking errors, and discuss the deterrents. Because criminals are extremely perceptive about the motives and thinking patterns of other criminals, even while remaining unaware of their own, this group scrutiny exposes the manipulation and denial to which the criminal personality is prone.

Before a resident graduates from the program, he will sit down with a staff member and review all the criminal thought logs he filed during the courses of his stay. This allows him to see how much progress he has made by observing how his thinking patterns have changed, how his skill in using the deterrents has developed, and how he has altered his strategies for handling conflict.

Other criminal thinking groups may be organized around particular applications of Yochelson and Samenow's theories. Sometimes the staff will hold criminal thinking groups to heighten the resident's awareness of what they call the "ripple effect" of a criminal act. One of the traits of the criminal personality is the ability to remain unaware of the physical and emotional harm they cause others. Ripple effect groups challenge this self-deception by forcing the residents to examine the harm they cause. The group focuses on a particular criminal act committed by one of the residents and examines its immediate effect on the victim, the victim's family and friends, and the victim's community. The group then goes on to discuss how this crime contributes to undermining society, causing tax money to be diverted from education to law enforcement (for example) and destroying the basic trust people have in each other.

Sometimes several residents who are prone to a particular thinking error will be assigned to role play what happens if it is acted on and how to apply the deterrents. Other times, a resident may be assigned to research a thinking error prominent in his defenses and to write a paper about how it applies to him.

Sometimes confrontations are videotaped, and those being confronted are required to review the tapes to identify thinking errors and non-verbal behavior that they used to avoid accountability.

Other Program Components

DATU offers three educational modules, in addition to the module on criminal thinking patterns -- Drug and Alcohol Education, Domestic Violence, and Sexuality. Each week, the residents attend a session from 1 to 3 hours in length on each of these subjects.

Drug and Alcohol Education. Because all of the residents have lengthy histories of serious chemical dependency, their drug education needs are extensive. This covers all aspects of chemical dependency including denial systems, the characteristics of addictive personalities, the effect of substance abuse on family life, relapse theories, and aftercare needs. DATU is an international chapter of Narcotics Anonymous (NA). All residents attend the weekly NA meetings held on the unit, and upper status residents are escorted to weekly NA meetings in the community. In addition, all residents are required to complete the Fourth Step Moral Inventory developed by Alcoholics Anonymous.

Domestic Violence. Many of the residents were victims of domestic violence as children and have grown up to become perpetrators themselves. This module covers topics such as the cycle of violence, the characteristics of victims and batterers, child and spouse abuse, sexual abuse, alternatives to aggression, and stress reduction techniques. In addition, a weekly men's group for batterers is held employing the curriculum of the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project.

Sexuality Education. Many of the residents have committed sex offenses, even though most have never been arrested for them. In addition to confronting the belief system that motives sex offenses, this module provides basic sex education. Topics covered include the reproductive cycle, venereal diseases, AIDS, contraception, adult children of sexually abusive families, and sexual assault.

An additional treatment technique employed is rational self-analysis. Rational self-analysis is a process for enabling offenders to challenge the irrational thinking patterns that cause them to feel angry, fearful, or put-down. This technique is based on Rational Emotive Therapy originated by Dr. Albert Ellis, but it is closely related to the techniques developed by Yochelson and Samenow because it teaches the inmates to examine their thoughts and to think about the consequences of their actions. One of the characteristics of the criminal personality is to believe that events in their lives cause them to have specific feelings. Through the process of Rational Self-Analysis, they learn that it is the way in which they interpret an event that creates the feelings they have about it. This process teaches them to replace their irrational feelings with rational ones, allowing them to experience the power they have over both their emotions and their actions.

Indicators of Change

The process of change is arduous and progress is uneven. A resident will go from one extreme to another, cooperating fully with the program for a while before relapsing into his old behavior. The social workers use the indicators of change developed by Samenow in order to assess an inmate's long-term progress and to determine when he is ready to graduate.

The key indicator that change is occurring is that the resident begins to implement new patterns of thought in ways that are observable. He begins to participate fully in group meetings. His reports are well organized and he discloses his thoughts fully, despite his fear of appearing foolish. He is willing to learn from others and neither blames himself or sees himself as a victim when adversity arises. He no longer relies on criminal tactics to block interactions with the staff and others in authority. He is willing to abdicate control and no longer responds angrily when the unexpected happens. He rarely uses the first four deterrents because the fifth -- automatic deterrence -- has become his key strategy.

When a resident consistently exhibits these indicators of change, he is ready to graduate. Often graduation is preceded by a home visit in the company of a social worker. This permits the resident to test his new skills and behavior in his old world, a world rife with temptation and peopled by those who expect him to behave as he always has. Many inmates return to DATU after these visits with a renewed sense of commitment to the program and with the intention of working as hard as they can in their last few weeks on the unit. DATU, with all its demands and tests of character, is a sheltered environment. The real challenge for the inmate lies in bringing what he has learned inside into practice in his life in the world.

Conclusion

DATU is an effective program for rehabilitating hard-core recidivists because it is carefully conceptualized, follows established policies and procedures, is adequately funded, and has a well-trained staff. The inmates who enter the program are screened to ensure that they fit the program parameters. The program is intense and requires a total commitment on the part of the resident. Once in the program, the inmate is retained either until he demonstrates that he is unwilling to do the work or until he is able to change his thought and behavior patterns. Most of those who enter the program fail to graduate. However, the majority of those who complete the program leave their criminal behavior in the past and become responsible citizens.

Follow-up and Success Rates

There are no formal follow-up procedures. However, most of the graduates stay in contact with the social workers for several years after they leave the unit. They call to report success in finding and keeping jobs and to get advice when they encounter problems. Most continue to attend NA meetings in their communities, and even though some may use drugs occasionally after their release, they recognize that this behavior will lead inexorably back to their old patterns; so most seek help quickly.

The express purpose of this program is to reduce recidivism rates among career criminals. The criterion for success is that the DATU graduate stay out of prison. Because there is no efficient way of knowing whether or not a graduate leaves the state and resumes his criminal career elsewhere, the only practical measure of success is whether or not these men re-enter the Wisconsin prison system. By this criterion, this is a successful program. Seventy-six percent of the 67 men who graduated from the program between July 1982 and January 1988 had not returned to prison in Wisconsin as of January 1989.

Breaking these return rates down and comparing them to those of the general Wisconsin prison population gives a clearer picture of the effectiveness of this program. After two years, only 5.9% of DATU graduates returned to prison in Wisconsin, compared with 33% of the general population. After three years, 12% of DATU graduates returned to prison, compared to 37% for the general population. After four years, 22.2% of DATU graduates returned, compared to 41% in the general population; and after five years, only 21.6% of the graduates had returned, compared to 41.5% of the general population.

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