

Short Term Change in Attitude and Motivating Factors to Change Abusive Behavior of Male Batterers after Participating in a Group Intervention Program based on the Pro-Feminist and Cognitive-Behavioral Approach¹

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Abstract

The Domestic Abuse Education Project (DAEP), in Burlington, Middlebury, and St. Albans, Vermont, is a group based domestic abuse intervention program, based in a pro-feminist and cognitive-behavioral approach for domestic violence intervention and prevention. A pre and post-test instrument was developed and implemented to determine short-term change in attitude of participants and motivating factors to change behavior, after completing the twenty-seven session program. After the program, participants reported a positive change in attitudes regarding their abusive behavior and stereotypical beliefs about women. Participants were also more motivated to change their behavior by the effect abuse has on their family relationships. However, many participants continued to agree that insecurity, jealousy, and alcohol and drug use can cause violence. The positive changes in attitude and motivational factors show that this is an effective model in changing underlying batterer attitudes that provide rationale for abusive behavior.

Key Words: attitude; domestic violence; cognitive-behavioral; batterer intervention; group intervention

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Introduction

The emergence of batterer intervention programs (BIPs) occurred in the late 1970's and corresponded with the increase of services for victims of domestic abuse. The development of BIPs acknowledged that men should and could change their abusive behavior in a relationship. The most prominent BIP has been the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota, which follows a pro-feminist, cognitive-behavioral approach through group intervention with batterers. The curriculum encourages participants to take responsibility for their abuse, teaches them how to interrupt and avoid abuse, and helps them to change the sexist attitudes and beliefs that underlie their rationale for abuse (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Gondolf, 2002; Shepard & Pence, 1999). The Domestic Abuse Education Project (DAEP), a project in Burlington, Middlebury, and St. Albans, Vermont, is also rooted in a pro-feminist, cognitive behavioral approach to domestic violence and is modeled after the curriculum of the Duluth, Minnesota program. The purpose of DAEP is to "give the participant the information he needs in order to eliminate abusive and violent behavior in his relationships and life," based on the *Vermont Statewide Standards for Domestic Abuse Programs* (State of Vermont, 1996, p. 51).

The curriculum is based on seven major assumptions: 1) Domestic violence is a choice; 2) Domestic violence is supported by sexism and homophobia; 3) Men who batter continue to abuse because of the benefits they receive from their abuse; 4) Domestic violence is a wide range of behaviors aimed at maintaining an imbalance of power within a relationship; 5) Domestic violence has significant negative impacts on partners, children, extended family, and the community; 6) Domestic violence is a violation of a woman's human rights; and 7) Men who batter can change their behavior if they are motivated to. The DAEP curriculum was designed to reflect these assumptions.

The objectives of the program are to: 1) Expand men's understanding of the wide range of behaviors used to control partners; 2) Increase men's awareness of the intentions and thinking that support their choices to abuse; 3) Increase men's understanding of the impact of their abuse on themselves, their partners, children, and others; 4) Challenge men's efforts to deny or justify their abuse and attempts to minimize or shift responsibility; 5) Increase men's motivation to engage in a process of change that supports safe, equitable and respectful relationships; and 6) Support men in creating specific plans for ensuring their partners' safety.

The intent of the curriculum is to support men in a process of change that will enhance the safety of women and children and will foster a greater level of accountability of the men who participate. Based on this intention, a pre- and post-test evaluation instrument was developed and implemented with the goal of determining short-term changes in attitude of participants and motivating factors to change abusive behavior, after completing a twenty-seven session group intervention program. Results of this evaluation suggest that the program is effective in creating short-term change in motivating factors and participant attitudes. Literature available suggests that these changes may ultimately support a greater level of accountability of the men who participate in this type of program, change in men's behaviors resulting in non-violent relationships, and enhanced safety for women and children (Caesar & Hamberger, 1989; Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Gondolf & Hanneken, 1987; Healey *et al.*, 1998).

Literature Review

Battering and the Cognitive-Behavioral and Pro-feminist Approach

The cognitive-behavioral model and pro-feminist approaches view violence as socially learned and self-reinforcing behavior. Violence is seen as functional behavior and batterers use it to systematically enhance their power in the relationship and control over their female partner. According to this model, a batterer's use of violence against a woman is a choice. Batterers are motivated to continue their use of violence because it successfully serves their purpose of maintaining power and control (Caesar & Hamberger, 1989; Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Eisikovits & Edleson, 1989; Gondolf, 2002; Healey *et al.*, 1998; Shepard & Pence, 1999; Vincent & Jouriles, 2000).

The goal of cognitive-behavioral and pro-feminist BIPs is to resocialize men by helping them to: identify and examine the attitudes and beliefs that reinforce their abusive and violent behavior; identify and examine controlling behaviors; recognize the effects of violence; and learn non-violent and non-controlling behaviors (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Gondolf, 2002; Healey *et al.*, 1998; Neidig & Friedman, 1984; Shepard & Pence, 1999; Vincent & Jouriles, 2000).

Cognitive-behavioral and pro-feminist approaches view group education as the most effective format for the success of BIPs (i.e. the cessation of domestic violence) (Gondolf, 2002; Shepard & Pence, 1999). Peer group education is preferred because it is believed to best reinforce the concept that the use of violence as a tool of male control has its roots in patriarchal social norms, and that as battering is learned, behavior change to nonviolence can also be learned (Caesar & Hamberger, 1989; Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Healey *et al.*, 1998).

Attitudes and Beliefs of Batterers that Lead to Violence

Research indicates that batterers hold rigid sex role stereotypes, or traditional, stereotypic views of masculine and feminine roles and male-female relationships (Saunders *et al.*, 1987; Spence *et al.*, 1973; Star, 1983). Mens' sense of failure from attempting to achieve the excessively high, traditional masculine image contributes to their anger towards and need for control over women. Batterers repress and project their sense of inadequacy, failure and self-hatred onto their female partner (Gondolf & Hanneken, 1987; Neidig & Friedman, 1984; Saunders & Hanusa, 1986).

In this belief system, a man's masculinity, or social status, as experienced by other men, is dependent upon the amount of control he has over "his woman". Men who feel less masculine feel compelled to assert their masculinity more forcefully through abusive behavior to compensate for their sense of inadequacy (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Gondolf & Hannekin, 1987; Healey *et al.*, 1998). Sexist attitudes and beliefs underlie batterers' perceptions that men have the right to control women and they provide a rationale for the use of violence to maintain this control (Briere, 1987; Burt, 1980; Malamuth, 1984; Spence & Helmreich, 1972). They reduce a man's motivation toward the use of cooperative communication and other nonviolent behaviors with his female partner that he would use when choosing to remain nonviolent with others, including those more powerful than he, such as a boss or judge (Caesar & Hamberger, 1989; Healey *et al.*, 1998).

Measuring Attitude and Attitudinal Changes Relating to Violence Against Women

Several studies support the use of attitude change measurement relating to violence against women to evaluate the effectiveness of BIPs. Pratto's Social Dominance Orientation indicated that abusive men favor social policies that maintain unequal relationships between men

and women (Malamuth, 1996). The Attitudes Toward Women Scale measures the degree to which respondents hold traditional or liberal, pro-feminist attitudes and beliefs (Spence *et al.*, 1973). The Femininity Scale found that competence and success are valued as masculine traits, the opposite as feminine traits, and that men who hold traditional beliefs react strongly in a negative way to women who do not adhere to their rigid sex role stereotype (Spence & Helmreich, 1972). Findings from the Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating indicate that attitudes toward wife abuse include that women are to blame for abuse, men are not responsible for abuse and do not make choices to be violent, and that batterers have more rigid definitions of sex roles (Saunders *et al.*, 1987). Findings from the Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse Scale provides evidence that self-reported likelihood of wife battering is related to attitudes supportive of family violence or that the use of violence against family members is okay (Briere, 1987).

The Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale measures the extent to which respondents believe that force and coercion are legitimate ways to gain compliance in intimate relationships. Based on research supporting the conviction that society's hostility towards rape victims is perpetuated by stereotypes and myths, Burt measured the degree to which subjects held several attitudes and beliefs. Findings indicated that acceptance of interpersonal violence was the strongest of four attitude predictors to rape myth acceptance. The data imply that creating a shift away from rape myths requires changing people's pervasive and strongly held sexist attitudes and beliefs. To eradicate sexual violence against women in the long run, society must begin by fighting sex role stereotyping (Burt, 1980).

Evaluating Batterer Intervention Programs

Many studies that have measured change as a result of BIPs have used police reports, male self-reports, and/or partner reports to measure recidivism rates (Caeser & Hamberger, 1989;

Edleson & Tolman, 1992, 1995). In general, research suggests that a substantial portion of program completers successfully cease battering for at least a short time after participation in a BIP (Edleson & Grusznski, 1988; Edleson & Tolman, 1995; Eisikovits & Edleson, 1989; Gondolf, 1997, 2002; Neidig & Friedman, 1984). However, solely studying recidivism rates can be misleading, as batterers who decrease their physical abuse often maintain the use of threats and psychological abuse in order to maintain an imbalanced power structure (Caesar & Hamberger, 1989; Edleson & Grusznski, 1988; Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Eisikovits & Edleson, 1989; Shepard & Pence, 1999).

Given the current research on the relationship between attitude and violence against women, researchers have studied short and longer term batterer change in attitudes and beliefs after having received BIP treatment. Saunders' and Hanusa's (1986) study of 92 male batterers, who completed 12 "skills" group sessions and 8 "process" group sessions using the cognitive behavioral approach, measured short-term effects of group therapy in anger level, jealousy, depression, and attitudes about women's roles, using a pre and post-test survey. Findings support the use of the cognitive-behavioral group approach in treating male batterers. Significant changes were seen in more liberalized views about sex roles, and decreased feelings of anger, jealousy, and depressive symptoms after group treatment. Gondolf and Hanneken (1987) also report on change in attitude after treatment. They conducted an in depth interview study of 12 "reformed batterers" who had completed 24-week BIPs and had not been abusive from 10 months-21/2 years. The reformed batterers described their change in attitudes and beliefs as part of a long-term personal growth process towards non-violent interactions and more egalitarian relationships. Their personal growth occurred in three steps: acceptance of responsibility for

abuse, awareness of range of feelings and development of empathy for others, and redefinition of masculinity.

Overall, research on battering indicates that men who batter their female partners hold two components of a belief system that supports abuse: 1) sexist beliefs that denigrate women, determine men to be superior, and entitle men to have control over women, and 2) the belief that abuse is an acceptable tool to use against family members. Cognitive-behavioral and pro-feminist BIPs assert that the cessation of domestic violence will be a result of men who batter identifying motivations to engage in a process of behavior change, which involves modifying and changing their sexist attitudes and beliefs (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Gondolf, 2002; Healey *et al.*, 1998; Neidig & Friedman, 1984; Shepard & Pence, 1999; Vincent & Jouriles, 2000). Limited research is available on whether or not BIPs are effective in changing batterer attitudes and motivational factors to change abusive behavior. Given the limited research, this study examines short-term change in attitude and motivational factors to change their behavior after participating in the twenty-seven session DAEP program.

Method

Sample

During the time frame of November, 1999 through November, 2002, 726 DAEP participants who attended the orientation of the twenty-seven session program were asked to participate in this study and requested to complete a pre-test at intake and a post-test instrument upon program completion. Approximately 99.5% (722) of DAEP participants during this time frame were offenders convicted of a domestic violence related crime and were referred to the program by the Vermont Department of Corrections as a condition of their sentence. Few participants (.5%, 4) entered the program on a voluntary basis. Attending and completing the

DAEP program was mandatory for all convicted and court referred offenders, however it was a choice for voluntary participants.

A total of 375 of those who entered the program completed the program during the study time frame (52%). The 48% of participants who did not complete the program during the study time frame may not have done so for several reasons. These participants may have been re-referred to the program and completed it at a later date outside of the study period. Participants could have also been dismissed from the program because of either new criminal charges brought against them or failure to comply with the DAEP program contract. This figure also does not include participants who enrolled during the study and completed the program after the study had concluded.

Throughout this time frame, a total of 278 participants completed the pre-test (38% of those who *entered* into orientation) and 165 completed the post-test (44% of persons who *completed* the program at the time of the study). To account for participant attrition in this study, participants may not have completed the post-test for several reasons: (1) they may have been dismissed from the program; (2) participants may have had a low level of literacy skills and were not able to complete the instrument on their own; and (3) study participation was not a requirement of participating in the DAEP program. This study includes participants from DAEP sites in Burlington, Middlebury, and St. Albans, Vermont.

Participant Characteristics

The ages of DAEP participants ranged from 18 to 73 years of age with an average of 33 years and median of 32 years (n=277). One hundred percent (278) of participants were male. The majority of participants (83%, 204) identified themselves as Caucasian, 9% (23) as African American, and 2% (5) each as Hispanic, Native American, Asian or Pacific Islander, and from

mixed decent (N=247). Thirty-one participants did not report this information, which was 11% of the sample. Monthly income at intake ranged from \$0 to \$8,000 with an average monthly income of \$1,291, median of \$1,140 and mode of \$1,000 (n=177). One hundred and one (36%) participants did not disclose their income information.

Procedure

At orientation to the program, participants were asked to complete the pre-test, prior to beginning the group intervention. At the completion of the twenty-seven session program, participants were given the post-test and asked to complete it and hand it in at that time or mail it back to the program. All participants who completed the post-test handed it in at the end of the program and chose not to mail it. Participation in the study and completion of the pre and post-test was not a mandatory condition of participation in DAEP. Identifying information was not indicated on the survey to ensure anonymity and reduce respondent bias in answering the questions. Completed surveys were sealed and delivered to the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont for data entry and analysis.

Measures

The pre and post-test instrument was developed and implemented for this study to determine short term change in attitude of participants and motivating factors associated with behavior change after participating in a twenty-seven session group intervention program, based on the research of Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp (1973), Saunders and Hanusa (1986), Briere (1987), Gondolf and Hanneken (1987), and Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, and Linz (1987).

Attitudinal Statements. The pre and post-test instrument consisted of twenty-three statements designed to measure the effect of the program on short-term change in beliefs and attitudes. Cronbach's Alpha score was calculated for the 23 statements, confirming the

instrument's reliability. The attitudinal statement section received an alpha score of .72, indicating an adequate internal consistency. An alpha of .70 or greater is considered to be acceptable (Nunnally, 1978). The instrument consisted of statements on two belief systems. The first belief system reflects a rationale for use of abusive behavior (statements indicated in Table I in the Results section). This includes: sexist beliefs and stereotypical gender roles, beliefs that abusive behavior is acceptable, and beliefs that externalize responsibility for abusive behavior. The second reflects a belief system that supports egalitarian relationships, less rigid gender roles, recognizes that violence is not acceptable, and accepts personal responsibility for abusive behavior (statements indicated in Table II in the Results section). Statements were presented to participants in random order. Participants were asked to rank their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale from one to five to measure the intensity of the response (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree). Participants were also offered the option of "9" for "not sure".

Cross tabulation was conducted to provide frequency counts of responses to statements on the pre and post-test. The nonparametric Mann-Whitney statistical test was used to measure whether the mean rank change for each question from the pre and post-test with intervention was statistically significant.

Motivation Factors for Behavior Change. In addition to agreement or disagreement with attitudinal statements, participants were also asked to indicate "yes" or "no" to whether or not nine factors motivate them to have a non-abusive relationship (Cronbach Alpha = .72). Examining motivational factors to change behavior before and after intervention is based on the DAEP program's assumption that the obstacle to behavior change is not a deficit in skills, but a

lack of motivation of men who batter to change their abusive behavior (Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Gondolf, 2002; Shepard & Pence, 1999; State of Vermont, 1996). The motivational factors included those that posed a short-term, negative consequence on the batterer. Factors also included longer-term ones that motivate a batterer to stop abusive behavior because of recognition that abuse is not right and the negative impact abuse has on family members. The motivational factors are presented in Table III in the results section. Cross tabulation of results and a chi square test was conducted to determine if the change in responses from pre to post was statistically significant.

Hypotheses

Three research hypotheses were developed based on the literature and DAEP program objectives. Two focus on participant change in attitude after program completion, as measured by change in agreement or disagreement with statements that support abusive behavior or a non-violent relationship, depending on question wording. The third hypothesis focuses on shift in motivational factors to change abusive behavior, after program completion.

Change in Attitude. After completion of the DAEP program intervention it is hypothesized that participants will show change in attitude toward disagreement with statements that reflect a rationale for use of abusive behavior, including sexist beliefs and stereotypical gender roles, beliefs that abusive behavior is acceptable, and beliefs that externalize responsibility for abusive behavior (Briere, 1987; Burt, 1980; Malamuth, 1984; Saunders *et al.*, 1987; Spence & Helmreich, 1972; Spence *et al.*, 1973; Star, 1983)

Participants will show change in attitude toward agreement or disagreement (based on question wording) with statements that reflect a belief system that supports egalitarian relationships, less rigid gender roles, recognizes that violence is not acceptable, and accepts

personal responsibility for abusive behavior (Caesar & Hamberger, 1989; Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Gondolf, 2002; Healey *et al.*, 1998; Neidig & Friedman, 1984; Shepard & Pence, 1999; Vincent & Jouriles, 2000).

Change in Motivational Factors. Participants will show change in motivational factors to change their abusive behavior, with participants less motivated by the negative consequences of abuse on themselves and how other perceive them, and more motivated by the effect of abuse on their partner and children, that abuse is not right, and the desire to improve the quality of relationship with their partner (Shepard & Pence, 1999; Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Gondolf, 2002; State of Vermont, 1996).

Results

Statements that Support Abusive Behavior

Table I shows the cross tabulation and Mann-Whitney tests of the 15 attitudinal statements that support abusive behavior compared by pre- and post- intervention. Thirteen of the 15 statements that emphasized beliefs supportive of abusive behavior moved in the hypothesized direction of disagreement with the statement, with all of the 13 being statistically significant ($p \leq .01$). Participants expressed significant disagreement with the five statements that view abuse as acceptable and externalize the cause of abuse. These statements include: it is ok to be abusive if you feel hurt, abuse is a part of human nature, smashing things is not violent, what happens in the home should remain in the home, and men are treated unfairly by the legal system.

Cross tabulation of the results from pre to post-test showed that several of the statements regarding external causes of abuse showed high percentage increases in disagreement with these statements from pre to post-test. The statement “it is ok to be abusive if you feel hurt” received

24% disagreement and 60% strong disagreement on the pre-test and 15% disagreement and 84% strong disagreement on the post-test ($z=-5.27$; $p\leq.01$). For the statement “abuse is a part of human nature”, 40% expressed disagreement and 39% strong disagreement on the pre-test compared to 24% disagreement and 59% strong disagreement on the post-test ($z=-3.27$; $p\leq.01$).

Table I. Cross Tabulation and Mann Whitney Analysis of Attitudinal Statements**Supporting Abusive Behavior, Pre and Post-Test, %(n)**

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Z
Anger causes violence	Pre	6 (15)	15 (40)	17 (46)	35 (93)	28 (79)	-.133
	Post	15 (24)	20 (33)	6 (10)	20 (33)	39 (65)	
Men should approve of their partner's friends	Pre	12 (31)	24 (64)	33 (87)	21 (54)	11 (28)	-2.82*
	Post	24 (37)	33 (51)	12 (18)	21 (33)	11 (16)	
It is OK to be abusive if you feel hurt	Pre	60 (161)	34 (93)	2 (6)	2 (4)	2 (6)	-5.29*
	Post	84 (138)	15 (25)	0	.6 (1)	.6 (1)	
Abuse is a part of human nature	Pre	39 (103)	40 (105)	10 (27)	6 (15)	5 (12)	-3.27*
	Post	59 (92)	24 (38)	6 (9)	7 (11)	4 (6)	
Alcohol and/or drugs cause violence	Pre	10 (26)	14 (35)	19 (48)	29 (72)	29 (72)	-2.84*
	Post	19 (28)	20 (29)	15 (21)	26 (37)	21 (30)	
Smashing things is not abusive; it is just venting	Pre	37 (96)	35 (91)	14 (36)	11 (28)	3 (8)	-6.74*
	Post	71 (117)	21 (34)	2 (3)	4 (6)	3 (5)	
Men abuse women because they are insecure or jealous	Pre	17 (41)	22 (54)	26 (65)	29 (72)	7 (17)	-3.96*
	Post	15 (25)	17 (26)	8 (13)	36 (57)	24 (37)	
What happens in the home should remain in the home	Pre	21 (47)	25 (56)	19 (43)	28 (65)	8 (18)	-4.61*
	Post	37 (46)	34 (42)	12 (15)	10 (12)	7 (8)	
Men are treated unfairly by the legal system	Pre	7 (19)	10 (26)	26 (68)	25 (66)	33 (88)	-5.33*
	Post	19 (28)	24 (35)	21 (31)	18 (27)	17 (26)	
Women provoke men to be abusive	Pre	22 (57)	34 (88)	26 (67)	12 (32)	7 (18)	-8.51*
	Post	63 (98)	25 (38)	5 (8)	6 (9)	1 (2)	
She is just as much the cause of the problem as I am	Pre	15 (39)	22 (58)	30 (79)	20 (52)	12 (32)	-8.57*
	Post	44 (72)	35 (57)	12 (19)	6 (9)	3 (5)	
A man cannot change if a woman won't change	Pre	36 (96)	43 (117)	10 (26)	5 (13)	6 (16)	-4.19*
	Post	58 (92)	29 (46)	4 (7)	3 (5)	5 (8)	
In general, men make better decisions than women	Pre	29 (75)	40 (105)	24 (62)	5 (14)	2 (6)	-5.28*
	Post	55 (87)	31 (49)	6 (9)	5 (8)	3 (5)	
Women want to be dominated by men	Pre	49 (129)	38 (100)	10 (26)	2 (50)	2 (5)	-4.30*
	Post	70 (112)	23 (36)	4 (6)	1 (2)	2 (3)	
Someone has to be in charge in a relationship	Pre	32 (88)	40 (108)	20 (53)	5 (14)	3 (9)	-4.55*
	Post	56 (90)	29 (46)	8 (13)	4 (7)	3 (5)	

*p ≤ .01.

The seven statements concerning sexist attitudes and stereotypical gender roles of women showed statistically significant change towards the hypothesized direction of disagreement. These statements include: men should approve of their partner's friends, women provoke men to be violent, women are equally the cause of violence as men, men cannot change if a woman cannot change, men make better decisions than women, women want to be dominated by men, and that men needs to be in charge of the relationship.

Cross tabulation also showed that three of the statements regarding women and gender roles showed high percentage increases in disagreement from pre to post-test. The statement "women want to be dominated by men" had 38% in disagreement and 49% in strong disagreement on the pre-test and 23% in disagreement and 70% in strong disagreement on the post-test ($z=-4.30$; $p\leq.01$). The statement "women provoke men to be abusive" had 24% disagreement and 22% strong disagreement on the pre-test while 25% disagreement and 63% strong disagreement on the post-test ($z=-8.51$; $p\leq.01$). For the statement "she is just as much the cause of the problem as I am", 22% indicated disagreement and 15% strong disagreement compared to 35% disagreement and 44% strong disagreement on the post-test ($z=-8.57$; $p\leq.01$).

Three statements concerning the cause of abuse showed conflicting results. The statement that "men abuse women because they are insecure or jealous" showed a statistically significant change in the opposite of the hypothesized direction, with 29% agreeing and 7% strongly agreeing on the pre-test and 36% agreeing and 24% strongly agreeing on the post-test ($z=-4.14$; $p\leq.01$). The statement that "alcohol and/or drugs cause violence" showed movement from pre to post towards the hypothesized direction of disagreement even though more participants were in agreement with this statement on the post-test than disagreement. The results were statistically significant ($z=-2.84$; $p\leq.01$). The statement that "anger causes violence"

did not show significant change from pre to post-test, as participants showed both agreement and disagreement with this statement comparing pre-test to post-test.

Statements that Support a Nonviolent Relationship

Table II shows the results of the cross tabulation and Mann Whitney analysis of the eight attitudinal statements that support a nonviolent relationship. In examining the responses to statements from the belief system that support egalitarian relationships, less rigid gender roles, recognition that violence is not acceptable, and acceptance of personal responsibility for abusive behavior, Table II shows that five of the eight showed significant change in attitude toward agreement with these statements. These statements include: men's unrealistic expectations of relationships and women can lead them to abuse their partners, what my partner thinks or feels is important even if I disagree, my behavior is my own choice and I cannot be provoked into being violent, it is possible to have a relationship without abuse, and I don't need to win an argument to feel ok about myself. Change in agreement with the statement "the way I treat my partner does not effect my children" significantly moved in the hypothesized direction of disagreement from pre to post-test. Change in agreement with the statement "a safe relationship needs to be based on mutual trust and respect" did not show significance because a high level of agreement was received on both the pre and post-test. Change in agreement with the statement "my partner is sometimes afraid of me" was not significant, because both agreement and disagreement were equally reported on the post-test.

Cross tabulation of the results showed high percentage increases in agreement for two of the significant statements. The statement "what my partner thinks or feels is important even if I disagree", showed considerable change as 39% agreed and 52% strongly agreed on the pre-test, while 18% agreed and 71% strongly agreed on the post-test ($z=-3.55$; $p\leq.01$). For the statement

"my behavior is my own choice. I cannot be provoked into being violent", 33% agreed and 28% strongly agreed on the pre-test, compared to 24% in agreement and 64% in strong agreement on the post-test ($z=-6.88$; $p \leq .01$).

Table II. Cross Tabulation and Mann Whitney Analysis of Attitudinal Statements Supporting a Nonviolent Relationship, Pre and Post-Test, %(n)

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Z
A safe relationship needs to be based on mutual trust and respect	Pre	1 (2)	0	1 (3)	16 (44)	82 (227)	-1.45
	Post	2 (3)	1 (2)	.6 (1)	9 (14)	88 (145)	
Men's unrealistic expectations of relationships and women can lead them to abuse their partners	Pre	20 (44)	35 (78)	25 (55)	14 (31)	6 (14)	-4.08*
	Post	22 (25)	16 (18)	7 (8)	33 (38)	23 (26)	
What my partner thinks or feels is important even if I disagree	Pre	2 (4)	3 (8)	7 (18)	39 (103)	50 (134)	-3.55*
	Post	5 (8)	4 (7)	2 (3)	18 (28)	71 (114)	
My behavior is my own choice. I cannot be provoked into being violent	Pre	7 (19)	16 (42)	15 (39)	33 (84)	28 (73)	-6.88*
	Post	6 (10)	5 (8)	1 (2)	24 (37)	64 (100)	
It is possible to have a relationship without abuse	Pre	2 (5)	3 (7)	2 (6)	29 (79)	64 (175)	-2.90*
	Post	4 (6)	2 (4)	.6 (1)	15 (24)	79 (130)	
I don't need to win an argument to feel OK about myself	Pre	3 (7)	7 (19)	10 (27)	49 (126)	32 (81)	-3.53*
	Post	5 (6)	6 (8)	2 (3)	34 (43)	52 (66)	
My partner is sometimes afraid of me	Pre	21 (53)	23 (59)	17 (44)	29 (74)	9 (24)	-.45
	Post	24 (35)	20 (29)	12 (17)	32 (47)	12 (18)	
The way I treat my partner does not effect my children	Pre	46 (115)	31 (77)	10 (26)	8 (19)	5 (13)	-4.13*
	Post	69 (108)	17 (26)	5 (8)	2 (3)	7 (11)	

* $p < .01$.

Motivating Factors for Behavior Change

One of the major assumptions of the DAEP program is that "men who batter can change their behavior if they are motivated to" and a major objective is "to increase men's motivation to engage in a process of change that supports safe, equitable, and respectful relationships." Table III shows the cross tabulation and chi square analysis of participant responses to whether or not nine factors motivate them to have a non-abusive relationship, comparing results from the pre-test to post-test.

One of the five factors that motivate batterers to change their behavior based on short-term negative consequences to themselves showed a significant percentage decrease from pre to post-test. The factor, “don’t want to lose my job”, motivated 33% on the pre-test and 22% on the post-test to change their abusive behavior ($\chi^2=5.31$; $p \leq .01$). Three of the five factors showed percentage decreases from pre to post, however these changes were not significant. The factor, “don’t want to feel bad about myself”, showed a percentage increase as a motivating factor from pre to post, with 53% indicating this on the pre-test and 52% indicating this on the post-test ($\chi^2=3.37$; $p \leq .05$).

Three of the four factors that motivate batterers to change their behavior because of recognition that abuse is not right and the negative impact abuse has on family members showed significant percentage increases from pre- to post-test. The factor, “effects of abuse on my partner” showed the highest percentage increase from 57% on the pre-test to 75% on the post-test ($\chi^2=13.64$; $p \leq .01$). The factor, “effects of abuse on my children” showed the next highest change with 48% on the pre and 64% on the post-test ($\chi^2=9.44$; $p \leq .01$). The highest percentage of participants indicated that the factor, “improve the quality of relationship with my partner”, motivates them to change, as 83% indicated this on the pre-test and 93% indicated this on the post-test ($\chi^2=8.89$; $p \leq .01$). The fourth factor of “don’t think it is right to be abusive” approached significance ($p = .118$), with 85% indicating this on the pre-test and 90% indicating this as a motivational factor after the treatment.

Table III. Motivating Factors for Behavior Change by Pre and Post-Test and Chi Square Analysis

Motivating Factor for Behavior Change	% (n) “yes” on Pre-test	% (n) “yes” on Pos-test	x^2
Don't want to feel bad about myself	53 (139)	62 (95)	3.37*
Don't want to lose my job	33 (87)	22 (34)	5.31**
Financial impact is too great	28 (73)	23 (36)	.88
Not getting arrested	49 (130)	45 (69)	.71
Don't want to look bad to others	35 (93)	33 (51)	.17
Effects of abuse on my partner	57 (152)	75 (116)	13.64**
Effect of abuse on my children	48 (127)	64 (98)	9.44**
Improve the quality of relationship with my partner	83 (218)	93 (143)	8.89**
Don't think it is right to be abusive	85 (225)	90 (139)	2.45

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Discussion

The DAEP pre- and post-test was developed to evaluate short term change in participant's attitudes toward abuse and factors that motivate them to change their behavior. The attitudinal statement and motivational factors sections on the pre and post test instruments demonstrated acceptable internal consistency and coefficient alpha scores, indicating reliability. In accordance with the study hypotheses, the results show that after participating in the twenty-seven session program, participants reported several positive changes in their belief systems. Specifically, participants expressed significantly higher levels of disagreement after the program with statements reflecting the belief system that abuse is acceptable, externalizes the cause of abuse, and promotes sexist attitudes and stereotypical gender roles of women. Participants also reported a significant increase in agreement with statements supporting an egalitarian relationship, less rigid gender roles, recognition that abuse is a choice, and acceptance of personal responsibility for abusive behavior. These findings are consistent with similar research conducted on change in attitude of batterers after completing BIPs, with batterer's reporting less traditional views of

women, accepting responsibility for abuse, and having redefined their definition of masculinity after program completion (Gondolf & Hanneken 1987; Saunders & Hanusa 1986).

With the exception of three statements, the findings support the first and second study hypotheses that after completion of the twenty-seven session program intervention, participants will show a change in attitude toward disagreement with statements that reflect a rationale for abusive behavior and a change in attitude toward agreement and disagreement, depending on question wording, with statements that reflect a belief system that supports a non-abusive behavior.

Further, participants reported that they are less motivated by short-term, negative consequences relating to themselves, including a loss of their job, financial impact, getting arrested, and how they are perceived by others. Results show that they are more motivated to change their behavior because of the effect the abuse has on their partner and children, the quality of relationship with their partner, that it is not right to be abusive, and to not feel bad about them self. With the exception of the motivating factor of not feeling bad about oneself, these findings support the third study hypothesis that after program completion, participants will show change in the factors that motivate them to have a non-abusive relationship, with focus on the effect of abuse on others and that abuse is not right. These findings are also consistent with Gondolf and Hanneken's (1987) research on change in batterer attitude post BIP completion, as batterers reported acceptance of responsibility for abuse, awareness of feelings and empathy for others, and redefinition of masculinity. "Reformed" batterers reported that these belief and attitude changes motivated them in the process of personal growth towards non-violent interactions and more egalitarian relationships.

Several findings regarding the cause of abuse showed conflicting results. Results showed that participants continued to agree that men abuse women because they are insecure or jealous. This finding is counter to the cognitive-behavioral approach, with the central premise that violence is always a choice, and curriculum objective “to challenge men's efforts to deny or justify their abuse and attempts to minimize or shift responsibility”. The researchers speculate that this response may indicate that batterers are taking greater responsibility for their feelings and making a stronger connection between how they feel and their abusive actions. Given that positive changes were seen in participant views towards women and women as the cause of abuse, this finding may indicate that men do not blame their partners for their feelings and therefore their abusive behavior. This may indicate a positive shift in perspective regarding taking responsibility for abuse, through taking greater responsibility for their personal feelings. Having men take responsibility for their feelings is potentially reflective of a change in attitude towards beliefs that support non-abusive behavior, rather than excuses for being abusive. Further, even though more men continued to see alcohol and drugs as a cause for violence, completers show a shift towards the hypothesized disagreement with this statement.

Results of this study suggest that completion of the DAEP program leads to a short-term change in batterer attitude toward the belief system that supports a non-abusive relationship. Further, program completion leads to a shift in batterer motivational factors to change behavior, with batterers being more motivated to change by the effect of their abuse on their partner and children, that abuse is not right, and to improve the quality of their relationship with their partner. These findings support that the cognitive-behavioral, pro-feminist group intervention model is an effective approach to change battering behavior by changing underlying assumptions and attitudes that lead to violence.

Several limitations of the study should be recognized, which lead to suggestions for further research. This study was limited in that the completed pre and post-test surveys were not paired, so to protect client confidentiality and anonymity. Thus, results are analyzed based on generalizing overall changes in the two populations rather than by examining individual change. The study was also limited in that it did not account for participants who dropped out of the program. There is the possibility that participants who dropped out of the program, re-entered at a later time. Because the pre and post-tests were completed anonymously, it is possible that a person who re-entered the program completed more than one pre-test. Further research should take measures to pair the pre and post-test instruments through the use of non-identifying codes that protect confidentiality and anonymity to overcome both of these limitations. Completion of the pre and post-tests should also be mandatory in a future study, to ensure a high response rate.

Further research on this topic should broaden the scope of study to measure attitudinal and behavior changes of batterers, to compare the relationship between the two. Additional information from partners or arrest records would be needed to validate self-reported data. This future study should also include a six to twelve month follow up interview with both batterers and partners and an examination of re-offense rates after completion of the program, to determine long term impact of the program on actual behavior changes.

In summary, batterer intervention literature indicates that batterers typically hold rigid sex role stereotypes, or traditional, stereotypic views of masculine and feminine images and roles, as well as male-female relationships. These attitudes and beliefs underlie a batterer's assumption that men have the right to control women, thus providing a rationale for the use of violence to maintain this control. All of these attitudes reduce a man's motivation toward the use of cooperative communication and other nonviolent behaviors with his partner. Based on the

literature available and the findings of this study, changes in batterer attitudes toward a belief system that promotes equality and non-abusive relationships because of the DAEP program will ultimately cause a change in batterer behavior toward a nonviolent relationship. Further research is needed to confirm the relationship between attitude change and actual behavior change as a result of the DAEP program.

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