Title of Intervention: Characteristics and Treatments of High-anger Drivers

Intervention Strategies: Group Education, Individual Education

Purpose of the Intervention: To reduce driving anger

Population: Angry drivers

Setting: Community-based

Partners: Not mentioned

Intervention Description:
- Group Education: Therapy was delivered by two advanced doctoral students in eight weekly, one-hour small group sessions. Self-managed relaxation coping skills (RCS) and a combination of cognitive and relaxation coping skills (CRCS) for driving anger were taught to bring about reduction in driving anger. The Relaxation Coping Skills group (RCS) was given a self-managed relaxation treatment rationale (the individual would become aware of anger arousal and apply relaxation to calm down) and training in progressive relaxation and four specific relaxation coping skills: relaxation without tensing, breathing cued relaxation, cue-controlled relaxation and relaxation imagery. Participants were also trained in the application of relaxation skills for anger management.
- Individual Education: CRCS clients developed a written list of personal cognitive counters for the situations addressed in session and engaged in cognitive and relaxation coping skills application.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:
- Staff/Volunteers: Not mentioned
- Training: Doctoral students were trained to deliver self-managed relaxation coping skills
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Room for group sessions
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Anger scales, therapists, audio recorders, curriculum
- Evaluation: Trained raters, audiotapes of sessions, Therapist Evaluation Questionnaire, Treatment Evaluation and Application Questionnaire, Driving Anger Scale (DAS), Driving Scenarios, Personal Driver Anger Situations, Driving Anger Expression Inventory (DAX), Driving Log, Trait Anger Scale (TAS)

Evaluation:
- Design: Randomized Controlled Trial
- Methods and Measures:
    - The Therapist Evaluation Questionnaire and the Treatment Evaluation and Application Questionnaire were used to assess client perception of the quality of treatment implementation, such as the clarity of communication and expectations of treatment effectiveness.
    - Therapist adherence to treatment protocols was evaluated by having a pair of trained raters independently rate audiotapes of the sessions and indicate whether the session reflected RCS or CRCS and the degree of certainty of their judgment.
    - The Driving Anger Scale (DAS) includes 33 driving situations and has a scale for participants to rate the anger they experienced if the event occurred.
    - The Driving Scenarios measure anger in three common driving situations that vary in level of provocation (driving in ordinary traffic, heavy traffic or rush hour and being yelled at by another driver). Participants rate their degree of anger based on each scenario experienced.
    - The Personal Driver Anger Situations asks the person to describe in detail his or her two most angering situations related to driving and rate them.

- o The Driving Anger Expression Inventory (DAX) is a questionnaire asking how the person expresses anger when driving; it is divided into two dimensions: Hostile/Aggressive Expression and Adaptive/Constructive expression.
- o A Driving Log was used to record the number of times participants had been angry while driving that day, the event that led to the greatest amount of anger while driving and the intensity of the anger and whether they had engaged in any of six aggressive behaviors or 14 risky behaviors.
- o The Trait Anger Scale (TAS) was used to assess how the person reacts generally with anger.

Outcomes:
- Short Term Impact: For the Driving Anger Scale, Personal Anger Situation, Trait Anger and Driving Anger Expression scales, RCS and CRCS groups did not differ from one another, but reported significantly less anger than the control group. By follow-up, CRCS and RCS did not differ significantly from one another, but both groups reported significantly less anger than the control group.
- Long Term Impact: Driving Log: RCS and CRCS clients did not differ from each other, but were angered significantly less often while driving than controls. CRCS engaged in significantly less risky behavior than controls, whereas RCS participants did not differ from either group in terms of risky behavior.

Maintenance: A post-treatment follow-up was conducted. Only CRCS maintained reduction of hostile/aggressive expression of driving anger at one-month follow-up.

Lessons Learned: Both relaxation and cognitive-relaxation interventions led to reductions on multiple measures of driving anger, including the frequency of anger in day-to-day driving.

Citation(s):
Deffenbacher, J. L., M. E. Huff, et al. (2000). "Characteristics and treatments of high-anger drivers." Journal of Counseling Psychology 47(1): 5-17.

Deffenbacher, J. L., L. B. Filetti, et al. (2002). "Cognitive-behavioral treatment of high anger drivers." Behav Res Ther 40(8): 895-910.