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September 2001 International Conference in Malmö, Sweden Promotes "Lasting Change"

A quite substantial number of outcome evaluations conducted during the past twenty years have demonstrated that cognitive-behavioral interventions are generally the methods of choice for aggressive adolescents and younger children. One such intervention is Aggression Replacement Training (ART), well-supported in its outcome efficacy by over a dozen evaluations.

On September 13-14, 2001, a major conference was convened in Malmö, Sweden, to review the status of ART and point in future directions for its continued application and evaluation. Seven-hundred and fifty persons of diverse professional credentials from 20 different countries, attended the meeting. Presentations, reviewed on page two, provided a perspective on its cognitive-behavioral intervention context; described the current status of the open-ended procedures that constitute ART; examined diverse means for training skilled ART trainers; detailed its programmatic application in diverse types of settings; shared on-going evaluation research-in-progress; and moved on to describe extensions and elaborations of the basic ART program.

In this, ICART's initial newsletter, we wish to provide a more detailed description of the conference program, say a bit more about ICART's make up and future plans, and offer the opportunity to join us in our goal of promoting the continued application and evaluation of ART by becoming a member of ICART.

Aggression Replacement Training is composed of three complementary intervention procedures:

1. Skillstreaming. This is the social skills training component of ART, essentially teaching the youngster a repertoire of behavioral alternatives to aggression.

2. Anger Control Training. The cognitive-emotional component of ART teaching youths anger control techniques. In a real sense, if Skillstreaming teaches youths what to do in lieu of aggression, anger control training imparts what *not* to do.

3. Moral Reasoning Training. Youngsters may be skilled in alternatives to aggression and in management of their anger, and still choose overtly aggressive solutions to life challenges. This third component targets prosocial values, thus enhancing the likelihood that skills learned will be skills actually used.

Because of the largely positive evaluations of ART in a number of rigorous studies conducted by diverse inves-

More than fifteen international experts presented the two-day conference.



tigators in a wide range of settings, ART has been designated a recommended program by the U.S. Department of Education, a validated program by the New York State Department of Education, a model program by the U.S. Department of Justice and by the American Correctional Association, and an accredited program by the U.K. Home Office Probation Unit. *continued page 2*

“Lasting Change” Conference continued: Conference Presentations

In recent years, change-agents of all types find themselves governed more and more in their work by the fact that we are in an “era of accountability.” Government and private agencies are increasingly and rightly insisting that we—the treatment and intervention professionals—firmly and unequivocally demonstrate that our interventions work. In fact, an ever-growing number of such agencies now require such efficacy information in advance, as a precondition to selecting and commencing to use any given intervention.

Nowhere has the accountability movement taken root more strongly than in the U.K. The U.K. Home Office Probation Department responded to 20 years of evidence showing clearly that the most effective interventions for chronically aggressive persons are those that seek to both: alter aggression-promoting thinking patterns, and provide new behaviors to aid the person to deal prosocially with previously provocative events—that is, cognitive-behavior interventions. They did so by asking the conference’s first presenter, a person considered the U.K.’s premier forensic clinical psychologist, to review in detail the existing evaluation literature on cognitive-behavioral approaches and to recommend those he felt of value. **CLIVE HOLLIN** is Professor of Criminological Psychology at the University of Leicester. His opening presentation provided the cognitive-behavioral context from which ART grew.

Panel #1: ART’s Component Procedures

The first set of conference presentations was essentially designed to provide an updating of application use and research support for ART’s three component procedures. The presenters were intended to be the persons who originated each component. **ARNOLD P. GOLDSTEIN**, Director of the Center for Research on Aggression at Syracuse University, presented Skill-streaming. Director of the Psychological Services Center at Long Island University, **EVA FEINDLER**’s update of her Anger Control Training was presented for her, as air travel cancellations due to the World Trade Center terrorism prevented her from joining us. Moral Reasoning Training—in the form of his Social Problem Solving intervention—was first formulated by and thus presented by **JOHN C. GIBBS**, Professor of Developmental Psychology at Ohio State University. In broad sweep, all three procedures clearly rest on even firmer empirical grounds than they were when first combined to form ART in 1987. Their application has been substantially further detailed and refined. Their joint use appears to be an even more appropriate and utilitarian decision.

Panel #2: Training ART Trainers

Competent ART trainers (1) know the ART procedures well, (2) are skilled in delivering its content, (3) are able to manage their sometimes acting-out trainee groups well, (4) are comfortable with and even enjoy working with adolescents and younger children, (5) are models of prosocial behavior themselves whenever they interact with trainees, and (6) help ART’s benefits generalize. *Who* the ART trainers are (e.g., race, gender, professional credentials) seems to matter very little. While we have long urged that the foregoing several competencies are necessary to make for a skilled ART trainer, just how those several competencies are to be acquired is and should remain an open matter. Stated otherwise, while we hope that all ART trainers will show high levels of knowledge of the method, good teaching and group management skills, and so forth, we also believe that such abilities can be acquired via a variety of trainer training approaches.

Three very promising training strategies, each quite different from one another, were the contents of the conference’s second panel. Apprenticeship training has been the creative effort of **MIKAEL KALT**, **MARIUSZ HERMELIN** and **IVAN BRILJE** and their fine organization, Youth Alternatives, beginning in Malmö, Sweden and since spreading throughout Sweden and beyond. **LUKE MOYNAHAN** and **TOM ROBBY** of the



Glenne Senter for autistic children in Norway and **KNUTE GUNDERSON** of Rogaland Hogskole in Naerbe, Norway have designed a full university course training ART skills trainers, and their detailed description of it was the panel’s second presentation. The British Home Office Probation Unit is in process of adopting and disseminating

ART throughout their entire nationwide system. **DANNY CLARK** of the Home Office Probation Unit and **JAMES MCGUIRE** of the University of Liverpool Psychology Department are skillfully organizing and managing this dissemination effort—which they described in the third presentation.

The three presentations reaffirm that skilled, effective ART trainer training may be conducted via diverse formats. In a spirit of what has been called “mastery learning,” well-trained trainers can indeed be developed in a wide variety of trainer training program incarnations.

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**All conference presentations are available on videotape. For further information, contact Garbis H. Sarafian at icart-europe@oasen.com.*

Panel #3: Program Applications

ART appears to be an effective intervention with a variety of trainees and in a variety of contexts. From its initial applications in delinquency centers and then schools, it has since also found a comfortable home in a variety of diverse community and family agencies. The third panel's presenters explored these diverse applications, nicely illustrating the manner in which creative clinicians, teachers, and other intervenors shape their training in order to prescriptively fit the particular, individualized needs of their ART trainees. **RUNE NENSÉN**, director of Barnhemmet Oasen, in Aneby, Sweden, and administrative director of ICART, and two of his colleagues—**GARBIS H. SARAFIAN** and **NIKOLAI HAMSTEIN**—described their very talented use of ART in a family center context, one in which the ART group is often all the members of a given family.

MARK AMENDOLA and **ROBERT OLIVER** from Erie, Pennsylvania presented next. Mark directs a large, multi-site and very successful community agency called Perseus House. Robert is the dean of the Collegiate Academy, a public high school for high-achieving students in Erie. Their community-based ART work is of especially good quality both in terms of intervention outcomes for the participating youths themselves, and reduced financial burden for the community of which they are a part, as trainees headed for expensive residential placement are, with the help of ART participation, diverted to successful in-community living. **BARRY GLICK** presented next, on delinquency applications of ART. Barry has been helping create and guide ART from its very beginning. No one knows better than he how it is best organized and applied with delinquent youngsters. There was much wisdom and experience in his presentation. The final member of the applications panel was **ROB DiFLORIO**. Rob is the vice-principal of a very challenging and unusually

successful inner-city elementary school in Syracuse, New York. His presentation described well how quality school programming can turn challenge into opportunity, turn aggression into a positive learning experience. His data on a variety of in-school behavioral criteria (e.g., in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, fights) add to the broad characterization of ART as an effective intervention.



Mariusz Hermelin & Bob Oliver

The conference welcomed 750 participants from 20 countries.



Bengt Daleflod & Rob DiFlorio

Panel #4: Research Evaluation

There are 16 completed evaluations of the effectiveness of ART, conducted at almost as many different locations by almost as many different investigators. These several studies are reported in detail in the revised edition of *Aggression Replacement Training: A Comprehensive Intervention for Aggressive Youth* (Goldstein, Glick, & Gibbs, 1998), as well as in investigations by others published after that text appeared (Kellner & Bry, 1999; Nodarse, 1998; Nugent, 1999; Whitney, 1996). Thus far, its overall effectiveness appears to be robust. But many research questions remain, and the range, duration and facilitators of such change need to be vigorously probed further. A number of research programs seeking just such additional efficacy evaluation are now underway, and three of them are represented by this panel's presenters. **BENGT DALEFLOD**, who was the first to bring ART to Sweden, is energetically and rigorously conducting a multi-site ART training and evaluation program in settings with seriously disturbed clients. **RUUD HORNSVELD** comes to us from The Netherlands. His creative format and evaluation of ART in a forensic setting prescriptively reflects the particular qualities and research requirements necessary when working with such clients. His research project is the first systematic evaluation in The Netherlands of an intervention program focusing directly on aggressive behavior. Five forensic psychiatric institutions are now participating in this project and three others show serious interest. The final presenter on this research evaluation panel was **ROBERT CALAME** from the Batshaw Youth and Family Centre in Québec. As we learned when Rune Nensén described the *doing* of ART in a family center, the evaluation of it in such a setting demands careful and rigorous attention to the unique characteristics which follow from a family focus. Thus far, Calame's data reveal a clear outcome priming effect when trainees' family members are also the target of ART.

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“Lasting Change” Conference: Conference Presentations cont’d.

John Gibbs: Equip Program



Panel #5: ART Extensions & Elaborations

No intervention is ever complete. All of us should be very disappointed if ART of a few years from now is unchanged from what it is at this moment. As both clinical experience and research findings emerge, hopefully practitioners using

ART will correspondingly alter its organization, structure, procedures, and delivery to fully reflect such progress. Two illustrations of such elaboration were referred to earlier in the conference, *i.e.*, Glick's *Thinking for a Change* and Hornveld's *Aggression Control Therapy*.

The presenters for the fifth panel also have each

taken ART and built upon it. **AARON GREGORY**, the first author, directs a secure youth facility for highly aggressive incarcerated delinquent youngsters in New York State. Aaron's management skills at the Taberg Secure Center have created a wonderfully promotive facility environment for the effective delivery of ART to its residents. Since no intervention is any better than the context in which it is offered, Aaron has much to teach us about means for priming ART.

JOHN GIBBS and **ARNOLD P. GOLDSTEIN**, respectively, offered the second and third presentations. Gibbs' was on The Equip Program; Goldstein's described The Prepare Curriculum. Both represent quite substantial extensions and elaborations of ART, and both have begun to find a meaningful place in school and delinquency settings. So, too, for this panel's final presentation. **SARA SALMON** came to ART early in its existence, and she did so as both an empathic counselor and a very high level school official in St. Louis. Her Peace Curriculum fully captures both her clinical wisdom and her teaching prowess.

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Future ICART-Sponsored ART Training Workshops

Twice each year, in Malmö, Sweden, ICART will offer a two-day training workshop for psychologists, social workers, educators, criminal justice workers, and other professionals. Each workshop will provide in-depth training in the methods which constitute ART plus similarly in-depth training on an aspect of its delivery that adds importantly to successful outcomes. That is, each of these workshops will provide attendees with the knowledge and skills needed to run ART groups plus to help create contexts in which ART can be most effective. This workshop series will begin in September, 2002, and continue in April and September of each year. Tentatively, workshop themes will include:

Workshop 1 (Sept. 26-27, 2002): ART in School Settings

The purpose of this two-day applied workshop is to provide attendees with useful, practical information on the use of Aggression Replacement Training in school settings. It is currently being employed successfully in hundreds of U.S. and Canadian elementary and secondary schools. But no intervention, including ART, is any better than the context in which it is offered. A poorly-managed classroom, or inadequate participation by school personnel, will impair the effectiveness of whatever intervention is offered. Thus, this workshop will, in addition to its direct focus on the use of ART in school settings, be devoted to intervention priming: that is, classroom and school-wide procedures to enhance the outcomes of any and all interventions offered.

DAY 1 (Morning): ART Procedures and Their Application in U.S.A. Schools

Arnold P. Goldstein, Ph.D., Syracuse University, New York

DAY 1 (Afternoon): Intervention Priming: School Consultation and Full Staff Involvement

Jane Conoley, Ph.D., Texas A&M University

DAY 2 (Morning): Classroom Techniques for Priming Successful Interventions

Brian Martens, Ph.D., Syracuse University, New York

DAY 2 (Afternoon): ART in Action: The Delaware School Program

Rob DiFlorio, Administrator, The Delaware School

Workshop 2 (April, 2003): ART and Family Participation Workshop 3 (September, 2003): ART in Prison and Mental Health Settings

Workshop 4 (April, 2004): ART for Special Populations

Workshop presenters will be ICART Board Members and other topical specialists, each offering half-day, hands-on training on aspects of the given workshop theme. In addition to these ICART-sponsored workshops, several individual members of the ICART Advisory Board offer ART and ART-relevant training workshops at various sites in Europe and the U.S. The dates, sites, and presenters of these meetings are listed on the ICART website:

www.AggressionReplacementTraining.org

For workshop attendance information and registration, contact Garbis H. Sarafian at icart-europe@oasen.com.

Reflections on ART: Influences on Its Form and Outcome

Over the four decades of my career as a psychologist, there have been three books that served as especially powerful influences on my work. It would be no exaggeration to claim that each in its own way was a turning point on the paths my career followed. Their respective themes differed, yet I wish to write of them here because all three I believe have a message of great potency for enhancing the outcomes of ART participation.

The first is Jerome Frank's *Persuasion and Healing* (Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), a seminal treatise proposing that much of what accounts for favorable outcomes in all types of psychotherapy and related change attempts are the qualities they hold in common. Therapists, when asked, will invariably account for the success of their efforts primarily by pointing to the *specific* techniques constituting their approach, those that differentiate their method from that practiced by others. The psychoanalyst might speak of free association and analysis of transference phenomena, the desensitization therapist of fear hierarchies and systematic relaxation, the cognitive-behaviorist of self-instructional training and erroneous belief disputation, and so on. Frank's contribution, in contrast, was to highlight the outcome-relevant potency of treatment qualities they shared, even if rarely pointed to. Such commonalities, *shared also by ART, when it is successful*, include a high quality therapist-patient (trainer-trainee, teacher-student) relationship, procedures (rituals) constituting the treatment or training that both helper and helpee believe in, an understandable and shared rationale underlying the procedures, cultural (social, organizational) endorsement of the helper as a bona fide authority and healer, and positive outcome expectancies held by both parties.

When ART yields positive outcomes, trainer inclination is strongly oriented to point to modeling, role play, systematic reinforcement and similar specific techniques as responsible. While such training features do indeed contribute significantly to outcome, the commonalities which ART and all other approaches share are too often ignored. Treatment/training outcomes will likely improve, I would assert, if and when the relationship or therapeutic alliance is strengthened, positive expectancies are structured, procedural belief is

enhanced, underlying rationale is provided, trainer competence and status are maximized and, more generally, the potency of intervention commonalities is fully respected and acted upon. Such was Jerome Frank's message. I enthusiastically support it.

But specific intervention ingredients matter greatly also. With his masterful book, *Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis* (Prentice-Hall, 1973) Albert Bandura presented in full and wise detail the person and environment events which lay at the heart of the person's learning, performing, and continuing to use aggressive behavior. By direct implication, he thus provided a social learning road map for its modification. Aggression, he asserted, is *acquired* via both direct experience and observation of others. Its employment is *instigated* by aversive events, incentive inducements, and modeling influences. Its further use is *maintained* by means of direct or vicarious reinforcement, and by cognitions that neutralize self-punishment by the aggressor. As was true for Jerome Frank, Albert Bandura was in a sense ahead of this time, charting new avenues for others to follow. His identification and elaboration here of specific cognitive and behavioral antecedents and concomitants of aggression, formed a comprehensive picture of the many types of variables in need of attention and modification when framing effective cognitive-behavioral counter-interventions. ART is one such intervention, and its structure and use owe much to his thinking.

Combine nonspecific intervention commonalities and social learning-based, specific techniques, and one has an intervention. Yet no intervention, whatever its source and substance, is any better than the context in which it is offered. Ervin Staub's powerful book *The Roots of Evil* (Cambridge University Press, 1989) demonstrates with both depth and energy how highly significant contextual and cultural forces can be in determining the worst in human behavior. Much as in the case of Bandura's similar assertion of the potency of the immediate environment, such contextual influences can also be for the better, not only the worst. The meta-message is clear: Context, be it that of the consulting room, the school, the community, or the larger society,

greatly affects human behavior, including those behaviors resulting from intervention efforts.

Staub has written wisely about the impact of broad cultural and societal

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ART co-founder Arnold Goldstein



*"ART treatment outcomes
will likely improve
when procedural belief is
enhanced and trainer
competence is maximized."*

Reflections on ART: continued

currents—stereotyping and devaluation of subgroups, authority orientation of the majority, the need for connection, moral exclusion, and more. It may seem a large leap from such society-wide perspectives to our topic here, but in both the macro and micro worlds, context greatly influences outcomes. Allow me here to be concrete.

Imagine you are a change-agent-psychologist, counselor, social worker—prepared to provide a school and its personnel an ART training workshop or extended tutorial. Your method has been generally effective, your skills as a trainer are good, your energies for doing this presentation in this school are high. Now imagine two scenarios. In the first, the school you enter to do your consulting clearly has its act together, and you sense this within but a few moments of entering. The halls are clean, graffiti-free, and with apparent pride display the creative works of its students. Between classes, students move from room to room in an orderly manner—neither lock-step rigid nor chaotically. During classes, no students loiter in its corridors. The students seem friendly and alert; the teachers chat easily with passing students; the administrators are present and available. Your feeling is that this school has a sense of community. Consider a second school. Its halls are littered, its walls are lettered, its spirit diminished. Students roam both between and during class times. Students are sullen and wary—towards both one another as well as the adults in the school. Cursing and bullying are common. Teachers are hard to find, even in the hallways between classes. Administrators keep to their offices. The school's "spirit" is more one of "us versus them."

To the degree that the second school as an (ART or other) intervention context can be altered to be more like the first, the intervention's likely success is correspondingly enhanced. Since so many of the contexts in which ART is actually offered are in fact quite like the second school, I would urge that it would likely be highly fruitful if much of the future work on ART were devoted to creating a receptive and change-promotive ART-commu-

"The future work of ART could be devoted to creating a change-promotive community, directed toward intervention priming purposes."

nity. That is, beyond research and refinement of ART *per se*, efforts directed at context change for intervention priming purposes are both needed and likely to be highly productive in terms of enhanced intervention outcomes.

These, then, are the three books impacting most upon my work. Their connection to ART may seem remote, yet each has had an immensely important and ART-relevant lesson to teach. Frank's is about the potent commonalities that all interventions share, and which we would be well advised to respect and attend to in all of our intervention efforts. Bandura provides a social learning guide to the acquisition, instigation, and maintenance of aggression, and by direct

implication to the specific techniques necessary for their effective modification. Staub steps back and offers perspective on the broader social and cultural context which must be both better understood and modified for intervention commonalities and specific techniques to yield their positive effects.

ART is a well-established intervention generally yielding positive outcomes. Yet much work remains to be done on enhancing what it shares in common with all interventions, refining the specific cognitive-behavioral techniques that constitute its procedures, and priming the immediate and broader contexts in which it is offered in order to facilitate yet ever-better outcomes.

~ Arnold P. Goldstein

American facilitators Mark Amendola, Arnold Goldstein and Bob Oliver.



ICART on the Web: www.AggressionReplacementTraining.org

With the merger of the European and American Aggression Replacement Training groups, the resources available online have also merged into one joint ICART website, available at www.AggressionReplacementTraining.org. If you need additional information, you can reach our European contact by e-mail at icart-europe@oasen.com and an American contact at icart-usa@oasen.com.

Organizational Goals of ICART

ICART was formed to

- provide a forum for the exchange of ART-relevant experiences and data;
- create an active network of interested professionals;
- encourage high-quality practice in its use;
- promote its continued rigorous evaluation; and
- aid in its growing dissemination as a useful intervention approach.

In order to accomplish these several goals, a series of ICART Advisory Board subcommittees have been established. Their respective charges are described below.

Executive Committee:

- Administration.
- Seek financial support (meetings, research, publications, travel, materials, office operating expenses, etc.).
- Communicate ICART's existence, goals, and achievements widely.
- Long-term planning.

Training & Standards:

Develop recommendations to the full Advisory Board regarding:

- trainer competence criteria.
- ICART's role (*if any*) in certification.
- means to promote quality ART training.

Research & Evaluation:

- Promote, conduct, gather and disseminate ART outcome and process studies.
- Promote collaborative ART research.
- Develop recommendations to the full Board regarding possible ART research funding sources.

Membership/Newsletter:

- By a variety of means, actively seek to expand the membership of ICART (*e.g.*, soliciting relevant organization membership lists, publicity, publication, conference presentations, journal notices, newsletter dissemination).
- Preparation and wide dissemination of the ICART Communicator Newsletter.



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Membership

After completing this form, please send it to **Garbis H. Sarafian** by **FAX: (46) 380418 11** or **MAIL: Barnhemmet Oasen, Box 199, Fasanstigen 17-25, 578 24 Aneby, Sweden**

If you wish to become a member of ICART, you can do so by completing this Membership Enrollment form. Please print.

ICART is an organization devoted to the practice and evaluation of Aggression Replacement Training (ART), a cognitive-behavioral intervention designed for aggressive children, adolescents, and adults. Membership in ICART is open to all interested professionals, both practitioners and researchers, of whatever professional background. Initial members have included psychologists, educators, criminal justice workers, social workers, and others.

The goals of ICART are to provide a forum for the exchange of ART-relevant experiences and data, create an active network of interested professionals, encourage high-quality practice in its use, promote its continued rigorous evaluation, and aid in its growing dissemination as a useful intervention approach.

To meet these several goals, in the period ahead ICART will sponsor future conferences like the initial one in Malmö (2001); create and disseminate this ART practitioner-researcher newsletter; serve as a clearing-house for creative ART practice innovations and developing research findings as they become available; and in yet other ways seek to encourage and promote the skilled use of ART and its competent evaluation.

Please **MAIL** or **FAX** completed form:

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Comments or suggestions for additional ICART activities or resources:

Comments _____
