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Can pre-treatment motivational groups in FATJAM promote therapeutically relevant changes for juvenile fire setters and bomb makers in forensic psychological settings?

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Juvenile fire setters and bomb makers (JFSB) constitute an increasing public safety concern. Forensic psychological and clinical settings have relied heavily on assessment measures and various clinical tools while delivering pre-treatment and screening services that are designed to help deal with various JFSB issues. Research has led to evidenced based treatment programs like FATJAM that are often used to reduce destructive behavior and recidivism (i.e., threats to public safety). The traditional treatment of juveniles has been to use more of a reactive approach within those same clinical forensic settings. Motivation has been identified as being a critical intervention component for changing an individual's unwanted behavior. This presentation aims to discuss how a motivational therapy orientation may be used to provide therapeutically-relevant changes in JFSBs. The presentation also reviews the use of pre-treatment groups that emphasize motivational therapy as a therapeutically-relevant strategy. The overall objective is to explain how pre-treatment motivational groups can result in desirable clinical changes (i.e., measured by subsequent risk assessments) by focusing on biopsychosociocultural factors through FATJAM interventions that incorporate a motivational group therapy component within a psychological forensic setting.

Biography

Ronn Johnson is licensed and board certified clinical psychologist with extensive experience in academic and clinical settings. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology. He has served as a staff psychologist in community mental health clinics, hospitals, schools and university counseling centers. The University of Iowa, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Central Oklahoma, and San Diego State University are among the sites of his previous academic appointments. His forensic, scholarship, and teaching interests include ethical-legal issues, police psychology, women death penalty, and contra-terrorism.

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