

**Promising Practices: Incorporating Conflict Management Skills and
Mediation Services for people in Recovery into Drug Court
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Overview

Mediation is a confidential and voluntary process that creates a space for everyone involved to talk about their experiences, be heard by each other, and establish a plan on how to move forward productively. Mediation can be used to resolve active conflict or to address lingering tensions and support people to have difficult conversations. Through community mediation centers, mediation is offered by community volunteers who represent the community's diversity and have been extensively trained. Centers meet participants where they are, providing mediation in locations throughout their services areas, including schools, libraries, prisons, hospitals, and recovery facilities. Community Mediation Maryland (CMM) supports the work of 17 community mediation centers throughout the state, by developing new uses for mediation and providing training and quality assurance.

One significant role of CMM is to identify and promote new uses for mediation to respond to social challenges in which communication and relationships are important. Some examples include prisoner re-entry mediation, provided in collaboration with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Individualized Education Program meeting facilitation, provided in collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education; and Attendance Mediation, to respond to the challenges of truancy. CMM develops the model, standardizes evaluation methodology, and provides training and technical support to the 17 community mediation centers throughout Maryland, who provide the direct service to their community.

Since 2006, CMM centers have been providing prisoner re-entry mediation services for inmates preparing for release from Maryland Prisons. Through Prisoner Re-entry Mediation, inmates repair relationships with families and other community members before release. CMM found success in this work at ACT-SAP (Addicts Changing Together-Substance Abuse Program in the Baltimore City Detention Center) and other drug treatment programs behind bars. In fact, offenders participating in the ACT-SAP program have requested re-entry mediation at higher rates than in any other facility in Maryland, reinforcing the need for addressing relationships within this population, a need which has also been identified by research. With this programmatic experience and a documented need among people in recovery for relationship building and communication skills, CMM began working with BSAS and the Baltimore City District Court Drug Court to identify ways to bring conflict resolution and mediation services to individuals involved in Drug Court. Community Mediation Baltimore (CMB) is the CMM member center providing mediation services to Baltimore City. CMB is the lead services agency in the work with ACT-SAP and the Baltimore City Drug Court.

Initially, Community Mediation efforts were focused on garnering referrals for mediation directly from Drug Court participants. Attempts were made to reach out to these individuals when they appeared in court, and through referrals from Community Supervision and Drug Court Case Managers. This approach resulted in few referrals, and the vast majority of these referrals did not end up going to mediation due to a lack of interest from the other participant or inability to contact drug court participants after the referral. As a result, CMM and CMB worked to develop a comprehensive approach, including conflict management training, mediation services, and an opportunity to participate in a 50 hour basic mediation training. This document outlines this model and provides recommendations for continuation, expansion, and replication.

Literature Review: Communication, Relationships, Conflict, and Recovery

The section below, written by Choice Research Associates, highlights the importance of addressing communication, conflict, and relationships as part of a comprehensive response to addiction recovery:

Stress is a known risk factor for substance use and abuse, and recovery from substance abuse and from mental health disorders can be a stressful process (Laudet, et al., 2006). For recovery to be successful, a wide range of supports and coping skills are required and stress levels need to be reduced. Especially important in the recovery process is the role of social supports, which can be helpful by “buffering stress in difficult times” and by “providing assistance, emotional support and a sense of belonging that can alleviate or buffer stress” and improve quality of life (Laudet, et al., 2006). A study by Laudet, et al, of dually-diagnosed self-help/mutual aid group participants found that higher levels of perceived supports were correlated with more successful recovery and improved well-being (2000).

In a recently completed evaluation of Baltimore’s Threshold to Recovery Centers, Davey-Rothwell and Tobin (2009) found that Threshold services such as NA/AA meetings, dedicated staff, peer support and referrals to services resulted in abstinence from substances, decreased social isolation and increased social connectedness to other individuals in recovery and family. Several studies find that pro-social relationships can be a strong supporting factor in attaining and sustaining recovery from substance use (Cloud & Granfield, 2009; Waldorf, 1983 as cited by Scherbaum & Specka, 2008; Alford et al., 2007).

The impact of family engagement and support on a person’s recovery process remains unclear. Predicated on findings that married people are healthier and more supported than unmarried people, it is often assumed that the family is the greatest source of informal, positive support and a buffer to harmful stress (Christian 2005, cited in Gideon, 2007). However, this view does not take into consideration that, because of the importance of family engagement, “low quality” relationships, such as disrupted relationships or relationships in which the other participant is involved in criminal activity or substance use, can cause significant harm and can harm the recovery process (Gideon 2007, 214).

Gideon (2007) conducted a study of a small sample of 39 male participants in a therapeutic community within a prison with the goal of evaluating the impact of family engagement, with a focus on the family as a main support and an agent of change. The qualitative analysis done in this study found that the conflict and stress inherent in reuniting a family, as well as mistrust and unrealistic expectations common in this situation can render the family “a negative support agent, [that diminishes] social capital” (221). This negative impact is increased when the family member is a spouse.

Nonetheless, family and other pro-social relationships can be a critical component in assisting those in the transition from incarceration because they provide both social control (Sampson & Laub, 1993) and social support (Cullen, Wright & Chamblin, 1993) which inhibits criminal activity (Maruna, Immarigeon, & LeBel, 2004). The provision of mediation between the inmate and a person who has the potential to play a positive role in the offender’s life increases the possibility that these pro-social relationships will be built or repaired. Stability can be increased for the ex-offender through adherence to agreements rendered through mediation, their exposure to the tools used in the mediation process, and the consequent positive support of on-going relationships that likely result.

The mediation services and conflict management training respond to the needs identified in the literature to assist people in recovery in addressing relationship issues, supporting families during the transition, and minimizing the stress associated with addressing relationship issues.

Recruitment for Conflict Management Training

Conflict Management training is available for District Court Drug Court participants in phase 1, 2, or 3 of the Drug Court Process, however, the focus has been on recruiting participants in phase 1. Participants receive 8 hours of community service credit for their participation in the Conflict Management training. This creates an incentive for participants to sign up, and there is still a need for a concerted recruitment effort. Participants only receive the credit if they attend the entire training – part 1 over the course of two days and part 2 which takes place on one day, 2-4 weeks later. Most participants indicate that while it was the community service hours that led to their signing up for the training, once there, they found the training to be engaging, meaningful, and useful.

The training has been offered since April 2012, and a few different approaches have been used to recruit participants. During the first 6 months of the provision of the conflict management training, the recruitment process was:

- Each Parole and Probation agent would refer at least 5 people to the training each month.
- The Drug Court Mediation Liaison would speak to all clients before the start of drug court progress conferences and mention the conflict management trainings.
- The Drug Court Mediation Liaison would meet with parole and probation agents to discuss client progress and which clients should attend the trainings.
- Parole and Probation agents would distribute flyers to all clients on the training list, once the date was scheduled.

- The Drug Court Mediation Liaison worked with public defender and judge to target clients who have challenges in their lives that could benefit from the training.

Using this approach 76% of the people who signed up for the training attended.

The process was changes in the fall of 2012 due to the turnover among Parole and Probation agents and because the full-time Drug Court Mediation Liaison went out on medical leave. The current process is:

- The part-time Drug Court Mediation Liaison distributes a sign in sheet to all clients in attendance at drug court progress conferences and FIRM meetings.
- Clients fill in contact information and indicate whether they have taken the training or not.
- The Drug Court Mediation Liaison sends the list to Parole and Probation agents and case managers to confirm which clients need to take the training.
- Fliers are distributed to clients that need to take the training.
- The Drug Court Mediation Liaison facilitates presentations at the FIRM meetings for clients to prepare them for training.
- Food is mentioned on the flier and served at trainings.

Using this approach 70% of people who signed up attended. The current approach was only instituted recently so the sample size is small. As more data is collected over the next few months we will be able to determine how successful the new approach will be.

The follow-up trainings occur 2-4 weeks after part 1 of the trainings. The process for the follow-up training is:

- The Drug Court Mediation Liaison informs clients of the follow-up training date at the end of the part 1 training.
- The Drug Court Mediation Liaison sends the list of part 1 participants and dates for follow-up training to Parole and Probation agents.
- Agents and the Drug Court Mediation Liaison call and meet with clients to remind them of training.
- Clients that complete part 1 and part 2 of the training receive certificate of completion at the end of training.
- The Drug Court Mediation Liaison sends a list of clients that completed the trainings to BSAS criminal justice coordinator so that clients can receive 8-hours of community service credit.

Using this approach, approximately 77% of clients that attend part 1 attend part 2 as well.

Community Mediation Maryland Training Philosophy

The CMM training approach taps into the wisdom of the group at every opportunity, and reminds people that they are bigger than their history. No matter what kinds of lives people have, everyone has experience with conflict. When people are struggling with addiction, conflict often becomes another excuse to use. Through the foggy perception of addiction, people can often escalate or shut down during conflicts that they may have handled differently, if they'd been sober. Consequently, people in recovery bring unique ideas about conflict to the training group. These ideas range from beliefs that conflict should be avoided because it can never be resolved productively, to a hopefulness that conflict is an opportunity to grow and rebuild relationships. CMM sees this range of ideas as the "wisdom of the group".

CMM uses experiential learning to teach conflict resolution skills. This approach is based in the premise that people learn best through experiences. This approach works well for those who are in recovery. They understand that no matter how much others preach, and no matter how much literature one reads, real change happens when a person experiences things that show them why and how they need to change. Experiential learning is most effective when participants are in a training space in which they feel comfortable to try new skills and make mistakes. It requires vulnerability and a willingness to share one's experiences. Consequently, even when participants are initially skeptical of yet another program that promises to "help" them, CMM's training approach allows Drug Court participants to trust that their learning will be nurtured in this environment. They see that they are able to create a safe space to discuss conflict, while learning how to address conflict effectively.

Finally, CMM is committed to direct, honest, and constructive feedback. Trainers give honest and direct feedback to support learning and to ensure that everyone knows what they have mastered and what they need to work on. In this way, Drug Court participants are able to learn how the skills fit them as individuals and how they can use the skills in the "heat" of conflict. Since addiction and recovery innately involve addressing conflict in one's life, feedback is essential for participants to feel confident that they can use the skills in real life.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the CMM training philosophy is that trainers are always learning, themselves. The wisdom shared by Drug Court participants gives the trainer a deeper understanding of the importance of non-judgment and understanding others. Trainers develop new ways to customize their explanations and answers to the learning needs of the group. Based on what they learn from Drug Court trainees, trainers are able to personally evolve, and enhance the training techniques for everyone.

Content of CMM's 8-hr. Recovery Conflict Management Training

CMM has designed the eight hours of training to happen in two parts: an initial six hours of training, and a follow-up training of two hours. The initial training is divided into two, three hour sessions. All trainings are scheduled in the middle of the day. This way of scheduling the training allows drug court participants to get to other required appointments and meetings that support their recovery. It also allows them to have convenient access to public transportation, as they divide their day between appointments and conflict management training. The training also allows time for several breaks. It's important for participants to have smoke breaks, as well as time to move around and focus on other things. Long periods of class time can make participants jittery. When 5 minute breaks happen about every 30 minutes, trainees are more focused and engaged in the training.

In the initial training, drug court participants build community and trust as they learn together. They are able to talk about past and current conflicts, how conflicts impact their recovery process, and to learn and practice skills that will help them manage conflict peacefully. The follow-up training is scheduled at least a month after the initial training. The goal is to give

trainees time to use and experience the skills in their lives. In the follow-up training, drug court participants discuss challenges and successes in using these new conflict management techniques. This training gives them a refresher of the listening skill, which helps them adjust how they use the skills, to fit their personalities.

The ideal size of the training is 16 participants, while the minimum number is 6, and the maximum number of participants allowed in the training is 20. In order for drug court participants to feel comfortable talking about their struggles with conflict and addiction, it's important that they feel supported by others with similar challenges and experience that they are not alone. In a group less than six people, they may feel isolated and uncomfortable sharing. In order for recovery participants to practice the skills, and feel confident about what they're learning, the group size needs to allow time for individual questions and attention. A group larger than twenty could be distracting for everyone, and detract from individual learning styles.

Conflict Management Topics Covered

Part 1 – The following content is covered in 6 hours, conducted in two 3-hours sessions on consecutive days:

❖ Preview and Guidelines

- Drug Court participants learn the importance of showing appreciation for those with whom they work.
- This builds trust among Drug Court participants, who are often suspicious of “programs”.
- Sets confidentiality as a group guideline, to create a safe environment for Drug Court trainees to discuss their experiences with conflict.

❖ Gathering: Name & “Something positive I do in my own conflicts...”

- Drug Court participants find that they're struggling with similar conflicts, as they reconnect with children, are mistrusted by family members, and are learning to avoid old friends and habits.
- Participants discuss how others discount their wisdom, because of addiction.
- Drug Court trainees learn to recognize & build on their strengths, in this exercise.

❖ Brainstorm: Ideas we Associate with Conflict

- Drug Court participants find out how they currently view conflict, and how those views impact the outcomes to conflict. They discuss how society and addiction has impacted the way they handle conflict.
- Participants learn that conflict is an opportunity for change and growth.
- Drug Court participants discuss feeling powerless because of choices they've made in the past. In this exercise, they also learn that they can now impact the conflict outcomes by their responses and choices.

❖ Personal Conflict Management Styles – Thomas/Kilmann Model

- While learning the five basic approaches people use in conflict, people in recovery learn to choose which approach is best for them in each situation.
 - People in recovery discuss how their histories have determined how they've handled conflict. In this exercise, they better understand why they use certain strategies in their own conflicts, and how they can choose differently.
- ❖ **Strategic Listening**
- Drug Court participants learn to embrace diversity in the midst of conflict
 - Drug Court participants learn to hear past blame language that usually makes them feel blamed and shut down. This skill teaches them to hear past blame to a person's feelings, what's important to them, and concrete topics around which they want to problem-solve. Drug Court trainees discuss how this gives them a new way of listening, as well as a new way of coping with conflicts.
 - Trainees in recovery learn to access their own feelings, get clear about what's important to them, and have clear language for concrete topics around which they want to problem-solve. This gives them a way to speak for themselves, and take responsibility for their actions, while not owning other people's negative opinions.
 - Drug Court trainees learn strategies to keep their guilt and other people's fears about their past from getting in the way of their ability to work on understanding when they are in conflict.
- ❖ **Open-Ended Questions**
- Drug court participants discuss how they often feel judged, as if they're constantly "on trial" by people who expect them to fail. They learn how to ask questions that build understanding without blaming, when they are in conflict.
- ❖ **Recovery Mediation, Becoming a Mediator, & Closing**
- Trainees in recovery learn how mediation can be a helpful resource as they rebuild relationships and make plans for the future.
 - Recovery participants get information about how to attend mediation training, if they want to become a mediator.

Part 2 – The following content is covered at least a month after the initial 6 hours. This follow-up training is two hours in length.

- ❖ **Preview and Guideline review**
- Reminds participants about confidentiality as a group guideline, to create a safe environment for trainees to discuss their experiences with conflict.
- ❖ **Gathering: Name & "Something I've done differently in my conflicts, since the first training is..."**
- Drug court participants give examples of situations in which they used the skills they learned. They also discuss how in the past, certain conflicts would have triggered them to use, but how they were able to cope by having a new outlook and new skills.
- ❖ **Review Strategic Listening**

- This gives drug court participants a chance to discuss current conflicts and apply non-judgment and working on understanding to them.
- Drug court participants share how understanding others helps them see that things aren't usually as horrible as they appear. When they remove their own defensiveness, they are able to hear what's important, which helps them to think of ways to resolve things instead of running away from things.
- Drug court participants discuss how this skill gives them new language to speak for themselves. In the past, they've often felt as if they deserved to be disrespected and blamed, because of the pain they caused in the midst of addiction. By speaking for themselves, they are able to take responsibility for their actions, while being honest about how they feel, what's important to them, and what they want to be trusted to do differently. This skill helps them feel validated in wanting a chance to do better than they did before.

❖ **Closing: Something I'm Taking With Me**

- Drug court participants talk about how they will take the skills, support, and stories from this training to help them in challenging situations.
- The class ends with drug court participants shouting together, "I am a perfect work in progress!" This affirms their worth as they leave this group, face new conflicts, and continue in their recovery process.

Basic Mediation Training

At the end of each Conflict Management Training, participants learn about the opportunity to become volunteer mediators.

CMM's Basic Mediation Training (BMT) enhances the basic skills learned in Conflict Management Training, by teaching the 6-Step Inclusive Mediation process through 50 hours of training. Mediation Training also gives drug court clients 50 hours toward required community service. In order to attend the training, one must become a volunteer at their local Community Mediation center. This means that drug court clients, who take the BMT, commit to volunteering 75-150 hours of service to their local center, after completing the training. CMM's BMT helps participants transform their attitudes and behaviors in relation to conflict, and makes them members of a community of mediators who support them. The BMT meets the training requirements outlined in Court Rule Title 17 to serve as mediators on a court list. Mediators at Community Mediation centers are required to join MD's professional organization for mediators (MD Program for Mediator Excellence or MPME), which gives drug court clients an opportunity to build their mediation skills, and teaches them to see themselves as being responsible for upholding the standards for mediators in Maryland.

To date, one Drug Court participant has participated in the Basic Mediation training. This individual completed the training and reported it to be a positive experience. He says, "I took the mediation training in November 2012 because I love to help people. I also have a passion

for working with youth. I knew that I was a very good listener and had the ability to communicate with others. So I thought that the training would be a good fit for me. During the training, Ms. Erricka really helped me learn the skills to communicate effectively and identify what's important to people. The training program was a great experience for me. They explained things to us and broke things down in a way that we could understand it. The best thing about the training was that they opened their arms to us and made it feel like a family atmosphere. The training motivated and empowered me to believe in myself more than I did before. It gave me confidence in my ability to communicate and help others with their challenges." Since completing the training, this individual has begun the process of observing mediation and intends to volunteer for Community Mediation.

Qualifications for Recovery Conflict Management Trainers

In order to be qualified to facilitate CMM's Recovery Conflict Management Training, a person must be experienced and confident in their ability to mediate conflicts, and teach conflict resolution skills. A trainer must be open to learning from drug court training participants, and must not judge the experiences that recovery trainees will bring to the group. To ensure that a trainer is capable of maintaining the quality of the Recovery Conflict Management Training process, a trainer must first:

- Complete at least 40 hours of Basic Mediation Training.
- Mediate 20 mediation cases.
- Be evaluated in CMM's Performance-Based Evaluation process, and score at least at level 5 out of a possible 6. At level 5, a mediator is able to demonstrate strength in mediating in the Inclusive model. Evaluators agree that s/he could mediate difficult cases, be paired with brand new mediators, and coach role plays.
- Complete an apprenticeship to learn how to facilitate an 8-hr. Conflict Management training. This apprenticeship includes observing several trainings, leading pieces of trainings, and receiving intense feedback about one's growth and readiness as a trainer.

Mediation for People in Recovery

The mediation process CMM member centers offer is focused on creating space for participants to have a difficult conversation in an authentic way, to understand themselves and each other, and to develop collaborative solutions to the issues they wish to resolve. The role of mediator is to support the dialogue, while ensuring that all content decisions are made by the participants.

The goal is for the mediation to be a real and authentic experience for the participants, while also offering them an opportunity to do something different. This means that all shifts in behavior, approach, and ideas come from the participants. Participants will act and express

themselves however they need to. This may involve speaking, yelling, cursing, name-calling, standing, stomping, chair pushing, and crying. Whatever participants do, the mediators' job is to work on understanding, without judgment and with respect for the courage it takes for participants to have this difficult conversation. Ultimately it does not matter if the mediators understand anything, however, as the mediators work on understanding, participants begin to understand themselves better, understand the other person better, and understand what kinds of solutions, if any, would help in their situation. Mediators work on understanding participants' feelings, their "values" or "what's important to them", and the topics they want to make a plan about. Mediators also work on understanding what ideas and options they think are possibilities to resolve the situation consistent with their values. This means reflecting especially the difficult, intense, or embarrassing parts of the discussion.

Sometimes the result of the venting and mediator reflections is that as participants feel heard and understood, they shift their behavior and begin listening to the other participant and change their own language and approach. What is important is that this shift was authentic for them, not because the mediator asked them to "play nice" or "split the difference". Other times there is not a noticeable shift in behavior. Some people, based on cultural or family upbringing, curse or raise their voice when they are discussing something they care about. Their way of expressing concern may not appear to be respectful to a mediator, but it might be precisely how they show care, concern, and respect. The mediator's job is to stay open to understanding their approach, thus creating an opportunity for the other participant to understand the approach, so that, together, they can decide how they wish to have the conversation.

Another goal of the mediation process is that it creates space for collaborative problem solving, in which *all* ideas come from the participants. As people communicate, they are able to get to underlying values, and, without judging the values, mediators ask participants to brainstorm which solutions could meet the values of everyone involved. The idea of not judging any idea, value, behavior, or approach is sometimes difficult for new mediators to embrace, since we live in a society which judges differences harshly although sometimes very subtly. However, it is this non-judgmental approach which allows participants to understand each other and build solutions together. It is this approach that makes this mediation process a powerful tool in creating an inclusive, dynamic, and just society.

A deliberate and completely transparent process creates safety and supports collaboration. Mediators begin by (1) explaining mediation, move into (2) facilitating a dialogue about the conflict, then (3) developing a set of topics participants want to discuss, and then (4) facilitating a brainstorm and selection of solutions. In some ways this is a natural flow of conversation. The type of solutions people develop after they have felt heard and understood and have heard and understood the other participant are qualitatively different than the ones they begin with. The ideas participants have, and occasionally are even willing to agree on, in earlier stages of the process usually involve "settling" for a strategy which is still somewhat offensive to them. The ideas they develop later in the process are generally more consistent with their values and

more collaborative. When participants find areas of agreement, mediators can (5) write up these points of agreement for the participants to sign. The entire process is transparent. Mediators tell participants what the process will be, inform participants what mediators are doing throughout, and ask for their input as they move through.

Finally, the mediation process is confidential. Exceptions to confidentiality are child abuse, elder abuse, and credible threats of future violence. Confidentiality is an ethical standard for mediators in Maryland. It is also protected by court rules and the Maryland Mediation Confidentiality Act.

Connecting Trainees to Mediation

Clients that complete the trainings are encouraged to use the formal mediation service in a variety of ways. When interpersonal conflicts are discussed in trainings, they are encouraged to use mediation as a way to rebuild and restore relationships that have been fractured by addiction. They are encouraged to use mediation as a way to make plans about moving from transitional homes and treatment facilities back home. Trainees are also encouraged to use mediation in the workplace to resolve conflicts that may arise as they assimilate back into the workforce.

Drug Court participants have shown an interest in using mediation to resolve interpersonal conflicts with family members within their homes, particularly children. In addition, presentations and workshops have elicited very positive responses from clients. However, despite several referrals to mediation, both at the court and through trainings, few mediations have occurred.

Since April 2011, there have been 24 referrals to mediation, out of which 1 mediation has occurred. In five cases, one or both of the participants chose not to use mediation; two cases were resolved before the mediation was set up; in 15 cases, the community mediation center was not able to contact one or both participants after the initial referral; and one case is still open and pending at this writing.

It is important to continue to offer the mediation service, as the number of referrals indicate there is interest from participants. However, the challenges to scheduling mediations are logistical in nature – related to Drug Court participants changing contact information and, in some cases, not having current contact information for their family members.

Outcomes

Between April 2012 and March 2013, CMM has provided training for 7 groups over the course of 21 days. 72 participants completed at least one day of training and 48 completed the entire training (2 consecutive days plus the follow-up), with 4 planning to come back for a follow-up in

early April. The table below lists the dates of the training, number of hours offered on each day, and the number of people who completed the hours on that day:

Date	Training Group	Total Hours	Number of Participants Completing Training
4/9/2012	Transitioning Lives	6	6
5/15/2012	Group A, Day 1	3	8
5/17/2012	Group A, Day 2	3	8
6/19/2012	Group A follow-up	2	7
7/10/2012	Group B, Day 1	3	9
7/12/2012	Group B, Day 2	3	10
8/9/2012	Group B, follow-up	2	8
8/15/2012	Group C, Day 1	3	16
8/17/2012	Group C, Day 2	3	15
9/17/2012	Group C, Follow-up	2	12
9/20/2012	Group D, Day 1	3	9
9/21/2012	Group D, Day 2	3	9
10/19/2012	Group D, follow-up	2	8
12/19/2012	Group E, Day 1	3	9
12/21/2012	Group E, Day 2	3	7
1/31/2013	Group E, follow-up	2	3
2/20/2013	Group F, Day 1	3	7
2/22/2013	Group F, Day 2	3	5
3/13/2013	Group F, follow-up	2	4
3/18/2013	Group G, Day 1	3	7
3/22/2013	Group G, Day 2	3	4

The evaluation results were analyzed for the trainings which took place between May 2012 – December 2012. Evaluation Results from CMM Conflict Training among 43 participants of whom 19 completed only an evaluation form for Part 1 training, 2 who completed only the Part 2 evaluation form, and 22 who completed evaluation forms for both Part 1 and Part 2 training.

For the 22 individuals who participated and completed evaluation forms for both Part 1 and Part 2 of the training, the time between trainings averaged 32.70 days (within a range between 29.98 and 34.98 days) (standard deviation of 2.00 days).

	Part 1 N=41		Part 2 N=24
The skills I learned today will help me ...	Agree or Strongly Agree	The skills I learned in training have ...	Agree or Strongly Agree
• Be more effective in dealing with conflicts with my family.	100%	• Helped improve communication with my family	92%
• Be more effective in dealing with conflicts with my friends.	97%	• Helped improve communication with my friends	92%
• Be more effective in dealing with conflicts with people I need to engage with in the course of daily life.	93%	• Helped improve communication with the people I deal with in my daily life	100%
• In understanding other people during conflict.	95%	• Helped me be more effective in understanding other people better	100%
• Be better able to effectively speak for my own needs during conflict.	100%	• Helped me be better able to effectively speak for my own needs during conflict	100%
• Ask questions in a way that opens dialogue.	100%	• Helped me ask questions in a way that opens dialogue	100%
• To keep my relationships with my support system strong.	100%	• Helped me keep a stronger support system	100%
Part 2 Questions Only			
N/A		• Helped me feel more comfortable with my ability to handle conflict.	100%
N/A		• Helped me deal with conflict situations with less stress	100%

Frequency of using conflict skills	Part 1: How often do you think you will use the skills you learned in the training? N=41	Part 2: In the last several months, how often have you used the skills you learned in the training? N=24
At least once a week	2%	8%
2 times a month	15%	21%
Once a month	83%	71%
Rarely	0%	0%
Never	0%	0%

It appears that participants expected to use the skills in the training at least once a month and many found that they used the training much more often than they expected to.

Recommendations:

- 1) Continue to provide conflict management trainings to District Court Drug Court clients to improve their communication skills and ability to manage interpersonal conflict.
- 2) Continue to offer mediation to Drug Court clients, at court hearings, at FIRM meetings, and during conflict management trainings.
- 3) A Drug Court Mediation Liaison working 20 hours weekly, should continue to enroll Drug Court clients in mediation and conflict management trainings at court sessions and at FIRM Meetings, as well as manage the logistics of the training and mediation referrals.
- 4) Include Drug Court Mediation Liaison in the case conferences before the status hearings in order to consider individual needs for mediation and conflict management training.
- 5) Encourage the judges to speak briefly at the beginning of each court session about mediation and allow the Mediation Drug Court liaison to speak briefly before the court session.
- 6) Expand these services to the Circuit Court Drug Court.
- 7) Expand these services to individuals in recovery not currently involved in the Drug Court.
- 8) Expand these services to Drug Courts in other jurisdictions.
- 9) Maintain high quality training by replicating the training outlined above and ensuring that the trainers are properly qualified (also outlined above).

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