

Behavior Therapy Associates

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Project Title: SECONDARY PREVENTION OF ALCOHOLISM VIA COMPUTER SOFTWARE

Technology Developed and How the Product was Commercialized:

Behavioral Self-Control Program for Windows is a software program that teaches moderate drinking skills to drinkers with alcohol problems. It is not appropriate for alcohol dependent clients, but rather, clients on the less severe end of the spectrum. The Therapist's Version of the software allows for multiple clients to use the program in a therapist's office. There is also a Single User version that is available separately and is sold to individuals, either via the therapists or through our web site, <http://www.behaviortherapy.com>.

The effectiveness of the software was demonstrated in a controlled clinical trial with 12-month follow-up. Effect sizes were similar to those seen in studies that provided this treatment via individual and group therapy formats. Detailed information is available at the web site address above.

The Research Division of Behavior Therapy Associates received a Tibbett's Award for excellence in SBIR research in 1997. The project has added profits to the Research Division of Behavior Therapy Associates (formerly the Alcohol Self-Control Program) as noted below.

Uses of technology

This software is in use in University substance abuse prevention programs, alcohol treatment programs, and individual psychologists' and therapists' practices. The Single User version, available on the Internet, has been sold to numerous individuals.

How product was commercialized

The software was ready to be copied onto floppy disks and CD-ROMs before the end of the project. Marketing has consisted of various distribution agreements with companies involved in distributing testing materials to psychologists (i.e., PAR), consistent advertising on the Internet, networking with professionals in the field, and foreign distribution arrangements (e.g., Sweden).

The development of this software has been a win-win situation both for BTA and for the users of the software. The software provides an effective secondary prevention/intervention for heavy drinkers. It also has produced an income stream that has allowed us to pursue additional research in high-tech approaches to assisting people with alcohol and drug problems. Our Research Division's long-term research agenda is to develop a suite of software programs that help drinkers and drug users from the initial stages of change (Ambivalence) through Action (moderation or abstinence) and into Maintenance and prevention of relapse. While not the answer for everyone, computer based interventions are demonstrating their effectiveness in helping people change their behaviors.

National Institutes of Health Awards

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