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Evidence-Based Psychosocial Treatment for Alcohol Dependence

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Mesa Grande



**A Review of Evidence for the Efficacy
of Alcohol Treatment Approaches**

Mesa Grande Review Project

- Conducted 1979-2003
- All controlled trials comparing an alcohol treatment with an alternative condition (control, other treatment, etc.)
- Each study was assigned:
 - A Methodological Quality Score (MQS) Range: 0-17
 - An Outcome Logic Score (OLS) for each interpretable treatment modality Range: +2 +1 -1 -2
- A *Cumulative Evidence Score* computed for each treatment
 - Range: +390 (strong positive) to -443 (strong negative evidence)

Final Version

- 381 controlled trials
- 99 different treatment modalities
- Over 75,000 participants

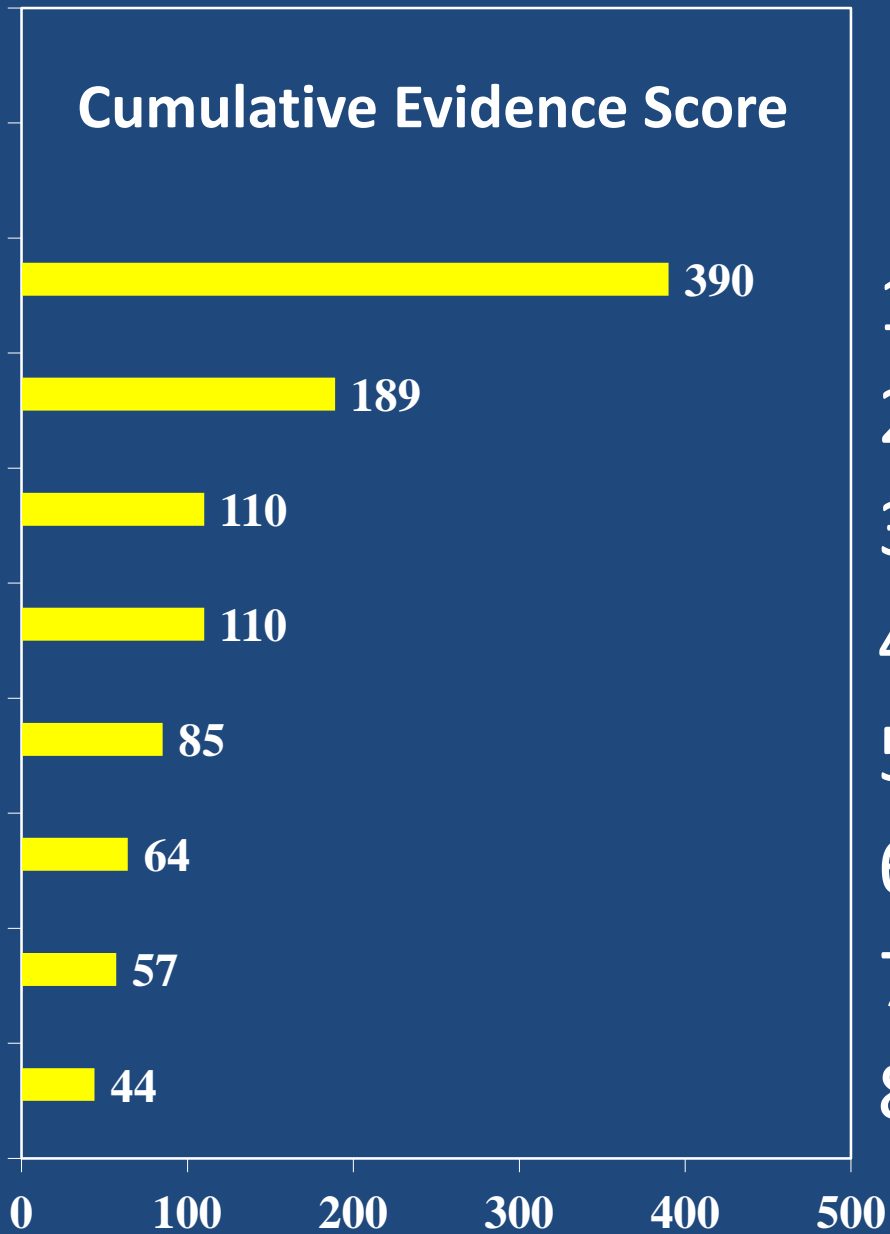
Miller, W. R., & Wilbourne, P. L. (2002). Mesa Grande: A methodological analysis of clinical trials of treatment for alcohol use disorders. *Addiction*, 97(3), 265-277.

Miller, W. R., Wilbourne, P. L., & Hettrema, J. E. (2003). What works? A summary of alcohol treatment outcome research. In R. K. Hester & W. R. Miller (Eds.), *Handbook of alcoholism treatment approaches: Effective alternatives* (3rd ed., pp. 13-63). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.



What Works?

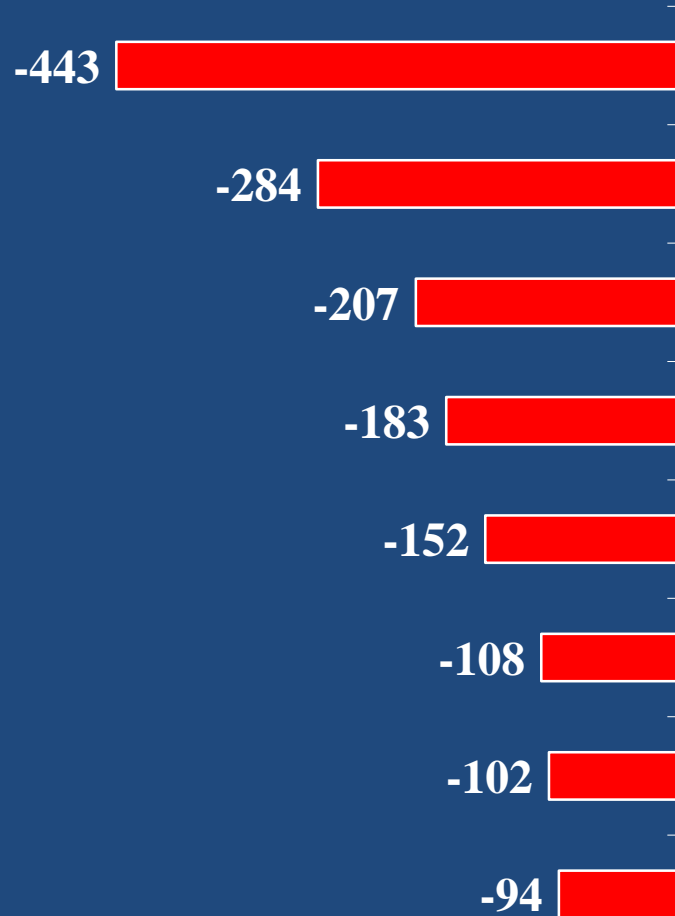
Cumulative Evidence Score



Most Effective Treatments

1. Brief intervention (FRAMES model)
2. Motivational interviewing
3. Community reinforcement approach
4. Self-help manuals (self-control training)
5. Behavioral self-control training
6. Contingency management
7. Behavioral coping skills training
8. Behavioral marital therapy

Cumulative Evidence Score

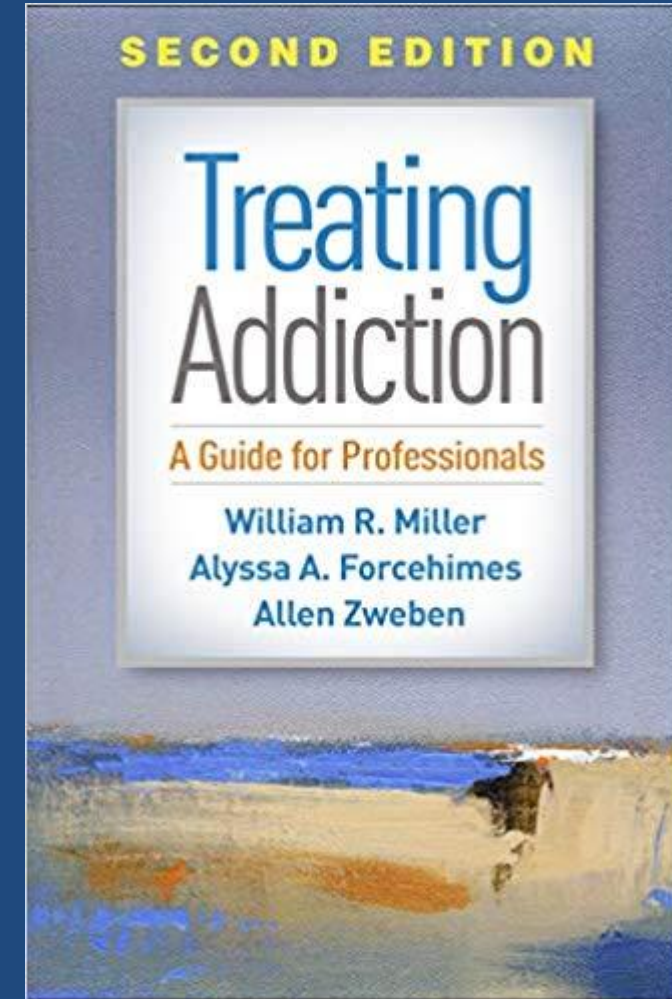


Least Effective Treatments

1. Alcoholism education
2. General counseling
3. Insight psychotherapy
4. Confrontation
5. Relaxation training
6. Video self-confrontation
7. Milieu therapy
8. Mandatory AA attendance

What's Changed Since 2003?

- **Add to the list of effective treatments:**
 - 12-Step Facilitation Therapy
 - Mindfulness Meditation
- **Stronger support for:**
 - Community Reinforcement + CRAFT
 - Contingency Management
 - Naltrexone



2019

Themes in Effective Treatment Methods

1. **Even brief intervention can make a difference**

Don't limit care to specialist settings

Screen for and address alcohol use in primary care

Don't have waiting lists

Themes in Effective Treatment Methods

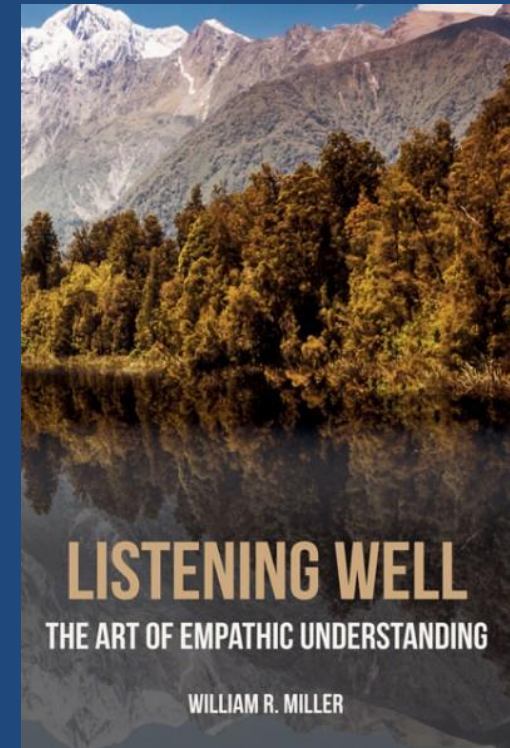
1. Even brief intervention can make a difference

2. Be empathic rather than confrontational

Therapists have a large effect on client outcomes

It matters what you do, and *how* you do it

Accurate empathy is learnable



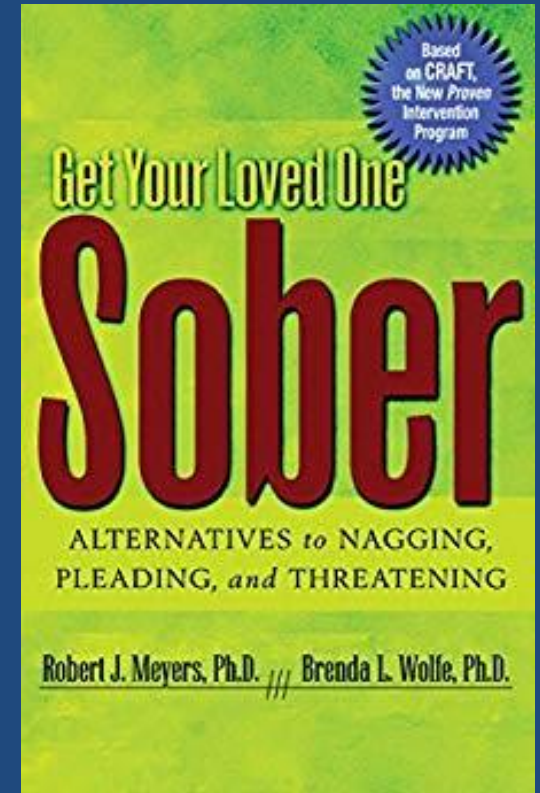
Themes in Effective Treatment Methods

1. Even brief intervention can make a difference
2. Be empathic rather than confrontational
- 3. Enhance clients' own motivation for change**

Motivational interviewing in treatment

Contingency management

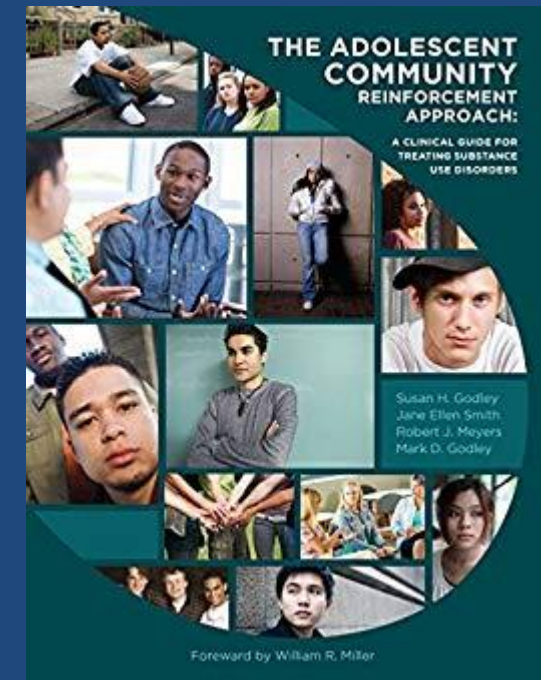
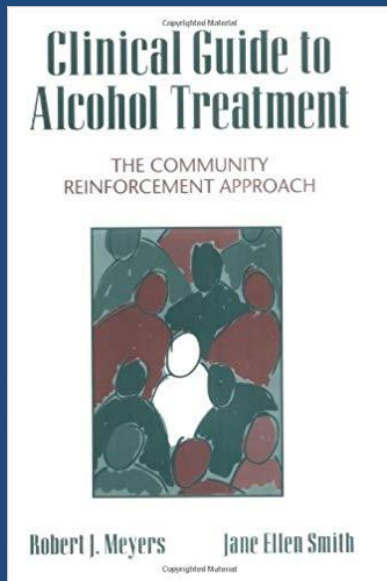
Working with family (CRAFT)



Themes in Effective Treatment Methods

1. Even brief intervention can make a difference
2. Be empathic rather than confrontational
3. Enhance clients' own motivation for change
4. **Focus on making sober life better than drinking**

Community Reinforcement Approach



Themes in Effective Treatment Methods

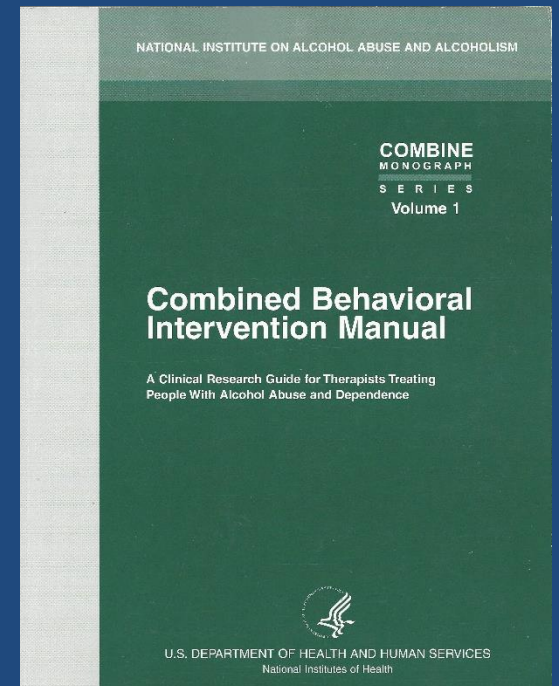
1. Even brief intervention can make a difference
2. Be empathic rather than confrontational
3. Enhance clients' own motivation for change
4. Focus on making sober life better than drinking
- 5. Empowerment: Strengthen coping skills**

Coping with craving

Mood management

Relationship skills / marital therapy

Self-help materials



The Combined Behavioral Intervention manual is available free online:

<https://web3rdmil.com/assets/guides/research/Miller%20%20Combined%20Behavioral%20Intervention%20Therapist%20Manual.pdf>

Themes in Effective Treatment Methods

1. Even brief intervention can make a difference
2. Be empathic rather than confrontational
3. Enhance clients' own motivation for change
4. Focus on making sober life better than drinking
5. Empowerment: Strengthen coping skills
- 6. Have shared goals and plans for reaching them**

Themes in Effective Treatment Methods

1. Even brief intervention can make a difference
2. Be empathic rather than confrontational
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4. Focus on making sober life better than drinking
5. Empowerment: Strengthen coping skills
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7. Attend to social support system

Include significant others in treatment

12-Step Facilitation & mutual support groups

Community Reinforcement & Family Training (CRAFT)

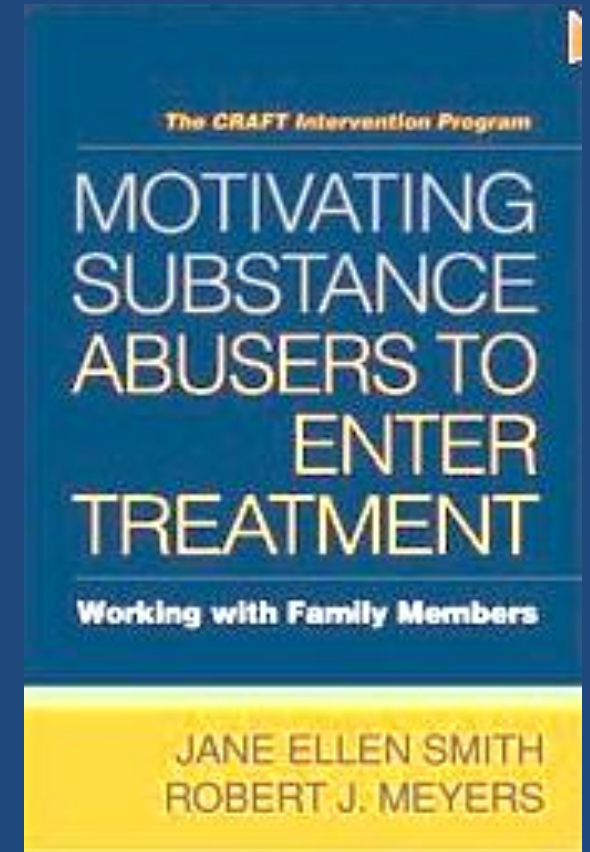
130 concerned significant others
randomly assigned to one of 3 interventions

All 12 hours of contact:

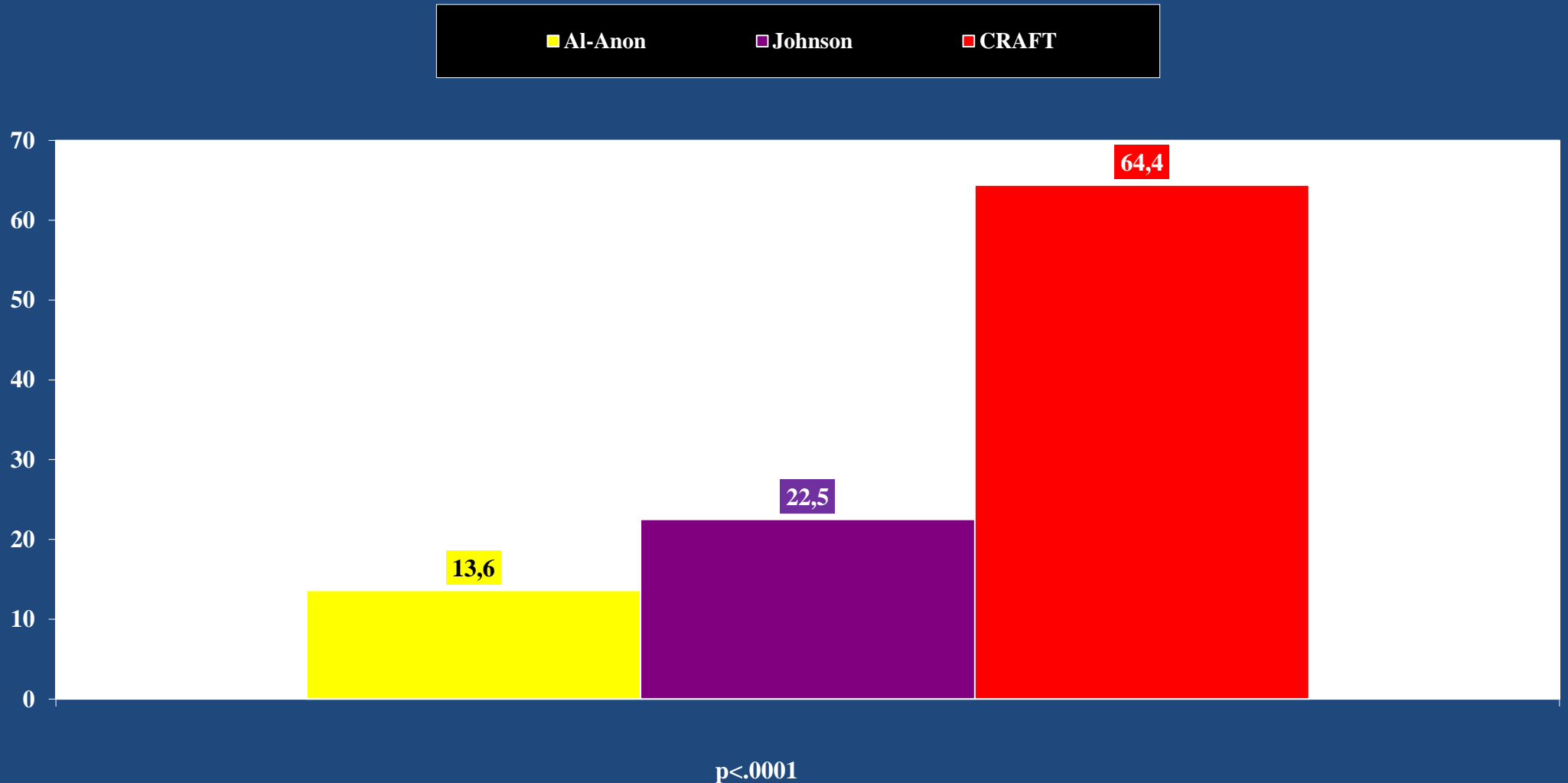
- Al-Anon Facilitation Therapy (AFT)
- Johnson Institute Intervention (JII)
- Community Reinforcement (CRAFT)

CRAFT

- Up to 12 sessions of unilateral family therapy
- Empowerment to influence change
- Training in behavior change skills
- Improvement of family life quality
- Preparation for treatment engagement



Treatment Engagement Rates



Average time to treatment entry: 47 days

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6. Have shared goals and plans for reaching them
7. Attend to social support system
- 8. Address concomitant medical/psychosocial problems**
 - Integrated behavioral health treatment
 - Case Management

Treating Alcohol Problems in Healthcare and Social Service Systems

- People with alcohol problems are already there
- High prevalence
- High impact on other health outcomes
- Potential for earlier intervention
- Efficacy of brief interventions
- Effective pharmacotherapies
- Decrease in stigma
- Blending of prevention and treatment

Three Models for Intervention in Healthcare Systems

- 1. Refer out to specialist treatment
- 2. Management by primary care provider
- 3. Integrated care: On-site behavioral health specialists

