

Group Counseling Skills



Kathy Tomlin

Housekeeping

- Time: 845-1015; 1030-12N; 130-300; 315-445
- Turf: ICADD
- Task: Develop skills with group work
- Trainer-Kathy and you!!

GROUP SIZE

- AGENDA ISSUES

Getting to Know you...

Part One:

- **Pair up with someone you don't know. Spend five minutes getting acquainted-**
- **Be prepared to introduce your partner to the rest of the group**

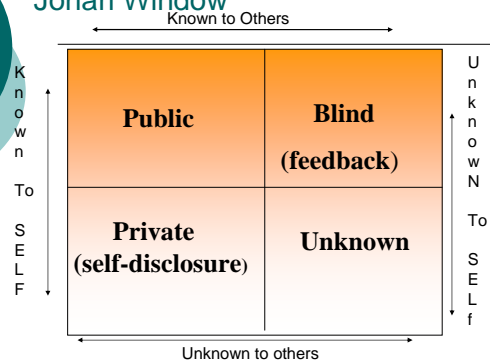
Let's make a list of topics you talked about.

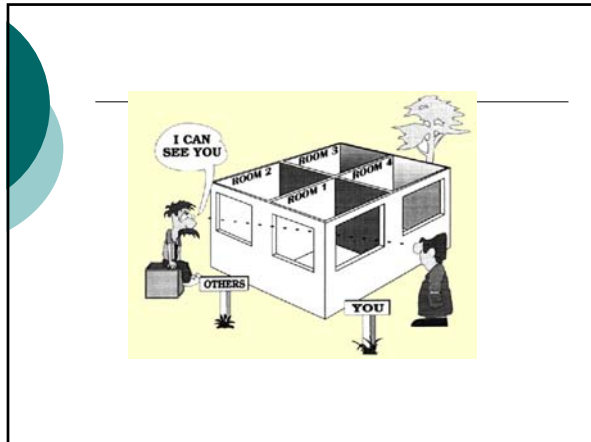
Comparing Lists

Part Two:

- If this person were to become a close friend, what topics would come up? What would you want to know before you could really trust?
- Share Friend topics with partner

Johari Window





Getting to know continued...

- Identify one expectation for the workshop
- What is one thing I would like the group to know about me?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 – What is my comfort level practicing with colleagues –and why?

Course Overview

- **Discussion of Group Dynamics**
 - Getting Acquainted
 - Concept of a “group”
 - Goals
 - Process and Content
 - Curative Factors
 - Stages of Group Growth
- Leadership
- Interventions
- Closing

Trainer Expectations

- Information will build on prior experience and knowledge
- Participants will be able to generalize the information and learning to “real world” situations
- Learning will be both fun and difficult
- We will give and receive feedback

Characteristics of an Effective group

- Members consider themselves a group
- All input is valued and group resources are used effectively
- An open, trusting climate develops; able to give and receive feedback and deal with conflicts
- Members tend to **how** they work together and to the growth of each other
- Group goals are explicit and shared, and compatible with individual goals
- Appropriate decision-making procedures and leadership are present

Goals Activity- discuss

- 1. What are appropriate individual goals for clients in substance abusing groups?
- 2. What are appropriate group goals for substance abusing clients in group?
- 3. What procedures have you used for establishing these goals?
- 4. What problems have you encountered in group goal setting?

GOALS FUNCTION

Goals Defined:
a general statement of what is to be accomplished



- 1-Shared goals keep the group on course
- 2-Leader interventions can be geared towards goals
- 3-Explicit goals can be used to assess the group's progress

Goals

Course Content
Ground Rules

Member Expectations
Leader Expectations

Group Dynamics: Process and Content

CONTENT

- Subject or task of the group
- Interactions tend to focus on content areas
- Often discussions will center on past or future events outside of group ("there and then" comments)
- Content is often related to group process
- "Safe" topics tend to keep the focus on the "surface"

Process-How of Group

- What is happening between and to group members while they are working
 - Involves here and now interactions
 - There are **six** process variables to be aware of:
- 1 Influence
 - 2 Feelings
 - 3 Participation
 - 4 Decision-making
 - 5 Membership
 - 6 Atmosphere

Influence

- Are members listened to?
- How does influence shift?
- Rivalry- what effects?
- Styles of influence
 - Autocratic
 - Peacemaker
 - Laissez-Faire
 - Democratic
- Which members are high in influence? Low?
- Is there any shifting in influence?
- Do you see any rivalry in the group?
- Is there a struggle for leadership?

Feelings

- Nonverbal cues
- Tone of voice
- Facial expressions
- Gestures
- Sitting positions
- Behavior in general
- What signs of feelings do you observe in group members
- Do you see any attempts to group member to block others expressions of feelings?

Participation

- Number actively involved
- Indicates intensity of involvement
- Patterns of communication
- Who talks to whom when/ how often?
- *Who participates more than others? Less?*
- *Do you see any shift in participation?*
- *How are those who remain silent treated?*
- *Who talks to whom?*
- *Who keeps the ball rolling*

Decision-making

- Decisions are hard to undo
- Important to know how decisions are made
 - By one member
 - By minority
 - By majority
 - By consensus
- *Does anyone make decisions and carry them out without checking with others?*
- *Is there any evidence of a majority pushing a decision through over other members objections?*
- *Does any one make contributions that receive no response or recognition?*
- *Is there any attempt to get all members participating in a decision?*

Membership

- Acceptance
- Types of membership
- Subgroups
- "In and out" members
- *Are there any subgroups?*
- *Do some people seem to be "outside" the group?*
- *What is the level of "buy in " in the members?*

Group Atmosphere

- Feeling tone
- Risk taking is more likely in a warm, accepting group
- Timing is important in developing risk taking
- Change in atmosphere often signals critical choice points in group development
- *Do people seem involved?*
- *Is there any attempt to suppress conflict?*
- *Do people seem tense? Tired?*
- *Do any members provoke or annoy others?*
- *What is the atmosphere in the room?*

Curative Factors in Group

- Getting feedback from others
- Having permission to express strong feelings
- Feeling that you belong to the group
- Giving feedback to others
- Finding out others have problems like yours
- Getting support from others
- Giving support to others
- Receiving advice or ideas from others

Groundrules/Norms

- **Confidentiality**
- **Participation-(open & accepting)**
- **Time**
- **Getting/Receiving Feedback**

Why Study the Stages of Group Growth?

- Increases understanding of the group and how it functions
- Helps to anticipate problems
- To know when and how to intervene in the most helpful way

Stages of Group Growth Stage One: Developing



- Norms are established
- Positions among the various members are built
- Leader's role is to facilitate cohesiveness and decrease conflict
- There are two sub-stages: Acquaintanceship and Groundwork

Acquaintanceship

- Avoidance of conflict/best behavior
- Superficiality
- Dependence on leader
- Confusion
- Anxiety/Discomfort
- Participants are concerned with:
 - Why am I here?
 - What am I supposed to do?
 - Will I get what I need?
 - Is this going to be worth my time?

Facilitator's Role During Acquaintanceship

- Develop ground rules and set norms
- Work toward the development of trust in the group
- Provide structure (not control)
- Assess group needs
- Encourage participation
- Deal openly with participants' concerns and questions

Groundwork

- Characterized by conflict and control issues
- Organizational stage
- Stress of growing intimacy
- Roles are established
- Leader stress
- Unresolved issues emerge
- Conflict with the leader/authority is normal
- Decisions about "buy in" are made
- Intensity reflects involvement and growth should be embraced, not avoided

Facilitator's Role During Groundwork

- Provide a model for conflict resolution
- Encourage members to deal with negative feelings and control issues
- Provide patience and model the ability to be criticized without getting angry
- Encourage appropriate risk taking and development of cohesiveness

Stages of Group Development Stage Two: Potency



- Authority issues have been largely resolved
- Members no longer rely solely on the leader for direction
- Group is more independent and identify issues for themselves
- Members understand their own relative positions in the group
- There are two sub-stages: Working and Closing

Working

- Conflict viewed as non-productive
- Open and trusting atmosphere
- Shared ideas and feelings
- Feedback- given and received
- A sense of accomplishment develops
- High level of work/tasks are accomplished
- Increased risk-taking
- Groups sometimes want to celebrate and stop work at this point

Role of the Facilitator During The Working Stage

- Promote collaboration with others in the group
- Encourage group and individual member independence
- Allow group to set course and direction
- Democratically keep group on track

Closing

- Members less connected
- Risk taking decreases
- Productive Feedback
- Lessons learned are transferred to outside world
- Decision Not to continue
- Members are willing to take advice from each other
- Leader needs to summarize learning and review experience to help assimilate learning

Facilitator's Role During Closure

- Summarize and review learning and experience
- Help participants bridge from training to "real world" application of knowledge
- Encourage participants to network with each other when trying to act on the learning
- Allow participants to give feedback to the leader and others about the experience

Review

- Function of Goals-
What is the function of goals in group
 - Types of Goals-List the three primary types.
 - Group Dynamics
 - Content: What-This equates to_____
 - Process: How: Six variables:
 - Curative Factors-What were the top two?
 - Norms-Define norms vs groundrules
 - Stages of Group Growth
 - Developing: Acquaintance; Groundwork
 - Potency: Working, Closing-
- For Each stages define tasks of the Leader

Helpful Qualities of a Leader

- Respect for group members
- Ability to perceive important issues
- Ability to arouse or allow some tension
- Ability to be criticized without getting angry
- Patience
- Ability to alter style
- Culturally aware

Less than helpful Qualities of a leader

- Use of warnings and threats
- Excessively giving advice
- Urging clients to behave in a certain way
- Not able to alter style

Leader Self-Disclosure

- Sharing by the leader of their own:
 - Observations
 - Feelings
 - Attitudes
 - Opinions
 - Experiences

For the benefit of the client

Appropriate Leader Self-Disclosure



- ◆ Aims at moving the group in a positive direction
- ◆ Gives feedback to the group that helps it grow
- ◆ Uses disclosure to model behavior
- ◆ Expresses interest and commitment to the group
- ◆ Identifies feelings for the group

Inappropriate Leader Self-disclosure



- X Acts as a tension release for the leader
- X Rescues the group from tension
- X Is a “should” or advice giving
- X Contributes to the group staying in content

What is Effective Leadership?

Clinician's Understanding:

- Context
 - Leadership skills & style
 - Membership Issues
 - Their Values and Beliefs
 - Research Implications
- so...where do I stand?

LEADERSHIP STYLES
~Autocratic~

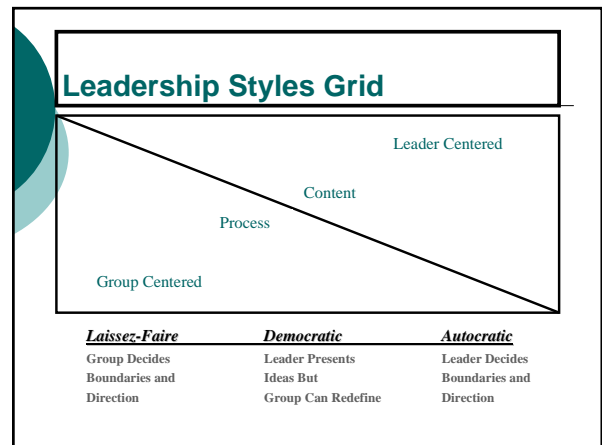
Leader Centered
Content/Task Focused
Leader Decides

Leadership Styles
~Laissez Faire~

Group Centered
Process Focused
Group Sets Direction

Leadership Styles
~Democratic~

Balance of Focus
Leader Suggests - Group
Redefines
Share Group Functioning



Interventions
An action intended to bring about change in the group's focus

- Requires leader to:
 - Understand what is happening
 - Decide what to do
 - Act to encourage change
- Pay attention when:
 - Events precipitate intervention
 - Difficulties when group tries to function
 - Avoidance of process
 - Unconstructive discussions occur

When to intervene..

- Goals should dictate
- Frequency- too often, ineffective
- Silence-may be good or bad
- Member interventions

Pay attention to topic and all process elements

Interventions include:

- Interpretations
- Questioning
- Self-Disclosure
- Attempts to shift focus from content to process

Three Traits of Interventions

 Focus

 Immediacy

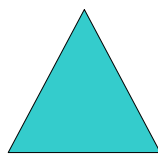
 Responsibility



Focus



Group



Individual Interpersonal

Responsibility

When **leader** takes responsibility, it encourages:

When the **group** is given responsibility, it encourages:

Leader to:



Members

Members to:



Immediacy

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| ○ Low | ○ High |
| ● Content | ● Process |
| ● There/then | ● Here/now |
| ● Facts | ● Feelings |

Advantages of Here and Now Interventions

- Action vs. talking about
- Experiential Learning
- Awareness of the moment
- Allows conflict resolution
- Facilitates group growth
- Encourages moving toward group goals

Group Theory Review

- Curative Factors
- Process/Content Dynamics
- Stages of Group Development
 - Leadership
 - Interventions

Group Dynamics

- **Content –What of Group Work**
- **Process – How of Group Work**
 - Atmosphere
 - Feelings (non-verbals)
 - Membership
 - Participation
 - Influence
 - Decision-Making