

## CHAPTER TWO

### GROUP WORK: STAGES AND ISSUES

#### Journaling Exercises:

- (1) If you were a member in a counseling group, which stage of the group process do you think would be most challenging to you? Provide a discussion as to what aspects of this stage you think you would find challenging and why.
- (2) If you were a leader of a counseling group, which stage of the group process do you think would be most challenging for you to lead? Provide a discussion as to what aspects of this stage you think you would find challenging and why.
- (3) Have you ever participated in group counseling? If so, reflect on that experience. What were some of the positive aspects of your work in that group? If you could change one thing about that experience, what would it be? If you have not ever participated in group counseling, would you, if you had an appropriate issue? Why or why not?

#### Discussion Exercises:

- (1) Identify three skills that are used in group counseling that are not used in individual counseling. Explain the circumstances under which these skills would be used and provide a brief example of what it might look like to see a group leader employing those skills.
- (2) Using the ethical code of the American Counseling Association, pick one stage of the group counseling process that most interests you, and discuss what potential ethical issues could arise within that stage. Be specific and name each code that might apply and why. How could you prevent a breach of the codes you listed?
- (3) Do a search on the Internet and find a video demonstrating a group counseling experience. Use the key words of “group counseling” and “Yalom;” “Group counseling, theorists, and videos” etc. Watch a video of a group counseling experience that you have chosen. Then observe the group leaders. Describe three group leader behaviors, techniques, or strategies that you observed. Discuss your perceptions as to why the group leader used that particular technique or strategy and what the impact of its use was on the group member(s).

#### Group Exercises:

- (1) Divide students into groups of four to six. Have the students engage in a mock group experience. Ask students to discuss a benign issue that is real for them in their own lives (e.g., the stress of being a graduate student).

Assign each student one of the following group leader skills. During the course of the mock group session ask each student to provide a demonstration of their assigned skill.

Linking  
Blocking  
Drawing Out  
Confronting  
Making Rounds  
Intertherapeutic Self-Disclosure

After each student has had an opportunity to demonstrate their skill, process the following with the group. What was the experience like for the student who demonstrated the skill? What was the experience like for the group member upon whom the skill was used? Did the use of the skill have the expected outcome? Why or why not?

- (2) Find a video of one of the group sessions led by Irvin Yalom or another group leader on the Internet. Use the key words “group counseling, Yalom, and video” or “group counseling, theorists, video.” When you have chosen a video, show it to your class. Then divide the class into smaller groups and have them discuss: (a) what stage the group was in as demonstrated by the clip (e.g. Definitive, Personal Involvement, Group Involvement, or Enhancement and Closure stage), (b) what member and facilitator characteristics did the students observe while watching the clip, and (c) what interventions did the group leader or co-leader apply. After the smaller group discussion, bring the class back together and hold a debriefing session regarding what stood out for students in terms of their discussions.
- (3) Lead a fishbowl group counseling experience for the class. Ask for 5-7 student volunteers to participate in a mock group experience. Arrange the chairs for the group in the center of the class and have the rest of the class observe from outside the center circle. Discuss the limitations of confidentiality in a group experience with the group, then hold a brief 15-minute session to give students a basic idea of what this modality of counseling looks like. If you want to demonstrate later stages of the group experience or demonstrate member or facilitator characteristics, you can script the experience. After the experience, hold a debriefing session with the class regarding what stood out for students in terms of what they observed in that experience as it relates to what they read in their textbook. Have the class identify the group stage you demonstrated as well as any member or facilitator characteristics they observed.

## TEST ITEMS

### Multiple Choice:

1. What factors most influence the development of a group?
  - a. The physical location of the group, the developmental level of the group members, and the training of the group leader.
  - b. The psychological characteristics of the group members, the maturity level of the group members, and the theoretical orientation of the group leader.
  - c. The purpose of the group, its membership, the leader's style, and whether a group is open or closed.
  - d. The purpose of the group, the training of the group leaders, and the theoretical orientation of the group leader.
  
2. The terms storming, transition, conflict, acceptance, orientation, and exploration have been used to describe which stage of a group?
  - a. Stage one
  - b. Stage two
  - c. Stage three
  - d. Stage four
  
3. What is a common behavior exhibited by group members related to stage one of a group?
  - a. Group members define where, or if, they fit into the group and what role they will have.
  - b. Group members make a commitment to the group and members become cohesive.
  - c. Group members test their power in the group.
  - d. Group members challenge the authority of the group leader.
  
4. Anxiety is a common emotion experienced by group members during which stage of a group?
  - a. Stage One
  - b. Stage Two
  - c. Termination
  - d. Both during Stage One and Termination
  
5. What is a step that group leaders need to take during the definitive stage of a group?
  - a. Group leaders need to decide the group's logistics such as time, place, number of meetings, and whether the group will have an open versus closed format.
  - b. Group leaders need to help group members explore how they can transfer what has been learned within the group to their lives outside of the group.
  - c. Group leaders need to link group members' issues and concerns to enhance feelings of universality.
  - d. Group leaders need to define the groups' process and write a treatment plan for the individual group members.
  
6. What member behaviors are characteristic of the personal involvement stage?

- a. Group members fully self-disclose information to the group leader.
  - b. Group members make a commitment to self to engage in the group.
  - c. Group members start to merge their individual goals with the goals of the group.
  - d. Group members share personal information and engage in confrontation and power struggles with each other.
7. Which of the following statements is an example of a group leader using the technique of blocking?
  - a. "Before we move on to your subject, I think Jorge was trying to add something."
  - b. "Andre, I am hearing sadness in your voice and see the dejected way you are holding your shoulders."
  - c. "John, your issue related to anger outbursts seems very similar to what Omar was just saying about his own."
  - d. "I can see that it is hard to open up when members may not know each other well."
8. What is a correct example of a group leader's technique of linking?
  - a. "Before we move on to your subject, I think Jorge was trying to add something."
  - b. "Andre, I am hearing sadness in your voice and see the dejected way you are holding your shoulders."
  - c. "John, your issue related to anger outbursts seems very similar to what Omar was just saying about his own."
  - d. "I can see that it is hard to open up when members may not know each other well."
9. All the following are true statements about group members' resistance EXCEPT:
  - a. Group members' resistance can be a message to the leader that something else needs to be attended to for the group or for an individual.
  - b. Group members' resistance is a sign that the group leader is doing something incorrectly in how he or she is running the group.
  - c. Group members' resistance can be productive and lead to greater trust and openness within the group.
  - d. Group members' resistance needs to be processed within the group.
10. Which one of the following is a technique to help less active group members share with the group?
  - a. Making rounds
  - b. Intratherapeutic self-disclosure
  - c. Linking
  - d. Blocking
11. Which one of the following is a technique to help group members build rapport with each other?
  - a. Making rounds
  - b. Intratherapeutic self-disclosure
  - c. Linking
  - d. Blocking

12. What definition most accurately defines the concept of intratherapeutic self-disclosure?
- Intratherapeutic self-disclosure is when a group member self-discloses how the member is feeling and thinking about the group, group members, or group process.
  - Intratherapeutic self-disclosure occurs when a group member uses the technique of making rounds.
  - Intratherapeutic self-disclosure occurs when a group member who has been blocked demonstrates emotion.
  - Intratherapeutic self-disclosure is when the group leader self-discloses how the counselor is feeling and thinking about the group, group members, or group process.
13. Which group stage is best characterized by group members self-evaluation and self-assessment of their own behavior, attitudes, values, and behaviors.
- Personal involvement stage
  - Group involvement stage
  - Termination stage
  - Definitive stage
14. Which group stage is best characterized by group members questions of “Can I trust the leader? Can I trust the group members?”
- Personal involvement stage
  - Group involvement stage
  - Termination stage
  - Definitive stage
15. During which stage of group counseling is it most characteristic for the group leader to model the behaviors that are expected in the group?
- Personal involvement stage
  - Group involvement stage
  - Termination stage
  - Definitive stage
16. During which stage of group counseling is it most characteristic for the group leader to become involved as a participant?
- Personal involvement stage
  - Group involvement stage
  - Termination stage
  - Definitive stage

**Essay:**

- Briefly discuss at least three reasons as to why it is important for group leaders to provide a formal termination and closure process for group members.
- Describe at least three common member behaviors and three leader behaviors for the personal involvement stage of a group.

3. Provide a brief explanation as to why group leaders welcome group conflict and why conflict can be helpful to the growth of the group members.
4. Provide a brief explanation of what it means when a group leader *draws out* group members. Provide and explain at least two techniques that a group leader might use to do this.

## CHAPTER 2

### Multiple Choice

1) c; 2) b; 3) a; 4) d; 5) a; 6) d; 7) a; 8) c; 9) b; 10) a; 11) c; 12) d; 13) b; 14) b; 15) d; 16) b

### Essay:

1. **Feedback:** Providing for a formal termination and closure process for group members is important for the following reasons:
  - It allows for the group leader and group members to recognize and explore group member individual growth over the course of the group process, as well as, the group's growth from the initial group session to the ending session.
  - It provides for a discussion of how group members can reinforce and commit to those changes without the influence or support of the group.
  - It provides for an opportunity for group members and group leaders to provide final feedback.
  - It gives group members and the group leader a chance to say goodbye to each other.
  - It gives group members an opportunity to explore their often conflicting emotions of anxiety, excitement, and grief and loss of the connections they made with the group.
  - It provides the group leader the opportunity to plan for any follow-up activities that might need to occur either for the group or for an individual.
2. **Feedback:** Typical member behaviors for the personal involvement stage of the group include:
  - Members struggle as they try to find safety and comfort in sharing themselves with others.
  - Members resist integrating the feedback they receive, because the suggested changes are perceived as being too painful to implement.
  - Members join with other selected members in attempting to build safety and security.
  - Members increase their commitment to themselves and to the group, its goals, and its purposes.
  - Members become more willing to share themselves with others and take a more active role in the group process.
  - Members expand their ability to share feelings, ideas, and needs as they relate to the group process.

Leader behaviors typical for the personal involvement stage include:

- The leader demonstrates awareness of the emotional make-up of the group and encourages affective expression.
- The leader participates in the struggle, confrontation, and conflict that are part of this stage.

- The leader communicates to the members the appropriateness of their member-to-member reactions and interactions.
  - The leader allows members to move through this stage at their own pace, knowing the dangers of rushing them.
  - The leader provides an environment that is conducive to greater comfort and safety.
  - The leader encourages members to explore new ways of behaving within the group.
  - The leader acknowledges his or her own struggles as the group moves to deeper levels of interaction.
  - The leader emphasizes the importance of all members of the group, aiding in the transition from definition to involvement.
  - The leader helps the group adjust when there is a member who unexpectedly leaves the group, especially if this occurred after a challenging period in the group.
3. **Feedback:** When group leaders help the group process those conflicts, it can result in greater group cohesion and member growth and self-awareness when resolved. When handled correctly, those confrontations and ruptures can lead to greater levels of intimacy when repaired. In their everyday lives, many clients do not receive feedback from others, nor do they have relationships in which ruptures 1) occur and 2) are then repaired. Therefore, providing members with an opportunity to have conflict and express emotion allows for new ways of being that can be transferred.
4. **Feedback:** *Drawing out* occurs when a group leader wants a member to express and share more in a group. Examples of how group leaders can do this includes:
- Group leaders can do this directly, with curiosity, and without a condescending tone: “Jaime, I am curious what your thoughts are on the topic.”
  - Group leaders might draw out several quiet members to equalize voice by stating: “I am wondering what those who have not yet shared on this topic are thinking and feeling about it.”
  - Group leaders might also use nonverbal eye communication to subtly prompt someone to share.
  - Group leaders might use *rounds*, which is where the group leader asks each group member to take a turn to speak on a topic.
  - Group members might also break the group into dyads to help members share and express.