

Group counselling

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



Aim of Group Counseling Group counseling is a form of therapy, which posits that people from shared experiences. Usually it is focused on a particular issue.

Process of Group Counseling A therapist (or two) usually facilitates the contributions from the members of the group. Their aim is to steer the experience so as to effect interpersonal change. This is because they believe that most people only use a small percentage of their capabilities but that within a group experience, they can recognize their full potential. In order to achieve that, the group has to go through five stages.

Stages of Groups

Stage One (Orientation/Forming): Group members become oriented to the group and to each other.

Stage Two (Transition/Storming): Anxiety and ambiguity become prevalent as group members struggle to define themselves and group norms. This stage is often characterized by conflict.

Stage Three (Cohesiveness/Norming): A therapeutic alliance forms between group members. Trust between members has been established.

Stage Four (Working/Performing): Group members experiment with new ideas, behaviors or ways of thinking. Egalitarianism develops.

Stage Five (Adjourning/Terminating): This is the time when the group disbands. As part of the assignment requirements, I will be looking in depth at techniques used in Stage 2 and 4. Before I get on task, it will be advantageous to understand the pros and cons of choosing group counseling, as the techniques will serve to maximize the pros and minimize the cons.

Advantages | Disadvantages | It provides a social atmosphere that is similar to the real world. | Less individualized attention from the counselor. | Members can test out and practice new behaviors. | Confidentiality is more difficult to maintain. | Members can practice new interpersonal skills. | There are concerns with

conformity and peer pressure. | They are cost effective. | Group leaders are not always properly trained. | Groups help members see that they are not the only one who has that particular problem or issue. | Not everyone can be in a group (e. g. those with issues too severe or those with poor interpersonal skills.) | Groups provide members with support. | Scapegoating may occur. | The silent one The group leaders need to create an atmosphere that is inviting rather than administer forceful participation. However, it is important for these members to break their silence so that they do not affect the group process. One technique would be to form the 'inner circle'. The silent members form an inner circle with the rest surrounding them in the outer circle. 1) Can you share with the group about your being silent during the process so far? 2) What has been like for you to be in the group so far? 3) Would you like to be more verbal? 4) Is your listening style satisfactory to you? These questions will allow the 'polite' listeners to share their thoughts and hence, the group can provide the necessary support and allow them to practice (new) interpersonal skills. If the counselor realizes that these people were not interested in doing the exercise, a variation of the procedure could be employed. The silent members form the outer circle. To the members in the inner circle, 1) How does it feel when you disclose and share with the group your personal thoughts and experiences when some of your group members don't? 2) How do you imagine this group might be different for you if the silent members were to say more? The silencer (monopolizer) Sometimes this cannot be avoided due to the nature of the person or personality in relation to the members of the group. An innovative technique to overcome this would be to exaggerate the behavior. 1) I would be

interested in seeing what would happen if you talked more often. This may trigger the members to gain increased awareness of what they are thinking and feeling at the times when they talk a lot. Hence, they will be more specific in their responses and return 'air-time' back to the others.

Scapegoat When the leader does not circumvent early to deal with the silencer or the silent one, it could end up in a situation with a scapegoat. It could be that the whole group's attention or negative feelings are turned towards the silent one or the silencer dominates the session and identifies his/her own scapegoat, which becomes the group's inadvertent centre of attention. This scapegoat could even be the leader (which I will elaborate later). To resolve this, the leader should make the group realize that we sometimes give more to others when we let them profit from the time we take for ourselves than when we direct our attention to trying to help them directly. The technique would be to ask the member (silent one or silencer) to go around and give each person one advice and then to say, " And from you I want _____. " These aforementioned techniques can be used in both the working stage and transition stages. The next technique is rather specific to the transition stage.

Anti-government As group leaders, we must understand that our role in the session is different and should not be intimidated from it when challenged by the members of the group. * " You leaders are not sharing enough of yourselves" * " You leaders are not very helpful" These should not be seen as a threat to their authority but treated as a healthy signal that the group is becoming more open and autonomous. Thus, the tone at which the leader responds should convey nondefensiveness and a willingness to reflect about what is being said. 1) "

How would it be more helpful to you if I told you more about myself? " 2) " What are you wanting from me that you are not getting? " The last technique to be accounted here, in my opinion, is peculiar to the working stage, as it needs certain maturity in the group. Actor Now that the leader has facilitated the communication between the members and everyone feels comfortable and ' equal' to each other, we can do role-playing to tackle the members' individual or common problems. As for the roles, it could be done in a reverse manner where the member assumes the role of the other person in the problem. I feel this is most effective during the working stage because during the transition or norming stages, there will be issues. For example, in the transition stage, the member with the problem would feel that the member role-playing is not sincere and thus not believe in the outcome of the process. Another reason for disbelief would be due to the fact that the people are very different and is not an accurate role-play to the real-life social setting. It is only after the norming stage that trust is established where the members know that their fellow group members are sincere in helping each other. Several therapeutic forces are working in a group and it is not always the case that they are achieved completely. Nonetheless, the leader(s) need to be patient and keep leading the group towards that direction. Most often the selection of a technique is based in the theoretical influence of the therapist or facilitator. For instance, techniques can be adapted to our own unique preference and personalities or in a way that makes sensitive sense to the individual. Therapeutic Forces In Groups

Instillation of Hope Universality Imparting of Information Altruism Corrective

Recapitulation Modeling Interpersonal Learning Group Cohesiveness

Catharsis Existential Factors Development of Socializing Techniques