

Group Dynamics Analysis

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The support group I chose to attend was Alcoholics Anonymous. The goals for AA meetings is for alcoholics to come and “share their experience, strength and hope with others to recover from alcoholism.” (Nassau). We found this meeting online and it was held at the Broadway Christian Church. There is no certain way to become a member of AA. the best way to become a member is just to go to the meetings. They do not make you attend each one or even make you participate, they are just there to give and receive support in hopes that they can control their alcoholism. With anything in life it can help having somebody there for you that understands when you are going through.

Attending this meeting was nothing like I thought it was going to be. I am not really sure what I was expecting, but I can say for sure that I was nervous to go. I did not think we would be expected there to observe them since we were students. I was very wrong. They made sure to make us feel included and not uncomfortable. When we introduced ourselves they said hello and began to introduce themselves to us too. Before the meeting started it almost seemed like it was a group of friends hanging out drinking coffee. They are all so comfortable with each other and that is very nice to see because it shows they are there to support one another.

An interesting part of the meeting to me was that the “leader” of that meeting was somebody who suffered from alcohol abuse too. I always thought it was a psychiatrist and shrink that came and told them how to handle their addiction. I never thought this would be a good way to get through to somebody. The best way in my opinion is to be able to talk to somebody that has gone through it too. Since the leader is also a member of AA it might make it easier for other members to share their stories with them and the rest of the group because they will not feel

judged. Each member also had a certain job while they were there. They had to read specific passages that was for the meeting being held. Each member of the group was given a chance to read and then the opportunity to reflect and bring up to the group what they thought stuck out to them most of all. Once a member picks a passage they liked hearing the most, it is read aloud again for all to hear a second time. After it is read again, the member that chose it explains why this reading meant so much to them. This exercise got the whole meeting off to a good start to have a discussion.

I believe the members utilized the 12 steps by relating their own life stories with the readings. In one of the readings that was read at the beginning of the meeting it talked about understanding what they did wrong and taking responsibility for their actions while being under the influence. The fifth step in the 12 step program is being able to admit “to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.” (Recovery) Each member at the meeting was able to relate a personal story to this specific step. One person mentioned how they never thought they had to take responsibility for their actions with drinking until they came to the meetings. They thought it was normal to blame everybody else and the alcohol and not blame himself. He seemed to be ashamed of this thinking until another group member spoke up feeling the same way. This is why the groups are a great way to refrain from alcohol abuse. People can attend these meetings and gain support from other members that have gone through what they go through.

Mental health can be majorly affected by alcohol abuse. Alcoholics have a hard time keeping jobs and friends. They tend to put the addiction above anything else. This can also affect their family and personal relationships. When they realize there is nobody around because they

pushed them all away, then they start to feel alone and depressed. It also does not help that alcohol is a CNS depressant. This means that no matter how happy they think they will be when they are intoxicated it is just suppressing their initial feelings. When a person goes through withdrawal they can experience symptoms such as tremors for example. When they experience these their body's first go to is to drink again because it is their psychological response. When this happens it becomes a full circle of and it's a constant struggle to get out of the hole. It also can still affect a person after they stop drinking. An alcoholic has to live with the addiction every day, so if his friends want to go out and he cannot go drink with them like a normal person then they could feel ashamed. This can bring an emotional toll on somebody.

Through this experience I have learned that people who are members of AA come in many different forms. It could be a family member or somebody just walking down the street. You never know if somebody has the disease of addiction so it is important for future nurses like myself to try and understand them. I believe this learning experience was important because it can help individuals who do not suffer from addiction, understand what people who do go through. It is important to understand what they think and experience on a daily basis so that we have a better chance of helping them recover. This experience also shows that addiction is a constant struggle and can happen in multiple ways so it is important for nurses to watch out for people everyday.

References

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