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Clinical Social Work Practice III with Groups

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This week's group consisted of a social worker and four participants. One member of the group, James, has a habit of interrupting others in the group. The social worker decided to speak with James outside of the group. She utilized motivational interviewing and explored if his childhood trauma is causing him to talk over others in the group. James had shared in the group previously that had experienced neglect from his parents from an early age and ended up in the foster care system.

James felt that the social worker was overreacting and that she was the only one who felt he was causing a disturbance. In the next group session, the facilitator asked the participants how they felt when James interrupted them. One participant shared that it bothers her, but she knows James does not mean anything by it. The second participant shared that it makes her feel disrespected. The third participant shared that she was offended that the facilitator brought this up in front of the group. James shared that he was angry that she brought this up and felt it was done to embarrass him. He said maybe he won't come back. One participant said that if James leaves the group, she is leaving as well.

The social worker then shared that she did not intend to embarrass James, and that she only meant this to help him hear how his fellow-participants felt. The participants in the group all comforted James, and they were able to move onto another topic of conversation.

The social worker tried to utilize object relation theory when discussing his childhood with him separately and seeing if this connected to his habit of interrupting other participants. I agreed with the facilitators' approach by talking to James separately. I understand the facilitator's intention behind bringing it up with the entire group, but I feel it caused some tension in the group. James felt targeted. I think a better approach would have been to have James ask other participants outside of the group how they feel rather than putting James on the spot during the group session.