

Reflection Paper 1

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Group Dynamics and Therapy

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Group therapy has been transient and a new concept to me. When the group therapy started, I was nervous and excited about it because I had never attended group counseling. Unfortunately, I'm not receiving the therapy experience I imagined or expected. I felt annoyed at the beginning of the first session because it needed to be more comprehensive than I had been taught. However, as time passed by, some sessions I saw an improvement in the therapist and the sessions. I observed that the therapist had been listening and brought topics from the first session into the recent sessions. There was a possibility that the therapist was trying to understand the group members to operate better as a therapist since we are future therapists.

I observed a few themes and patterns as I attended group therapy. First, I noticed taking this group therapy. I have learned that group therapy consists of psychotherapy treatment that allows individuals to come in contact with each other. The members begin to communicate with each other about their issues in an interpersonal setting. My group therapy has no specific arrangement, and the group members manage to run the group. Also, the group, however, has goals similar to counseling groups. In addition to helping develop positive attitudes, the group facilitates healthy interaction among members and assists them with taking skills learned in the group out into the world.

I'm not too impressed with the group leader and her style. However, I have seen several improvements as the session has gone by. The first few sessions were chaotic because the members needed to figure out what to say and were kept from knowing how the group would run. The group members felt responsible for most subjects. During sessions, the therapist would say a few words in less than a few minutes and call on a member to comment. I preferred to avoid members taking the initiative in the group. I wanted her to control the session more than letting us lead the group. I'm not too fond of that. In group dynamics class, I learned that the

therapist needs to encourage the clients and show that the therapist listens by paraphrasing the client's matters. In other words, when it comes to a group therapy session, the therapist must give the individuals in that setting an instillation of hope. Plus, members of therapy groups often find hope as they discover and focus on how to face their problems.

Unfortunately, she does not offer that impression. Yet when a similar topic reappeared in the discussion from a previous session, she remembered what was discussed, which was excellent compliance.

The therapist appeared to adopt a person-centered approach primarily. According to Corey, the person-centered approach is the client is viewed as the expert on their inner processes, and the goal of therapy is self-healing through self-discovery and self-acceptance (Corey et al., 2018). In other words, it is the members of the group that are responsible for changing their situation. As far as conversation goes, the therapist mostly lets it proceed. During a session, the therapist might interject to ask questions and get the members' opinions as the group moves from one topic to another. Then she would only say a word once she was bothered by silence.

Many things have surprised me about group therapy. First, I wanted to discuss the approaches and techniques I have learned. Therefore, I can sharpen my pencil to facilitate group therapy in the future. This group therapy was a chance to put into practice what I had learned. Unfortunately, the therapist still needs to take me on that route. Although she does not go in-depth with theories, she paraphrases and clarifies some topics to the group with very little affordance. However, she could've taken that opportunity to teach the group and help members to recognize their problems and guide them to solutions. Another surprise I have experienced is that the members are still warming up to each other although we have known each other for many years, we are holding our feelings back. We still have time to share our life's reality. For instance

last session, a member shared he would rather kill himself instead of moving to the U.S. I was surprised by his comment and questioned his views as a Christian man. Although, I was happy he shared that.

Culture, race, and ethnicity did not affect group therapy. However, we discussed discrimination in the last session; everyone was comfortable sharing their thoughts. All members were respectful and attentive to each other. I have yet to notice an issue with these topics within the group. The group, including the therapist, has diverse cultures, races, and ethnicities. In addition, there are three male members out of the ten members. We all treat each other with consideration. Therefore race and gender are not a problem.

Last but not least, I would change a few things if I were the group therapist. For example, when we met for the first time, I asked many questions. To help and learn more about the clients. As part of my approach, I would ask my client various questions encouraging them to open up about themselves and help build trust. By asking questions such as, in particular, what do you expect to attain from this group? How will this group benefit you and your career? Why do you want to be a part of this group?

Furthermore, I would bring up current world issues. As a result, I show my clients that I care about them by showing interest in them. As I previously stated, counselors' primary responsibility is to respect the dignity of and promote the clients' welfare. In this manner, they would be given a sense of security and caring.