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SWK658: Clinical Social Worker Practice w/Group (NA)

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Alcoholics Anonymous Support Group Meeting

On March 8, Jaqueline attended an Alcohol Anonymous Meeting from 8:00 pm - 9: pm in Parkchester Bronx, NY 10465. The name of the meeting is Never Too Young. It is an open meeting available to anyone interested in the Alcoholics Anonymous program for recovery from alcoholism. Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers. The 7th Tradition 12-step group program protects the fellowship structure and basic spiritual foundations by self-supporting and declining outside contributions. "Every group should be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions," says Tradition 7 of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). AA identifies with CBT approach cognitive behavior is based on behavioral and therapy learning principles to help with behavioral changes and cognitive restructuring. (Corey, 2020)

The Preamble reads that Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experiences and strengths and hope to help others solve their common problems and recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking, and there are no dues or fees for membership. Members are self-supporting through their contributions and do not want to engage in any controversies. Their primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety. Self-help organizations emphasize peer support over hierarchical governance and lack institutional distinctions in their organizational structure between boards of directors, professionals, and consumers. They are usually self-sufficient, depending on donations from friends and family rather than government funds, foundation grants, or public fees. (Zastrow & Hessenauer, 2019)

The group structure comprised a diverse group of men and women ages 40 -70. The ethnic groups represented were Africans, Caucasians, and Hispanics. Becky and Ben are volunteers who lead a group of eighteen people. One does not have to be a social worker or counselor to lead an AA meeting. Self-help groups are voluntary associations in which members provide each other with various types of help, usually nonmaterial and nonprofessional, for a particular shared, usually challenging, characteristic. (Zastrow & Hessenauer, 2019)

Ben opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the group. He welcomed the newcomers, which was directed at her since she thought the group was very familiar with one another. Ben then opened with a serenity prayer. "God, Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the Courage to change the things I can, and the Wisdom to know the difference." She noticed they added words specifically aimed at Alcohol Anonymous as she listened, but she could not remember the exact words. The session focused on encouraging members in their sobriety not to give up. A member displayed slogans for encouragement that read, "Bring the body, and the mind will follow," "First thing First," "One step at a time," and "What you think is not facts" these were just some of the signs that I can remember.

Ben handed over the leadership to Becky, who opened the floor for the members to share.

Don spoke; first, he began his introduction with, "Hello, family, my name is Don, and I am an alcoholic." Don encouraged the members with his story and spoke about how he came to the AA meeting and how the meetings helped save his life. He shared how it was not easy initially but got easier when he admitted he was an alcoholic. Don would only accept it after a while. He said before that he did not know why or how he ended up in the meeting. However, today, she remembers hearing or reading Let go and let God. Hearing let go and let God

(surrender) is when he took the meeting seriously. He has been clean with God, his sponsor, and AA meetings for a year.

Each member shared similar stories of how alcohol destroyed their life, but now they are on the road to recovery. Others talked about how alcohol has broken up their families and how AA is restoring. While others are still praying for restoration and how God and AA give them hope. The purpose of the meeting was clear. The members illustrated how the twelve steps principles work if applied to one's life. She enjoyed how each person that spoke contributed to God for their success but not without hard work, 12 steps, meetings, and sponsors.

The Bible's Twelve Steps describe how to regain our sanity after drinking alcohol. We acknowledged our powerlessness and hoped that a Power more significant than ourselves could restore us. We then decided to entrust our wills and lives to God's care, took a thorough and fearless moral inventory of ourselves, confessed to God, and begged Him to remove our flaws. We also made a list of everyone we had harmed and attempted to make direct amends to them wherever possible. Finally, we sought to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him through prayer and meditation, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out. (Centers, 2021)

Not Too Young AA group was founded on biblical principles, and it showed through the testimonies of their members. As the group process continued, She observed most of the members smiling, others looked tired, but to their defense, it was getting later. Although members looked tired, they supported one another by thanking them for sharing and expressing gratitude. She especially found it interesting that they could share their experiences to encourage others by sharing how the AA slogans help them in their journeys, such as "One day at a time," a famous AA motto Kunst (2017). First thing first, we must concentrate on the moment.

Nevertheless, we do not have control over our behaviors right now. Second, we must understand that reality is merely a series of moments. While the most famous AA slogan tells us to take life one day at a time, we frequently hear AA members say they must take life one hour or one minute.

Lastly, according to Kunst (2017), another slogan she heard throughout the testimonial is the first thing; first, one cannot rush our recovery. She is putting the cart before the horse will only serve to stunt our metamorphosis. There is no need to push one's self too hard. The slogans used in AA are some of the same ones used for people without alcohol addiction. She constantly tells herself not to rush into decisions before counting up the cost or placing herself in situations she cannot escape so quickly. AA was a beneficial experience for her. She was encouraged to hear the overcoming stories from people who once could not see the light at the end of the tunnel, but now it sounds like it is shining brightly.

References

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