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SWK658: Clinical Social Work Practice III with Groups

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The excessive use of alcohol has been broken into two categories, alcohol abuse and alcoholism. Alcohol abuse is defined as the consumed excess of alcohol. It is the behavior indicator, which leads to lowered job performance and poor interpersonal relationships. Chronic Alcoholism, also known as alcohol dependence, (often classified as a disease) is when a person has a strong desire to drink. There is loss of control, because of the physical dependence on alcohol. Withdrawal symptoms such as nausea sweating, shakiness and anxiety occur when alcohol has not been consumed. A greater amount of alcohol is needed in order for the chronic alcoholism patient to receive a high (thriftbooks.com).

On March 9, 2023, I have the opportunity and privileged to attend the Alcoholics Anonymous support group program on its online platform. Alcoholics Anonymous: is a fellowship of people who come together to solve their drinking problem. It doesn't cost anything to attend A.A. meetings. There are no age or education requirements to participate. Memberships is open to anyone who wants to do something about their drinking problem. They don't discriminate because of age. In Corey's, Theory & Practice of Group Counseling, pg. 38, the author shares that "The group format can assist people in breaking out of their isolation and offer older people the encouragement necessary to find meaning in their lives so that they can live fully and not merely exist". (Corey. 2015. Pg 38) "This support group is for anyone with alcohol dependency. A.A also sponsors 85 other support groups.

Although the support groups are open to anyone, there are a few requests that should be observed and follow. They stated "new alcoholics, college/university students who needs to observe one of our support groups as part of a class assignment, you are welcome to attend open meetings as an observer.

The group started at 9PM. There were three facilitators, one counselor and two volunteers, and one peer advocate, Maria, asked everyone to please mute our phone, so that she could read the group expectations and guidelines, which I think that was very important for the group to run smooth. Everyone in the group meeting introduce themselves. I introduce myself as an observer, instead as a college student. There was a total of 9 participants in the support group. Celia, join the support group from: Atlanta Georgia, I was surprise but very attentive. Four of the participants were Puerto Rican, two males and two females. Five participants were African American 3 males and 2 females.

Maria, asked if anyone wanted to share the reason they join A.A support group. Janet, mentioned being in recovery of alcoholism and doing great. She also shares staying sober is a daily fight but with the support of love ones and the A.A support group she is doing well. Al, who also in recovery appeared to be obese, he stated about continuing to reach out to others in need and doing all he could do to help others. Margarita, shares and was super excited because she is not in the shelter system any longer. She finally found an apartment and cannot wait to move in. The support group was overjoyed for her and wishing her all the best in her new home. She said: Thank you to everyone. A gentleman was next to speak but did not feel like talking in the moment. Maria, encourage everyone to keep seeing their therapist whenever the have too much on their mind and the importance of taking care of themselves. On the other hand, I observed the dynamics of hoe the A.A. deferred to the peer advocate, yet stayed completely engaged in the process. In the book of (Corey. 2015. Pg 381) “Group leaders are expected to assume an active, directive, and supportive role in the group and apply their knowledge of behavioral principles and skills to the resolution of problems”. Corey’s also states it is important that group participants know that the individual working with them are both knowledgeable and empathetic.

In Zastrow's Social Work with Groups, states that social workers considerably and extensively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; by using the tools and resources available for a better outcome. (Zastrow. 2015.Pg 84).

Observing the support group at A.A., was very interesting and it motivates me to want to join again. I had facilitated few groups before at my first Internship but the A.A support group are better organized and that makes a big difference. It was great for me to see the interaction between participants and how this group has become so united. Corey & Zastrow's readings are very important because it provides me with a better understanding of how support groups really works and function professionally. As a future social worker and clinician, I hope to utilize and implement all that I am learning in A.A support groups which will comes with practice and experience (Zastrow. 2015.Pg. 82).

The Twelve Steps Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority-a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement of A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A. A, group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The Twelve Steps of Codependents Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over others-that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand God.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

REFERENCES

Corey, G., 2015, January 1. Theory & Practice of Group Counseling., Cengage Learning 9th Ed., Boston, MA

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