

**Journal 3**

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**SWK658-Clinical Practice With Groups**

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Week six's lesson was about Working with diverse populations in social work. Although diversity is a topic that seems routine in the practice of social work, this lesson made me realize that competency in diversity requires continual learning and humility. Some classmates Lourdes shared that they realized the policies of social work do clash with personal beliefs. She described questioning whether she wanted to stay in the field when she first started learning. While pursuing my Social Work education, I haven't had a personal dilemma because of social work policies. Learning about diversity has always felt easy because of my cultural upbringing and friendships. I think I had a relaxed view of diversity but this lesson reminded me that I need to have a greater sense of duty to grow more in this area. Even the best social workers are not infallible to bias, discomfort, and ethical dilemmas in their work.

My classmate's experience, my experience in my field practicum, and my experiences in class have helped me realize I have so much more to learn. In practice with diverse clients, I will always be a cultural learner specifically because the client is the expert on their experience (Corey, p 34). They will teach me about their specific needs and goals. As was stated during class discussion, the client comes first at all times, even if the social worker does not agree with them. As highlighted by slide 13 in Lesson 6, Zastrow accurately teaches that one may be a fully competent social worker even if the client is culturally different from the professional. The most significant part of this lesson was learning that some clients prefer working with professionals who do not belong to the same cultural background. This fact reminded me of times when I did appreciate mentorship or leadership whose cultural experiences were different from my own.

## Lesson 7 Clinical practice with Adlerian groups

The list of qualities of an Adlerian group leader is as follows:

Presence, Self-confidence, Demonstrating the courage to be imperfect, Willingness to take risks, Acceptance, Caring, Willingness to model, Collaborative spirit, Sense of humor, Listening for purposes and motives, Encouraging, A belief in the usefulness of the group process, and Have a sense of their own identity, beliefs, and feelings. This list along with the general rules of Adlerian group work theories was a great overview of what group work and counseling should be like. While I enjoyed learning this concept, it also seemed a bit overwhelming. Most of the qualities of an Adlerian group leader are ones I do not yet possess. I am sure time and practice will help me grow those skills. It was fun to watch my group members so expertly play out the Adlerian techniques like perception checking, reorientation, and analysis. Honestly, it did feel daunting to realize I am so behind on learning these skills. I did not feel like I did a good job even pretending to be a group member who was passive-aggressive. I was sad for my classmate Michael who felt overwhelmed by role-playing Adlerian group work with me. But as Adler would say, I must be willing to take risks and be imperfect. I appreciate that the professor and my group members are able to reorient the group even when Michael and I were not interested in maintaining our roles for the group activity. Overall, this class and lesson were my favorites so far. My classmates and I learned a lot and are receptive to one another and most importantly receptive to the teachings. I also appreciated the demonstration of Adlerian therapy between Nelson and Professor Yoon. Their exchange is what made the concepts from the lesson clear and actionable.

## References

Corey, Gerald (2015) (9th Edition). *Theory and Practice of Group Counseling*. ISBN-13: 9780357670989;

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Hessenauer, S. L., & Zastrow, C. (2019). *Empowerment Series: Social Work with Groups:*

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