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Clinical Social Work Practice III with Groups

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## **Group Structure**

I attended a Narcotics Anonymous group through zoom; however, they also meet in person. I went to two separate meetings, and one was only on zoom and the other one was integrated with in person and zoom members. The meetings were held on February 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup>. The members who attended the group varied in age. The age demographic appeared to be from the ages of mid-thirties to late sixties. The race was diverse and some of the identifiable races were African American, White, and Hispanic. There appeared to be more males than females in the group sessions, one of the groups there were about twenty members who attended and there was about fifteen males and five women. There was one facilitator of the group, however with each group they had someone come on as a motivational speaker in the start of the session who journeyed the same road of drugs. The speaker had about fifteen minutes to speak and share their story with the group. The zoom group appeared to be more intimate than the group that was in person and zoom combined. There were more members that participated to speak when it was all zoom. There was a disconnect with the mixture of the group being zoom and in person at the same time. It was harder to connect with the other members who were speaking in person, some of the problems were the volume of the other members, the position of the video camera of the in-person members. Some people did share who was on zoom, but the vibe was different from the first meeting.

## **Group Process**

The groups would begin with the facilitator opening the group and introducing the speaker of the day along with some house rules for the open group. After the speaker speaks the group provides feedback on her story and then facilitator addresses the group with anyone

that wants to share. Each member has a time limit when they share, and they must raise their hand to speak. Not all group members shared, because not all group members volunteered to share their story. There were a lot of members who would provide feedback to those members who did share. There were a lot of words of encouragement given amongst the group. There was a beauty to see the members support each person in their process and celebrate their wins together. There were members in there that have been clean for several years, and others who just joined the group that were only clean for a week. There were various emotions expressed throughout the group, such as, happiness, celebration, encouragement, hopeful, scared, and comfort throughout the stories that were shared.

### **Group Application**

My observation of this group left me feeling encouraged by the amount of perseverance and resilience each person displayed. I was empowered by their stories and used it for my own life to keep going. Although I do not have an addiction, I was able to relate to some of the feelings and experiences some of the members shared. It allowed me to walk away with being able to endure. I was happy that people get to journey through life with others who have traveled down a similar road. So many people have support and in their "process" they go through so many different of experiences and some never overcome. I can see the benefits of testimonies being shared; present struggles being processed with other people. They way many of the members probably felt reassured in their journey. I remember one member sharing how he has been clean for thirty something years, and when he was using, he never brought it into his home. He spoke about his wife now having to use pills in the home, and the struggle he is having with his new reality. He was very transparent and scared all in one. He spoke about his

fears around his new reality and the way the group came together to support him was a very powerful thing to witness. This experience reminded me of why it is important to be connected to the body of Christ. God tells us, that we carry the burdens of each other. This was demonstrated through this meeting. Additionally, how important it is to be connected to the body because you do not have to travel down the road alone, there are others there to lift you up when you cannot do it for yourself. This illustration brought everything back to why community is important on so many different levels. The group showed the power of confession, truth, transparency, and support. This group was very structured in the way they ran the group, and I believe it helped in the way the members were able to flow in the group. No one violated the rules and respected each other. When the time was coming to an end with the person who was speaking, they put a warning up on the screen to give awareness of time. Each person respected their time limited. This group exemplified the terms and definitions of what support groups talk about should occur during the groups.