

Journal #4

As to the Zoom stage of group development, I believe the group now is in the working stage based on Corey, G. 2012. Members are now more focused on building cohesiveness and the dynamics within is to become productive members of the group. Intensive levels of interaction among the members are observed and the majority seems to have the freedom to contribute to the progress of the group process. Members began to share meaningful self-disclosure evidence that trust has been building up slowly within the group. I believe many members experience a sense of belonging, feel connected to one another, and enjoy each one's company. There's a feeling of acceptance and willingness of members to put insight into action.

I believe that Yalom's theory of the Existential Approach to Groups that was discussed had given a place in our group process tonight. Talking about the key concepts of self-awareness, self-determination, freedom, and personal responsibility for example, and applying these in our small group, means that each member and the leader are given a choice to expand or limit each vision of ourselves. If for example a member or a leader thinks every time, we meet is only fulfilling the requirements and to graduate and not learn techniques that one can use in future practices, that could mean limiting the choice of our actions. Another one is probably a thought that because we are in graduating class, means that personal responsibility to study and take charge of things to do can be neglected. That is also, I believe, an example of not being able to direct our lives and limiting our potential for growth because of our wrong choice of actions.

I am impressed with Yalom's view of what Existential therapists are and the description of psychotherapy as "an attitude toward human suffering and has no manual, Corey, G., (2012)

p223. This to me is the acknowledgment of the uniqueness of an individual, personality, situations, upbringing, background, motivations, values, weaknesses, strengths, and many more. I love to think that the subjective has a part in this therapeutic process. This means allowing each member to discover each uniqueness makes the practice more suitable for a wide range of possibilities in solving a problem. In other words, I think what the theory is saying is that there must be no “cookie-cutter” approach to solving problems. This liberated me from having a conforming thought into exploring the horizon, thus providing more freedom and choices.

One thing that I remember in our class discussion is the inevitability of humans having to experience anxiety in life. That this could be because of death, freedom, isolation, and the meaninglessness of life. I think Yalom’s bringing this concept out into existence helps many of us to confront truthfully and courageously what life is. The purpose and meaning of life and that everybody will face death, somehow. Or things will end, things will begin somehow whether we like it or not. Thinking about the inevitableness of death sounds like a fatalistic approach. But given the truth about dying, cannot be disputed that it is true and that no one can escape it. Thus, the question becomes, how can we look at dying or death as part of being alive?

In summary, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of my small group and the class. I believe now my goal is not to look for perfection but to look for meaningful experiences that will lead me to bring out authenticity about myself, influence the functioning of the group, and hopefully will be translated into a meaningful practice with my clients currently or in the future. Writing this journal becomes a healing process for me. Bringing myself to become vulnerable, at risk of anything within the group, or outside the group, teaches me to become courageous so that I can fulfill the true purpose of my existence here on earth.

