

Kathy E. Salazar
Clinical Social Work Practice with Groups
Professor. Anderson Yoon
March 23rd, 2023
Journal #4

This week I was given the opportunity to interact with my classmates via zoom. It was a different dynamic since I've been in person this semester. Today's class was very interactive and learning about the existential approach to groups was very interesting because it emphasizes more on our own free will to determine how different circumstances can impact our lives, such as loss or death. This approach provided us with a more empowering tool to help clients understand how when we deceived life, we end up making wrong assumptions. These assumptions can have a negative impact in how we confront life's struggles. Our job as group leaders is to help individuals to face these struggles and challenges with courage which I find it to be a very empowering method.

As I learned about this therapeutic approach, I really like the purpose behind this therapy. Enabling clients to understand their purpose and enhance their ability to recognize their strengths and how their worldview can be different once they understand the meaning of life and how this meaning can change their present and their future. I believe that for this approach to be successful, self-determination is the key as Schneider and Krug (2010) explained based on their three values. Helping individuals understand that they can work around their limitations, that they have free will to make healthy decisions, that every choice they make has a meaning and that they are the drivers of their own destiny, and this will shape the way they want to carry their lives in a more positive perspective, allowing them to use their freedom to know how to overcome life struggles as they come.

Based on my experience in the medical field and learning about this holistic approach, I agree that more existential groups should be developed not only in hospital settings but in every self-help,

self- supporting group setting to promote the need to find life's significance and purpose even if it is at the end-stage of life.

As therapists using this approach will also help us understand our mission and purpose in this world, as social workers our purpose is to help those that feel hopeless and have no desire to live.

I find this approach very empowering and, in the future, I can see myself using this approach in my practice with groups.