

During week nine group practice, our exercise was to lead a group for elders, called “swimming together in a sea of loss.” Our task was to role-play a scene of a group meeting using existential group therapy. During our group practice, the group leader addressed some of the similarities and differences among the group members. One similarity that was explored within the group was the feeling of finding a new sense of self as an older adult as well as learning how to cope with the new roles that each member plays in their lives within their families, friendships, and communities. We also show how even though the member shared similarities amongst one another they also had various experiences to how they have been experiencing the aging process.

Something that came up in our group practice was how existential therapist challenge clients to become their full and authentic selves. The group leader/existential therapist, asked two questions, “How can I fill my life with beauty, goodness, wonder, and truth? and How can I create a new old age?” which is a question that allowed the members to explore their authentic selves. Corey (2015) states, “Living authentically entails knowing and accepting our limits” (Corey, 2015, p. 239). I feel like these group questions provided the opportunity for members to figure out who they were on their own to gain an understanding of themselves even with some of the new limitations they may have to encounter.

One of the ongoing themes that came up in this group practice was the search for meaning. As stated by Corey (2015), “According to Frankl, the central human concern is to discover meaning that will give one’s life direction” (Corey, 2015, p. 237). I found this to be true during our group practice when we discussed the questions and saw the common theme of older adults finding meaning in their older life as well as finding new ways to live fulfilling lives even as things have changed and they are experiencing different challenges in life. While engaging in

our group practice the leader allowed each individual to explore the meaning of their life even though it looked different for each member and they came to their meanings in various ways. I thought it was significant when Corey (2015), spoke about how “the therapist’s task is not to tell clients what their particular meaning in life should be but to encourage clients to develop meaning for themselves.” (Corey, 2015, p. 237). This rang true as the leader guided our group session and just allowed each member to express themselves and explore the questions presented as they saw fit to come to their meaning of self.