

Structured Academic Controversy Personal Reflection

As nurses group cohesion is necessary to understand and encourage because we work on team with other health care professionals, and we may also take part in group therapy sessions as a co-facilitator or facilitator depending on where we end up working. Group selection or de-selection however you want to look at it is just as important in the group process, if you don't weed out the 'group deviants' it can affect the other members development and participation (Yalom, I. 2005. Pg241).

Cohesion is hard to directly define, I found a definition that explains group cohesion as "the sum of all factors that cause members of a group to stay in the group or be attracted to the group. You can think of group cohesion as the 'social glue' that binds a group together" (Grimsley, S. n.d.). Group cohesion is important to group therapy as it helps reduce stress, increase self-esteem, give a feeling of belonging and improves interpersonal functioning and relationships (Burlingame, G. M., McClendon, D. T., & Alonso, J. 2011). Cohesion is a big part of a patient's improvement in group therapy and it can take time to build, the nurse must encourage the patients to interact and become involved in order for this to happen. (Grimsley, S. n.d.).

The majority of therapists do not select patients for group therapy they deselect them (Yalom, I. 2005. Pg241). I found this really interesting. For a therapist to be able to know what kind of group member a person is going to be they need to take into account a few different things. A big factor for selection is the patient's motivation, this can be high or low affecting the group in different ways. High motivation is positive and therapists look for it when selecting patients however low motivation can drag the rest of the group down so it's considered a characteristic for deselection (Yalom, I. 2005. Pg241). Other characteristics looked for in deselection are greater denial, reactiveness instead of reflectiveness, less positive emotion, lower intelligence, lack of group therapy understanding, increased anger or hostility, substance abuse, and a less likeable personality (Yalom, I. 2005. Pg238).

Cohesion and selection are important for positive group outcomes because if they can make or break a group's productivity and individual growth. If there is no cohesion or there is a high dropout rate in the group the facilitator is failing to form the bond necessary for this type of therapy to be successful. When group members commit to the group they are more open to exploring and expressing themselves, becoming more in tune with their self and their relation to others (Yalom, I. 2005). Group cohesion and selection ultimately affects the group performance, however group performance and attendance can increase or decrease group cohesion (Grimsley, S. n.d.).

In exploring both sides of the argument for the best outcome I think they come hand in hand. If clients are not selected properly for the type of group therapy they are attending it can significantly affect the other members and in turn decrease the group's cohesion. If members are chose by the selection/deselection process and fit well into the assigned group, the group will have a stronger cohesion and a more positive experience for all members.

References:

Grimsley, S. (n.d.). Group Cohesion: theory, definition & quiz. Education Portal. Retrieved from: <http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/group-cohesion-theory-definition-quiz.html#lesson>

Burlingame, G. M., McClendon, D. T., & Alonso, J. (2011). Cohesion in group therapy. *Psychotherapy*, 48(1), 34-42. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/As/Downloads/cohesion%20meta-analysis%20in%20psychotherapy%202011.pdf

Yalom, I. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy*. (5th Ed). New York. Basic Book.