

Selecting Teenage Girls For An Existential Therapeutic Group

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In developing a group for teenage girls using the existential therapeutic approach, it is essential to carefully select participants to ensure the effectiveness and success of the group therapy. Selecting such a group involves careful consideration of several factors to ensure the group is cohesive and the therapy effective. It is also essential to consider the unique needs and experiences of teenage girls who are selected for the group using the existential therapeutic approach. Existential therapy focuses on helping individuals explore and make sense of their existence, values, and choices through themes such as meaning, freedom, and responsibility (Van Deurzen). Therapists using the existential approach help individuals confront existential questions, explore their inner world, and find purpose in life. Based on the existential therapeutic approach, this paper will discuss the criteria and considerations for selecting teenage girls for such a group.

Before selecting participants for the group, it is crucial to have a good grasp of existential therapy principles and how they apply to teenagers. Teenagers often grapple with existential questions like who am I and what the purpose of my life is, which is recognized through the existential therapeutic approach. These questions about one's existence are part of normal adolescent development (Fitzgerald). In this regard, existential therapy emphasizes individual responsibility, freedom, and the search for meaning in life, which necessitates that participants be intellectually prepared to engage with complex issues. Therefore, teenagers who are open to exploring these concepts and willing to engage in self-reflection would be ideal candidates for the group. For instance, the therapist would look for teenagers who have shown an interest in exploring their values and beliefs or those who have displayed introspective tendencies or have expressed a desire to understand themselves better.

The initial step in selecting teenage girls for an existential therapeutic group involves assessing their suitability for this specific type of therapy. For example, teenage girls who are motivated to participate in the group and committed to the therapeutic process are more likely to benefit from existential therapy. Gauging their willingness to engage in self-exploration and their readiness to confront existential questions and challenges is essential, and this can be gauged through one-on-one discussions with participants or pre-interview questionnaires. The voluntary participation of teenage girls also reflects maturity at the emotional level, which enables them to explore the purpose of life and answer other existential questions without feeling anxious in the process. Suppose teenagers who actively participate in group sessions on a regular basis and engage in group activities demonstrate a genuine interest in self-discovery. Additionally, during therapy sessions, ensuring psychological stability is crucial, as psychological distress could hinder psychologists' effective participation in the group process.

When therapists focus on setting up a group based on the psychological stability and common emotional experiences of the participants, diversity plays a significant role. Therapists can foster understanding among female participants by establishing a group of them from diverse backgrounds. This would create an inclusive environment with richer perspectives. As the therapists form a group of teenage girls aged 14 to 18 years for therapy, the factor of inclusivity becomes increasingly helpful for both the participants and the therapists. For instance, inviting teenagers from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds can form a dynamic composition. It creates a safe space for all the participants where they can feel valued for their unique identities. Thus, based on their psychological, social, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, it is beneficial to have individuals with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds and diverse experiences in the group so that they can reflect on each other's developmental stages.

Establishing an existential therapeutic group is crucial and requires consideration of several factors. One of them involves group size, which should be taken into consideration by the therapists who aim to set the group up. In this context, the group size of 6 to 9 girls aged 14 to 18 years is recommended to the therapists. This group size strikes a balance to maintain individual participation and diverse interactions so that each participant girl receives adequate attention while actively participating in the group. For existential therapy to be effective, voluntary participation of the girls is essential to foster a sense of ownership and commitment to the group and the process. This can only be achieved if the female participants willingly participate and are genuinely interested in the therapy process because such an approach requires a high level of engagement and personal investment from the participants (Tantam and van Deurzen). Moreover, maintaining ethical considerations is the cornerstone in any therapeutic setting, and this can be achieved by engaging the parents or guardians of the girls to facilitate a supportive environment and ensure that participants understand the nature and benefits of existential therapy.

In conclusion, holding an initial trial session to confirm the group composition where girls can effectively interact would be an essential step to allow the female participants to make an informed decision about their continued participation, as well as the therapist to make necessary adjustments before the existential therapeutic group officially begins. By carefully selecting teenage girls open to exploring existential themes, motivated to engage in therapy, diverse in backgrounds, emotionally stable, and well-supported, the existential therapeutic group can provide a transformative and enriching experience for all participants. Taking these criteria and considerations into account will contribute to the group's success and the growth of each individual involved. This careful selection process of teenage girls' existential therapeutic group is crucial for the success of the therapy and the overall well-being of the participants.

Works Cited

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