The Development of Group Therapy and the Role of World War II

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Foundations and Purpose of Group Therapy

Humans are born into a group of people, such as family, social, cultural, and religious groups. These groups shape the everyday life of the person and their behaviors as well. Group therapy is a type of psychotherapy in which one or more therapists work with a group of people at the same time. Because of human nature to act in a group, group therapy can be an effective source of persuasion, stabilization, and support for the people who are involved in group therapy. The therapy is widely used to tackle people at the same time who have the same issues and is considered effective. It is a process of interaction between a group of people, and the discussion is used to treat several disorders and health issues. The therapy is also helpful in treating behavioral issues. The creation of the group is essential as it has an impact on people's behavior and attitude. The choice of group is important as the group members can influence the people positively and negatively. The paper aims to explore the development of group therapy, the role of World War II, and the impact of group therapy treatment on the treatment of drug users.

Fixed and Revolving Therapy Groups

The development of the groups in group therapy is important. There are two types of group development: fixed group development and revolving group development. The idea of a fixed group is in which members of the group stay together for a longer period of time, whereas in a revolving group, the stay is dependent on the individual goals and motives of joining the group. People in the revolving group keep on changing (Flores & Georgi, 2005). The fixed group has a limited number of people, admission at the start of the group only, a fixed number of therapy sessions, and a more structured learning process. For example, the sessions will be linked with the previous sessions. However, in the revolving groups, the number of sessions might be fixed, but anyone is welcome to join any session. People are independent of the sessions they want to join.

Stages of Group Development

Because group therapy is aimed at certain recovery or treatment of health or behavioral issues, the development of the group has stages as well. The first phase of the group is attention, relationship building, orientation, and establishment of a safe working environment. In the second phase of the group, people share their personal experiences, several coping strategies are advised, and therapy is carried out. The last stage of group therapy is the deliberate but positive end of group therapy (Flores & Georgi, 2005). Groups are developed to enrich people's experiences, ensure guidance and support in times of crisis, and provide positive reinforcement. While thinking about the activities or tasks for the group sessions, it is essential to be sensitive to the cultural, religious, and other sensitive aspects of the group members. The leader of the group must consult the members privately to understand their difficulties and growth during the therapy. Group therapy can have negative impacts if it is led by a poorly trained and unskilled therapist.

World War II and the Growth of Group Therapy

The concept of group therapy emerged after World War II because after World War II, there was a large number of soldiers who needed help, and therapists preferred to treat them in groups. The number of psychiatric causalities was high during and after the war, and individual treatment was not possible, so the therapists in the military made the decision to use the group treatment method (Vlastelica, 2011). The therapy resulted in a positive outcome for the soldiers and, therefore, was widely used post-World War II. The therapeutic group activities can be traced back to the *Northfield experiment.* During this experiment, many army officers and patients who were traumatized by the war were gathered in the group. It was analyzed how being in a group is effective for a positive outcome.

Group Therapy for Substance Use Disorders

Group therapy is widely used in treating substance use disorders (SUDs). Group therapy for substance abusers has been in use for a long and in the year 1988, it was estimated that 94% of the treatment has a group therapy element in the treatment (Weiss, Jaffee, de Menil, & Cogley, 2004). Teens or adults usually use drugs or alcohol in the company of other people, so group therapy can benefit in replicating their experience. When asked, 80% of the teens preferred group therapy over a web-based activity (Kaminer, 2005).

Therapeutic Benefits of Group Participation

The group helps them understand their struggles as well as the struggles of their peers, the development of the techniques for socializing, and peer feedback, which will enhance their ability to

cope as well as share their experiences. The substance abuse treatment group is primarily a fixed group where, at the start of the group, participants are asked if they are not allowed to miss any session. The relapse rate is high for drug users who discontinue treatment, and this is true in the first month of the treatment. In the initial month, the clients are emotionally, mentally, and physically fragile, along with external stress, subgrouping, personal conflicts, and lack of the ability of the leader (Flores & Georgi, 2005). At that time, the therapist can play a role and derive some motivational techniques to keep the interest of the members and help them stay motivated and active.

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