COURSE OUTLINE

SEMESTER: Spring 2016

COURSE TITLE: Group Work Training and Supervision

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: The purpose of this course is to provide group work training and supervision to social workers who are facilitating group work at their agencies. Four sessions of two hours each will focus on knowledge and skill building. Topics will include: (1) group development and planning, (2) gate keeping, (3) ethical issues, (4) identification and deepening of group themes/issues, (5) intervention skills, (6) analysis of group process, and (7) evaluation of group practice.

This training is offered to social work professionals (LMSW or LCSW) who are presently facilitating ongoing groups or planning to implement new groups within their agencies. In addition to the four monthly training sessions, participants will participate in an intake interview and post-session evaluation. Each participant will submit a weekly group process recording for supervisory feedback (each week for 16 weeks). Participants may be facilitating a variety of groups with diverse populations, as training will focus on group work knowledge and skills, rather than any specific theme or population. There is no fee for this training.
Session One – Wednesday, January 6, 2016
This session will focus on overview of training sessions. Topics for this session will include information sharing regarding to each participant’s group, and group preparation, utilizing group prospectus, gate keeping, intake interviews, utilization of group process recordings, Q and A, and discussion. Review of group stage developmental stages from the Boston Model (Garland et al., 1978) and Relational Model (Schiller, 2007) will be addressed. Participant feedback and discussion will be encouraged.

Readings:


Session Two – Wednesday, February 3, 2016
This session will focus on theories of group developmental stages of the Boston Model (Garland et al., 1978) and Relational Model (Schiller, 2007), worker roles, location, and norms of each stage. In addition, the identification and development of group themes, demand for work and ethical dilemmas will be considered. Feedback and discussion of issues arising from participants’ groups will be encouraged.

Readings:


Session Three – Wednesday, March 2, 2016
This session will focus on issues that arise in group stages of Power and Control and Intimacy, importance of “group think,” group work vs. casework, demand for work, group cohesion and power. Also addressed will be the group worker’s role as facilitator and concept of “worker location” as group dynamics change and evolve. Participant discussion and feedback will continue.

Readings:

Session Four – Wednesday, April 6, 2016
This session will focus on separation/termination with groups, including worker collusion to avoid saying goodbye, critique and evaluation of group process, individual member growth and contributions, utilization of group “celebrations.” Group evaluation will also include identification of the variety of group issues that have arisen and how participants have creatively enabled the group to take the “group problem” and turn it into a “group solution.” Participant feedback will enrich these discussions.


Focus Group Evaluation – TBA
Final meeting will focus on evaluation of training and supervision on group work knowledge and skill building. All participants will complete post-test.
GROUP PROSPECTUS

The group prospectus demonstrates your knowledge of the pre-group planning stage. It clarifies all aspects of the group that you are developing. The group prospectus is never a “make work” assignment. It demonstrates a high-level professional format for group facilitators. The group prospectus will include:

1. Group Purpose: Reason for development of group, including membership population, planned activities, goals.

2. Population: Specific population characteristics including gender, age, and agency requirements, other specific data about group membership and size of group.

3. Norms: Norms or rules of group as identified by worker before beginning group.

4. Group Duration: Length of time or number of planned group sessions, including date and time of group. Is the group open ended or close ended?

5. Worker Role: Identification of roles the social worker will fulfill in working with this specific population.

6. Membership Policy: Requirements for group membership: attendance policy, dismissal policy, client of agency. Include any specific requirements for membership in specific client categories: parents, foster care, medical recovery, socialization, addiction, bereavement, or immigration.
Group Process Recording Format

Name____________________

Heading:
Name of Group
Session Date
Session #
List those who attended and who were absent

Pre-engagement comments:
Describe the planning that you have done prior to group meeting; include contacts, advocacy, etc.

Narrative:
Provide a narrative of group discussion, themes and process; include worker interventions, thoughts, and reactions. This is not a verbatim report, but a description of the interactions both verbal and non-verbal.

Impressions:
Provide your retrospective thoughts about the meaning of this group session and the process. Reflection of the process enables you to develop and deepen awareness of the latent content, assess the process, and progress (or lack of it) of individual members and the group as a whole.

Plans:
Provide information on future plans, which focus on the worker, members, and group as a whole.

Questions:
Provide questions that came up for you in an honest and self-reflective way, taking initiative for enriching professional group work skills. These questions should contribute to the supervisory agenda, and the richness of your learning experience.
References


