ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SOCIAL WORK WITH GROUPS

SOCIAL GROUP WORK IN THE GENERALIST UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM

EXAMPLE OF ASSIGNMENTS FOR SOCIAL WORK WITH GROUPS COURSES: SCENARIOS ON CLIENT NEEDS, GROUP TYPE AND STRUCTURE, AND WORKER ROLE

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Scenario 1: Staff Intervention
Your friend and colleague, the director of a small, private, non-profit agency, calls and asks if you would be interested in doing a staff intervention at the agency. The agency had been providing services to a female client who was recently murdered by her husband. Your friend tells you that a number of members of her staff have been deeply affected by this tragedy. You and she agree that a short-term group intervention would be most appropriate and helpful.

Scenario 2: Inner City Middle School
You are the social worker in an inner city middle school. A number of the students whom you see have been referred to you for behavior problems, typically aggressive, hostile behavior in the classroom. You decide that you would like to start a group for these children, since you realize how similar their problems are (family instability and violence, drugs, and poverty). You have the support of the principal, and she allows you to remove children from class to participate in the group.

Scenario 3: Non-profit Agency for Developmentally Delayed Adults
You are the social worker in a private non-profit agency providing services to adults who are developmentally disabled and their families. The county in which the agency is located is planning to cut its contribution to your agency’s budget. This will result in a reduction of services to your clients and eliminate entirely services to their families. A number of your clients’ families have expressed concern and anger over this situation. Your agency director encourages you to provide a group intervention.

Scenario 4: Non-profit Agency for People with AIDS
You work in a non-profit agency that provides comprehensive services to people with AIDS. You decide you would like to facilitate a group for caregivers who have recently lost their loved one to the disease, since your agency has never provided any services to these individuals once their loved one has died.
Scenario 5: Short-term Admissions Inpatient Psychiatric Facility
You work on a short-term admissions unit of an inpatient psychiatric facility. You have been asked to take over the daily ward meeting, since the previous leader is leaving the agency. All residents on the unit must attend the one and one-half hour meeting. The group has never had a clear focus. However, you understand that in the past the group has focused on members’ discharge plans (the average length of stay is 5 days), resolving member conflicts that stem from living together, and addiction (on average, 75-80% of the patients have substance abuse problems).

Scenario 6: Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
You work in the neonatal intensive care unit of an inner city hospital. The majority of the parents of the newborns are unwed teenage mothers. While the mothers are typically discharged within two days, their babies stay in the unit for an average of six weeks. The mothers (and fathers) are encouraged to spend as much time as possible with their newborns. You have observed that most of the moms and a few of the dads do visit frequently. In general, the parents seem afraid of and overwhelmed by their newborns, and you believe that a group intervention of some sort would be helpful to them.

Discussion Questions for Each Scenario:
• What type of group work service would be appropriate to respond to potential members’ needs?
• How would you characterize the role of the worker?
• How would you structure the group in terms of session length, number of sessions, use of an agenda, number of members, etc.?
• As a result of tuning in, what do you anticipate members’ thoughts and feelings would be about beginning the group? What would you do to address these? What would your feelings be about starting the group?