

**Adam Turner**  
**May 4, 2020**  
**Self-Evaluation Paper**

## **Segment One**

### ***Purpose***

Therapist: Good afternoon everyone!

Group Members: Good Afternoon!

### ***Explained his role***

My name is Adam. I am a social worker here at the Veterans Administration clinic here in Chattanooga, Tennessee. I've been working here for about three years, and I manage groups, um, such as this one.

Comment: For this part of the video, I believe that I did pretty with introducing myself. I could have been a little more detailed and cut out the "um" towards the end of the sentence. I also could have done a much more open welcome.

Correction: Hello everyone! I want to welcome you all here to our group session here at the Veterans Administration clinic here in Chattanooga, Tennessee. I've been working here at this clinic for about three years, and one of the groups that I manage is this group which is a therapy group for veterans who are struggling with PTSD.

### ***Clarified the purpose of the group***

Therapist: This group right now is called, um, is a group for people who are struggling from PTSD. And they're deployed, um, after war and they, you know, in need assistance in terms of being able to adjust to regular civilian life.

Comment: For this part of the video, I believe that I did pretty with introducing myself. In the video, I believe that I helped create an environment of warmth and comfort for the clients in the group. I also could have stated the time for when the group would be meeting which would be 7:00 PM every Wednesday.

Correction: This is a therapy group for those who are struggling with PTSD and are trying to adjust to regular civilian life after deployment. This group will meet about once a week every Wednesday at 7:00 PM here in this specific room at the Veterans Administration clinic.

### ***Helped members verbalize expectations.***

Therapist: Alright so, the next thing that I'm going to do is that I am going to ask each of you what are your expectations from this group? Starting with Kim.

Kim: I guess I kind of just expect to how to figure out how to deal with all of this because it is affecting my personal and my professional life.

Therapist: Okay alright! Um, Liz.

Elizabeth: Um, my expectations for this group is to get a good night's sleep. I haven't sleep really well.

Therapist: Okay

Eldriana: I have a hard time sleeping. Even when I watch TV, if it's too much guns or war and stuff like that. I feel like I can't go nowhere without too much noise.

Therapist: Okay, um, Kirsten.

Kirsten: I guess kind of like a summary of what each one has. How to manage or how to better sleep at night and also kind of like how to manage flashbacks.

Therapist: Okay manage flashbacks.

Comment: Here, I was in the process of establishing the purpose of the group. And by asking the group for their expectations, this allows for the therapist to be able to guide the group in the direction that is necessary for them achieve their therapeutic goals. I do believe that I did a great job of inquiring about the specific expectations.

Correction: Alright so now, the next question that I will ask is, what are some of the expectations that each of you have and what do you hope to gain from the group sessions within the next couple of weeks that we will have together?

### ***Explaining and clarifying group rules***

Therapist: All right. So, before we move forward, what we're going to do what I would like to do is to establish some group rules. Does that sound okay with everyone?

Comment: Here, while giving the rules for the group, I also wanted to make it more of a collaborative process so that the entire group will have a great therapy experience. I think I could have done it without a question. Or I could have asked the question in a much better way.

Correction: What I would like to do with everyone is to establish some ground rules. These ground rules will be very important so that all of you will be able to get the most of your experience with the group therapy sessions. How does that sound?

Therapist: So, one of the rules is to always, um, now always have for groups usually as to come on time. Um, does anyone else have any suggestions for any rules for the group?

Eldriana: To make sure that there is one person talking at a time and everyone listen to that person who is talking.

Comment: Here I could have cut out the "um" word in the question. Looking at it, I definitely do not sound very confident in the therapeutic skills that I am demonstrating. Also, I could have added another one or two rules here. This also could have been the opportunity for me to share when the group will be meeting exactly.

Correction: One of the rules that I always have for this group is for everyone to always be on time. Being on time is very important because it allows for us to be able to have productive sessions. If you are not able to come to the therapy group, you should call the Veterans Administration clinic twenty-fours ahead. The group will be meeting every Wednesday at 7:00 PM here at the Veterans Administration clinic.

Therapist: Okay alright. Anyone else? Liz you had your hand up?

Elizabeth: Yeah, I think a no judgement policy would be really good.

Therapist: No judgment? Yup, absolutely. This is, I would also like to let you guys know that everything that is shared in this group is completely confidential. And the only time that I would need to report it is if you mentioned anything such as harming yourself or harming someone on the outside such as your family or someone with a disability, then at that point, I would have to

report it to the proper authorities outside that everything in this room in this space is completely confidential. And it's not and I will not share this information with anyone outside of this group. Comment: Here, I believe that I did great a job getting the group involved in helping to establish the group rules. What I could have done better here is cut out the word “yup” and said “yes” instead. I should have done the confidentiality agreement at the beginning of the video and not during the rules. However, I don't believe that it is completely a bad thing that I used this specific time to explain confidentiality.

Correction: Yes Elizabeth! I would definitely agree with that rule. This group is a no-judgment zone and I want everyone in this group to feel comfortable sharing things with each other. I also would like for all of you to know that I will not share anything outside of this group unless you mention anything about brining harm to yourself or somebody else.

Eldriana: I have a question. Is it like okay if we drink or eat at the same time?

Therapist: I only allow water. I only allow water. Water. That's to minimize the distractions.

Eldriana: So, we cannot eat or snack?

Therapist: Oh no, it's just water. It's also a part of the facility rules and therapy rooms. So...

Comment: This also another policy that could've been stated at the beginning of the session. However, it was definitely perfect timing for the client to definitely ask about the food policy concerning the group sessions.

Correction: Well, because of the policy of the facility, I'm only allowed to let clients drink water during the therapy sessions in the room to help minimize the distraction.

## ***Getting Started***

### ***Helped members get acquainted/Set a positive tone***

Therapist: So, what you are going to do is just, you know, share with us your name, and tell us which branch you're from, and tell us, um, a favorite food of yours.

Eldriana: My name is Eldriana. I used to be in the Navy for three years and one of my favorite foods is the poutine. It's from Canada.

Therapist: Okay! Alright! Liz?

Elizabeth: Hey my name is Liz. I used to be in the administrative branch at the Air Force for about four and a half years. And I like to eat chocolate chip cookies.

Therapist: Oh, chocolate chip cookies! Nice! Okay, alright the next two?

Kim: I'm Kim. I was in the Marines. And I like mangoes.

Therapist: Mangoes! I like mangoes too. Those are pretty good. It's one of my favorite fruits. Alright last person.

Kirsten: Hello my name is Kirsten. And I've also been in the Navy for a year now.

Therapist: Okay! And what's your favorite food?

Kirsten: My favorite food is anything that is pasta.

Therapist: Oh, so you like spaghetti?

Kirsten: Spaghetti, lasagna, etc.

Therapist: I like spaghetti but I'm not so much a fan of lasagna

Comment: Here, I could have stated the purpose of the group getting acquainted with one another. Throughout this portion of the video, majority of the clients were mainly introducing themselves and the specific branches that they were from. I also believe that I did a great job of getting everyone in the group acquainted and comfortable with each other before the group started.

Correction: Alright everyone! So, to start off this portion of our session, we are going to an icebreaker. And this icebreaker will involve us sharing our name, which branch we are from, and what our favorite foods are. And we are going to take turns starting with Eldriana!

### ***Focus***

#### ***Deepened the focus when necessary***

Kim: I kind of explained like, um, I just use a lot of words. I just explained how sometimes, I'll be doing an activity like playing outside with my daughter and I will zone out. And the sounds around me become a part of war zone. And I black out and become wide awake. It's that constant fear that I am going to hurt someone that I love.

Therapist: Hmm. What makes you...so when you say that you black out, and you hear sounds around you when you are talking to your daughter, or when you're um, playing around with your daughter, you say you're about to hurt someone that you love?

Comment: Here, I was mainly in the process of trying to deepen the focus with Kim to gain an overall understanding of where she was coming from. I could've definitely stalled less and made complete sentences here. I could've definitely cut out the "um" and the repetitiveness while asking and going deeper at the same time.

Correction: When you zone out while spending time with you daughter, and your environment begins to feel like a warzone, what thoughts and feelings come about? Are you saying that

#### ***Cut off members when necessary/ Appropriately shifted the focus from a person to a topic and back when necessary/ Brought the group's focus back to the agenda/purpose when necessary***

Eldriana: Okay, so the first one is flashback. So when I'm on my family barbecues and stuff like that, from nowhere I can hear something drop. And I will have like flashback of like something else that had the same lows. So maybe guys get it like something going on. And I also cry, because I mean, like I'm sure in a way, because I'm able to, to come back to my family and be with them. But at the same time, I feel guilty for those that are left behind. And then I'm able to also share time with your family. So got ourselves on top, I cannot focus, like someone can talk to me. And I will look at them and say like, yes, yes. But like, it's not registering, like what they're saying, because I have so much thing going through my head that I'm like they're physically but mentally, I'm not there. Also, I'm mad at myself, because I felt like if I never went to the Navy.....

Therapist: Alright, so, so, let me cut your off right there.

Comment: With this part of the therapy session, it most definitely could have been done better. Once she shared that she written down eight things that she wanted to share, I probably should have asked her to only share two or three things from the list that she made so that we would have been able to move on with the group session. Therefore, I believe that one area of improvement that I could use in terms of focus skills is proper timing.

Correction: Hey Eldriana! You seem very excited about the list that you are about to share with us. Would you mind only sharing about two or three of items of the list that you wrote down? I want to make sure that everyone in the group has the chance to share what they wrote down or drew on their piece of paper.

***Deepened the focus when necessary***

Therapist: So, when you, when you hear those sounds or whenever you're at an, an airport and you hear that, what thoughts and feelings come with you hearing those sounds at the airport?

Elizabeth: When I hear the sounds of airplanes taking off, I think of danger and yeah. That's mainly it. Danger and fear.

Comment: In this part of the session, I wanted to go deeper with Elizabeth in terms of the thoughts and feelings that she has when it comes to airports. Of course, considering the client's background being in the Air Force, that's what she would experience. I should have stopped first to think about what I was going to ask because I stumbled while asking the question.

Correction: So, what types of thoughts and feelings do you have when you go to airports and you hear those sounds of airplanes taking off even though you are a regular civilian now?

***Checked out the comfort level of members when necessary***

Therapist: Alright so the next thing that I want to do, um. The next thing I want to do is I want to kind of comfort level from everyone. So, on a scale of one to ten, how comfortable would you say most of you are right now?

Elizabeth: How comfortable I am?

Therapist: Yes

Elizabeth: Well this is like my third group that I've been in, so I feel like I'm at a seven or eight.

Therapist: Third, third group that you have been to?

Elizabeth: Mmmhmm

Therapist: Oh...okay, so you have attended other groups in the past?

Elizabeth: I have.

Therapist: Okay, alright. Eldriana?

Eldriana: As of now, I can say a five.

Therapist: A five?

Eldriana: Yes.

Therapist: Why would you...

Eldriana: Mainly because, I usually share it with my family and now I'm part of a group that I can be vulnerable with. So, I'm just evaluating how the process is going right now.

Therapist: Ah, well just so you know, this is a no-judgment, like I said earlier, this is, um, this a group for you guys to share your concerns or share what you're going through. Um we are here to support one another.

Eldriana: Thank you.

Therapist: So, um, thank you Eldriana!

Eldriana: You're welcome.

Therapist: So, who else did I not ask? Kirsten?

Kirsten: I'll say like a seven. This is my first group so far. Just seeing others with this peer support environment. And I'm willing to see how the rest of the sessions will be.

Therapist: Mmkay that's great! And Kim.

Kim: Um, I would say maybe like a four or five just because this is my first group and sometimes, I struggle with putting my thoughts and my feelings, and my trauma into words.

Therapist: So, so you have trouble, you have trouble expressing how you're feeling?

Kim: Yeah how I'm feeling or why I'm feeling that way.

Therapist: Okay alright!

Comment: This part of the session I would say is definitely the most awkward part of the session in terms of the timing. For some reason, I believe that getting a comfort level check would have probably been better in an earlier part of the session somewhere halfway through. Nonetheless, I was able to get more positive responses from everyone in the group which allowed for me to see the specific progress that I had been making thus far.

Correction: So, here's what I would like to do now for the next portion of the session. I would like to go around and do a comfort level check. I want you all to share with me, on a scale of one ten, how comfortable you guys are so far?

## ***Rounds***

### ***Demonstrated the use of rounds***

Therapist: So, what you are going to do is just, you know, share with us your name, and tell us which branch you're from, and tell us, um, a favorite food of yours.

Eldriana: Okay, um, what do you want to know? My name is Eldriana.

Comment: I should have cut out the "uh" and "um" in this portion where we were doing the rounds at the beginning. This would have been the proper opportunity for me to actually introduce the actual exercise that we were going to do. I could've also called this an icebreaker since its a round where people are getting to know each other

Correction: I'm so glad that all of you are here. What we are going to do for this portion of the session is that we are going to have an icebreaker. For this icebreaker, we are going to go in a circle, and we are going to tell each other our names, which branch you're from, and what is one of your favorite foods.

## **Exercises**

### ***Appropriately introduced the exercises/ Appropriately processed the exercises***

Therapist: Doe everyone have their sheet of paper and their pen? What we're going to do, what I'm gonna have you guys do is to write down what often happens in your mind when you're doing regular activities such as spending time with your children, or you're spending time with your family going out and about, or just any type of regular normal activity that you've been doing since you've come home. We're going to take about, say, five minutes to do that.

Comment: I believe that I introduced this exercise pretty well. It was definitely an exercise that I had planned out before the session had taken place. I do wish that I had done some research on therapy exercises normally used for therapy groups for veterans that are suffering from PTSD.

Correction: For our first activity for this session, everyone is going to take out a piece of paper and a pen. What you are going to do is write down or draw what comes to mind while you are doing your day-to-day activities. This could be what happens while you're spending time with your family or any other normal activity since you have been home. We are going to do this activity for at least five minutes and then I am going to have each of you share what you either drew or wrote down.

Therapist: Alright good job everyone. So that last exercise that we would do is pretty much what you would call a mindfulness exercise. And so, what we're going to do is, this is going to be where everyone is going to close their eyes, close their eyes, and I want you to think of, um, think of yourself at a park. Where there is no one. Right? No one, the park. Um, you're walking

through the woods and the trees. All you hear is birds, chirping. There's no one there, just you. Then you approach a creek and you hear just the water flushing and running, flushing and running. Hitting rocks. Crashing. And it's flowing. Just you. No one else. But it's the rocks and the water. It's crashing, running, and flowing. Just focus on the water. Just focus on the water that's flowing. It's flowing. Crashing. Alright, now you may open your eyes. How was that? How are you guys feeling?

Comment: For this section, I could have looked up some actual mindfulness exercises to before the session. However, I believe that I achieved great results after conducting the exercise. I was definitely surprised by some of the responses that they gave towards the end. However, I believe that Kim's review of the exercise that I did with the group was probably a reminder that I should have found a more organized type of mindfulness exercise. This was also difficult to do over the Zoom platform as well.

Correction: Alright everyone! So, the last exercise that we will do for this session is called a mindfulness exercise. To start off this exercise, I'm going to have everyone to close their eyes and simply imagine yourself being at a park. At this park, you are the only person that's there. It's just you. Walking through the words. The wind is blowing. The birds are chirping.

### ***Yalom's Therapeutic Factors***

#### ***Imparting Information***

Therapist: So some of the criteria, some of the criteria that seems to match with what some of your shared with me would be such as associated with the criteria for PTSD, which tends to be events associated with traumatic events, um, irritability with family members, uh problems with concentration, or uh negative moods associated with events or even trouble sleeping or nightmares. Does that sound, um, does sound right to what you guys have experienced.

Group Members: \*all agreed\*

Comment: One of Yalom's therapeutic factors that I implemented in the group was Imparting Information. Here, I was sharing what the specific criteria that matches with PTSD to see if the any of the clients were experiencing any of the criteria. After sharing what the criteria was for PTSD, I was able to gain confirmation from the group about what they were experiencing. j

Correction: So, here are some of the characteristics that count as criteria for PTSD. Some criteria for PTSD include sleeplessness, nightmares, irritability with family members, inability to focus, and negative moods associated with specific events. Does this sound similar to what you all have been experiencing since deployment?

#### ***Socializing techniques***

Therapist: So, what we are about to do, what we are going to do, we're going to take turns and share with each other what we either drew or what we wrote down starting with Kim.

Comment: Another one of Yalom's therapeutic factors that I had implemented was socializing techniques. This therapeutic factor involved each of the group members sharing what they had written down during the activity so that they were able to share with me and the rest of the group. Implementing this type of activity was the only type of socializing technique that I could use through the Zoom platform since I couldn't exactly use the dyad technique for the group. Therefore, the rounds were the most effective. I could have also not used so much repetitiveness

in the video in terms of telling the group about sharing what they either wrote down or drew on their paper.

Correction: Alright! So now that you all are finished with writing and drawing, we are going to take turns sharing with each other what we put down on our papers. And we are going to start with Kim!

### ***Problem Situations:***

#### ***The Chronic Talker***

Eldriana: Even though I know I did for a good reason. But the fact that I am coming back home, all of those feelings and all those things going on, like, I feel like maybe it wasn't the right thing to do in a way but when I see that when my family is set for life, um, with me going through it, was it worth it

Therapist: First and foremost, I am really glad that you are sharing this with us. I am also glad that, um, you are here. Um, I just want to let you know, um, that this group is great support. Thing is, we'll get back to you soon. Okay? You will get a chance to share again but we have to move on.

Comment: This was the problem situation of the video where Eldriana was the Chronic talker. In the focus section, I had cut her since she only had about eight points written down where I could have asked her to only list three of the points that she had shared. However, in this portion of the video, she was questioning her decision as to why she had left behind her family to go the Navy in order to be able to provide for her family and children. Here I believe that I had done a great job of properly cutting off Eldriana. After the video was over, her and I discussed the timing of me cutting her off. This would be something I would say that I would definitely need to improve upon.

Correction: Hey Eldriana! You really seem excited to share what you have written down. However, there are other people within the group that also want to share what they have written as well. Later on, in the group, you will have a chance to share again. How does that sound?

### ***Closing***

#### ***Summarized and highlighted the main points of the group/Reinforced commitments made by the members/Allowed time for closing***

Therapist: So just, what I want to do now, is that I want to do a summary, um, of our whole session. So, pretty much what we did was we got started and we all shared with each other the names, the branches we came from. Um, we also talked about our favorite foods. Um, I explained who I am. I introduced myself. Um, and we set a time to where we will come here every Wednesday at 7:00 PM. Um, you know we went over some group rules, we created some group rules together. Um, we explained, we helped verbalize, you know, your expectations of what you have of me or what you plan to get from these therapy sessions for the next couple of weeks. We also talked about, um, you know in the activity, you know, what we tend to associate ourselves or what events we tend to associate with the daily activities that we often do. And then, um, we did a comfort level check. Um, then we also did our mindfulness exercise.



Comment: Throughout this whole session, I for the most was definitely nervous. Overall, I believe that the group session was definitely very productive with minor technical difficulties. I should definite “um” quite a bit while summarizing the whole session.

Correction: Before we end our session for today, I would like to do a summary of the session that we just had. At the beginning, I introduced myself and my role here at the agency. We all introduced ourselves and got acquainted with one another. We also talked about the specific expectations that all of you have for this group. I announced that our meetings will be at 7:00 PM each Wednesday here at the Veterans Administration clinic. We completed our first activity and shared what we wrote and drew on our papers. Also, we did a comfort level check of everyone within the group. And finally, we completed our mindfulness exercise.

***Planned for and conducted an effective close for the session***

Therapist: And what I would like to do before, um, we would leave, I would ask, um, not ask but get some feedback from each one of you. What did you think of this session?

Comment: I should have cut the “um” in this sentence. It also could have been improved in terms of how I framed the question.

Correction: Before we end this session, I would like to get some feedback from each of you about this session. What did each of you think of your experience with the session that you had this evening?

***Reinforced commitments made by the members***

Therapist: I would highly suggest going and spending some time out in those places. I thoroughly enjoy those. So, it’s just a suggestion that I have. Does anyone have any questions?

Comment: This took place after I had asked the group if they would like to complete an activity before the meeting for the next week. I probably could have shared some of the nice parks such as Sunset Rock. I should have also suggested them writing a journal about their experiences at these parks and how visiting the park would have helped them mentally.

Correction: Here in Chattanooga, there are very many nice parks that you all can visit until our time together next week. If you do go to one of the parks, I would like for you to journal your specific experiences and how it helped you mentally. And if you’re willing, you may share it with the group next. How does that sound?

**Cultural Issues:**

What are the cultural issues that surfaced during the session (or could have surfaced based on the participants in your group)? How did you handle it during the session (if it did not surface, how could you handle cultural issues that might surface in a group)? What might you have done differently to increase the cultural competence of your skill delivery?

The main cultural issue that I would say that I ran into while doing the group session was the fact all of the members in the group were women. Often times, it is not discussed what women in the military often go through along with their PTSD. Towards the end of the group, one of the group members mentioned that she was grateful that the group was all women. The way that I handled this was mainly being respectful of the specific experiences that they had shared with the group.

One thing that I could have done to increase the cultural competence to enhance my skill delivery is done research specifically on women in the military. This would have helped to give me some perspective on the female experience in these specific types of settings. It also would have given me understanding of PTSD from the female perspective considering how prevalent rape and sexual assault is in the military. Although there weren't any issues that surfaced in the session, I do believe that in the future, I will be able to handle cultural issues that may show up in group sessions.

**Reflections on your growth and performance as an *advanced autonomy practitioner*:**

Reflect on your role as an advanced autonomous practitioner, facilitating group therapy sessions. Over this semester and in this video, how did you demonstrate this role effectively? How could you strengthen your role as an advanced autonomous practitioner? What do you plan to do in order to maintain and grow your group facilitation skills in the future?

At the beginning of the school year, I did not know how to conduct therapy sessions with either individuals or groups. If I were to compare the videos between my skills from the very first video that was recorded of me with the video that I recently recorded for my group session, more than likely, there is huge difference in the skills that I am demonstrating. However,

throughout the school year, and this semester specifically, I have been able to gain the proper skills and training on how to properly conduct group therapy sessions. When this semester began, I had a lot of anxiety about learning how to conduct group sessions because I had only gotten used to having individual CBT sessions from the previous semester.

However, after completing the readings and doing practice sessions outside of class, I became more and more comfortable with conducting group therapy sessions. After completing the last two videos for this class, I believe that I have the basic overall foundation for conducting both individual and group therapy sessions. After I receive my degree and officially begin my career, I plan to attend certifications and trainings on different types of therapeutic interventions to help improve my practice. Some of the certifications and skills that I plan to gain are in therapeutic interventions such as Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy.

**Reflections on your experience of using technology in the second half of the semester:**

What were some of the positive things that you learned or experienced? What skills did you add specific to therapy done through a technology platform? What obstacles did you face?

Using technology for the rest of the semester was not that complicated of an adjustment. However, it was adjustment learning how the Zoom platform works since I had not used it since my fourth year of college. However, I believe that it did somewhat prepare me for delivering teletherapy sessions in the future. Teletherapy is definitely important in social work practice and could definitely help with clients who have issues with transportation. It is also becoming more and more popular within the clinical social work and therapy realm due to the advancement of technology.

One of the obstacles that I did face with using technology for the second half of the semester was trying to gather some of my colleagues together for specific projects. Another obstacle of using technology was that sometimes during the group meetings, we would have to change to FaceTime due to having difficulties with Zoom. Sometimes, the video chat would freeze and everyone in the group would have to call again. However, using the Zoom platform was a major learning experience which has prepared me for the events in which I would need to use technology to provide therapy and other mental health services.