

## Group Therapy Self-Evaluation

### *Ethical Issue:*

One of the ethical issues that surfaced during my therapy session is the concept of dating within the therapy group. I tried to address this issue in the session, but I could have handled it a bit better. She asked if it was a problem to date someone within the therapy session and I should have discussed more of how it would be a problem. I should have notified her that dating while in therapy could cause confusion with your emotions as well as the other person in therapy. It could be a distraction to the other members in therapy, and it could be used as a crutch to avoid your own feelings and problem you are facing. Without facing our emotions in therapy sessions, we are unable to process those emotions, therefore we are unable to move on from the trauma. Although I could not force her not to date someone in the therapy group, I could have laid out ground rules and discussed how there should be no romantic or physical contact in the group sessions in order to avoid distracting the other group members from their goals.

Dating in therapy groups can be an ethical issue since it could possibly be a hindrance to the progress of the group members. It could also be an issue if the trauma experienced by some in the therapy group was related to dating. Group members dating in the therapy group could possibly bring up triggers for someone who experienced trauma within dating, which could cause more issues. I know that in substance abuse therapy groups dating is prohibited but was unsure if it was prohibited in trauma groups. Although it may not be prohibited, it should be emphasized that it is largely discouraged.

### *Reflection on my Growth and Performance as an Advanced Autonomy Practitioner:*

I still feel that I have some difficulty deepening the focus and discussing emotions in therapy sessions. I am very good at keeping things positive, but that can be a hindrance sometimes when trying to get down to the very deep, negative emotions someone is experiencing. Although I have a problem leading people down the dark into their deeper emotions, I can empathize very easily with people and use my basic therapy skills such as active listening, reflecting, etc. In my personal life, I have always struggled discussing things in groups of people. But over the semester, I have been able to push through that anxiety and am able to open up and engage with multiple people at once. I have grown more confident in my skills as a practitioner and I am able to impart information that is needed for my clients. I personally still prefer one-on-one therapy and feel I am stronger in that area, but I have made progress over this semester.

I hope to strengthen my role as an advanced autonomous practitioner by continuing to practice group therapy sessions. I will maintain and grow my group facilitation skills in the future by participating as a facilitator in a therapy group as I am able. I am still unsure of where I will end up working, but most places can benefit from some sort of group therapy. If not, I could always start up a group at my church that can help with different issues that are needed. But overall, I hope to become a stronger advanced autonomy practitioner through experience. I plan

to work in a mental health setting, which will allow me to provide therapy and strengthen my skills over time. I will not allow my mistakes to hinder me, but rather will learn from them in order to become a well-rounded therapist.

*Reflection on my Experience Using Technology in the Second Half of the Semester*

Honestly, using technology the second half of the semester was not as difficult as I thought it would be. A lot of school work and lessons are technology based as it is, therefore it was not as big of a change as it could have been. I did have some difficulty with keeping track of assignments and trying to check multiple different platforms (i.e. email, Eclass, Southern website, etc.), but overall, it was not too bad. It fit in with my schedule a little better as well, since I was able to watch lectures and such between my work schedule. I actually work in a doctors office, so getting involved with telehealth services has opened my eyes to some new experiences as well. It has revolutionized the way practitioners provide health services, and I can see how it can benefit a lot more patients, since we tend to have an issue with many patients not having stable transportation options. I can see how it will be beneficial to mental health services as well, for the same reasons.

Personally, I like online better because I have some anxiety in groups of people and the online platform helped ease some of that. There were some complications such as not being able to dyads, and I was unable to do an exercise that I had been prepared for previously in this therapy session due to being on Zoom. I also had some complications when my group and I were trying to do all our videos together and had to end the meeting on Zoom in order to download the recording then re-invite everyone back into the meeting. But one of the major benefits of being online was that it was so much easier to find people to participate in the group therapy session, since they could be involved from home. That made all of it completely worth it.