**Module 1: Group Therapy Dilemma**

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*Instructions: After completing the readings from Module 1, review the following case study and answer the questions below by applying the concepts from your readings and lecture this week.*

Case Study: Allie

Allie recently graduated with a master’s degree in social work. She is taking a new job at the Veterans’ Center and has been asked by her new boss to present the different kinds of groups that could be run. The supervisor and LCSW would like to offer several different kinds of groups to serve the veterans better, but he is not sure what those groups should be. Allie has said she would develop a list of different kinds of groups the center could offer. In a discussion with Allie, the supervisor told her he is not sure the counselors and social workers at the center have what it takes to be good group leaders. Allie says she can find a list of leadership characteristics and qualifications. She, too, is concerned about some of the counselors at the center. Some of the therapists have said to her that groups are a waste of time and have no value other than a place for folks to socialize. Allie loved her group counseling course and feels that groups can be a great addition to the Veterans’ Center.

The supervisor also said he was concerned about people leading groups who need more training. He asks Allie to investigate the ethics of asking ill-prepared leaders to conduct groups.

1. Share specific leadership characteristics and qualities that would be needed from the group leaders at the Veterans' Center. Be specific and support your rationale with information from your readings and lecture.

According to the ASGW, the leader should have cultural sensitivity toward veterans and their diverse backgrounds. The leader should believe that group work has the ability to make a difference in the lives of the group. Similarly, they need a wide knowledge of the topics and skills needed for the clients’ specific needs. The group leader must set the tone for the group and be a cheerleader for the program. If the people at Allie’s job do not believe in groups, they would make terrible leaders. Their lack of interest would plague the entire enterprise.

1. Discuss the ethical considerations surrounding asking “ill-prepared leaders” to conduct groups. Share at least one ethical principle that should guide the selection and training of group leaders, particularly in a therapeutic setting.

As discussed prior, an ill-prepared leader can make the entire event useless. The leader must provide guidance and expertise for the participants in the group. They should have an obligation to continued education and research-informed practice relating to their clients’ needs. Selection of leaders should be based on overall competency, cultural competency, and research-informed practice. Clinicians are supposed to provide expertise to individuals. If they are uninformed, they are not going to be able to share necessary information with clients.

1. What recommendations could be made to Allie on how to address the concerns raised by the supervisor and the counselors and advocate for group therapy at the Veterans' Center? Support your points with the readings and cite your sources.

She should ensure that each group leader receive education related to group work. She needs to evaluate the education and experience of those in her organization and determine who could use professional development to prepare for group work. She needs to undergo an ecological assessment of the needs of her agency to prepare for the group. By assessing needs, she will have a better idea of who would be capable of addressing specific issues.

<https://eclass.e.southern.edu/pluginfile.php/2010962/mod_resource/content/0/ASGW-Guiding-Principles-May-2021.pdf>

<https://eclass.e.southern.edu/pluginfile.php/2010960/mod_resource/content/0/Why%20Study%20Group%20Therapy.pdf>