The APA Convention in New Orleans proceeded without any major glitches to my knowledge. The attendance appeared to be down somewhat for Division 49 and as a whole. However, I felt that our Board of Directors and Business meetings went well. Our Social event, which featured a New Orleans menu, was especially well received and I am grateful to Dr. Robert Kaltenbach and his wife, Mary, who made all of the arrangements and with my wife, Lola, also served refreshments during the social.

The Program Committee, chaired by Dr. Jennifer Harp, produced a varied and professionally challenging program that was well received. The Board and Division are indebted to Dr. Harp for her successful program. One of the highlights of the program was the presentation by the co-recipients of the Arthur Teicher Group Psychologist of the Year Award, Drs. Addie Fuhrman and Gary Burlingame. They reviewed their own research and theoretical contributors and those of their students and related their discoveries to the increased understanding of group process and outcome. Dr. Sally Barlow, a member of the Board of Directors and former student of Dr. Fuhrman, presented the Award to Drs. Fuhrman and Burlingame.

Recognition Awards were announced and/or presented to Past President Dr. Steve Sobelman, retiring Journal Editor Dr. Dennis Kivlighan, Jr., retiring Associate Editors Drs. Glenn Littlepage and Craig Parks; retiring Board of Director’s member Dr. Jennifer Harp; Dissertation Award recipient Dr. Floortje Rints, and gavel presentation to incoming President Dr. Lynn Rapin.

Inasmuch as this column will be my last opportunity to communicate with Division 49 membership as your President, I shall briefly review some accomplishments of the officers and Board of Directors of Division 49 during 2006: Under the able chair of Dr. Andy Horne, the Editor Search Committee of Drs. Gary Burlingame, Don Forsyth, and Steve Sobelman nominated Dr. Craig D. Parks of Washington State University and current Associate Editor, to be the new Editor of the journal Group Dynamics. The Board of Directors approved the nomination and Dr. Parks will begin as Editor on January 1, 2007.

The Board of Directors approved of the re-institution of special or theme issues of the journal to begin with a theme topic that I recommended: Group Dynamics in Education. Dr. Zipora Shechtman, Chair of the Research Committee, is currently preparing this special issue to be published in 2007.

Dr. Jennifer Harp, Chair of the Bylaws Revision Committee, continues to lead the Board in revising the bylaws that should be completed during the 2007 Midwinter Board of Director’s meeting. Dr. Eric Chen is presently preparing an action plan on Diversity for Board action at the Midwinter Board meeting. Billy Yarborough, our Student Committee Chair, is preparing an action plan for the Division to involve and recruit student members. All Division 49 standing and ad hoc committees have been requested to provide progress reports on their committee functioning during Convention and Midwinter Board meetings.

A Policy Manual that I proposed to guide future officers and boards is being developed and a preliminary draft is to be ready for the

(Continued on page 4)
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The oversized umbrella lay unused and fallow in its waiting room stand for more years than I can recollect. Its color was once a bright purple, now faded by time. I had placed the umbrella receptacle there for the obvious function. Mostly, it was seldom utilized; wet umbrellas were usually put elsewhere. At some point I deposited my purple umbrella in the heretofore vacant cylinder. On this particular group psychotherapy night and the one following the next week, the aged purple protector would have much significance.

Stacey, a short, petite, attractive woman in her late 40’s had been in her group for several years. She was struggling in a joyless, depriving two-and-a-half-decade marriage, and was usually quite self-deprecating with her reluctance to leave her emotionally disengaged but brilliant husband who regularly demeaned and bullied her. The recent departure of her disengaged but brilliant husband who regularly followed by the next week’s group session. When the group ended, I went into the waiting room to shut the lights, and group members traversed the steep driveway from their parked cars on the street. On this particular evening, a violent thunderstorm erupted with about twenty minutes to go in the session. The rain fell loudly; the sound on the skylights underscored the already passionate mood of the group session which centered on the theme of the painful, unrequited need for protection from parents, marital partners, and others, including the group therapist. In the very last few minutes, the value of the group was being questioned. At that point, the din of the storm necessitated members to literally shout to be heard, and the last minute was spent in silence. As the group ended and the torrential downpour with lightening and thunder continued, I suggested to group members that they feel free to linger in the waiting room until they felt safe enough to go to their cars.

The following scenario unfolded after the group, it was unknown to me until I had several individual sessions with group members followed by the next week’s group session. When the group ended, all group members, with the exception of Stacey, had their own umbrellas. Stacey had brought no protection from the elements. Stacey, long enamored with Stacey, offered to share his tiny umbrella with her until he spotted the purple shield in its usual spot near the waiting room exit. Sam urged Stacey to take the long idle umbrella. Two other group members chimed in with their own encouragement. Stacey hesitated, Sam persisted, and she relented, still full of doubt. Stacey and Sam walked down the driveway, with Sam holding the huge umbrella over both of them, the two of them snuggling close. The storm raged, a bolt of lightening terrified Sam as he left Stacey with the now useful umbrella, and he scampered under his own umbrella to his car.

In lieu of immediately returning to her arid and distasteful home, Stacey elected to visit her friend and past lover. While there, and during an intimate several hours together, her friend’s dog chewed the handle of my ancient umbrella. Stacey then took the damaged umbrella home with her, feeling guilty about the damage, but also aware of a sense of safety and serenity as she reentered her unhappy home, umbrella in hand.

Stacey returned my umbrella when she came for her next weekly individual session; she sheepishly told me all that had occurred, insisted on buying me a new umbrella, sharing the cost with her friend. In the following group session, she again narrated the events of the previous group evening, and spoke of the soothing presence of the umbrella. She also expressed her gratitude for the support group members had given her during and after the group session, and indicated her dread of returning home that night to her disgruntled, bitter spouse. She anticipated a sleepless night, filled with isolation and agitation. Then several group members advocated for her taking the umbrella with her after the group for company and reassurance, one member saying she had really purchased the umbrella by intending to replace it. Following that, a few group members spoke of how the group’s support and that of the leader had helped them to make significant changes. After the group’s departure, I went into the waiting room to shut the lights, and the purple protector was gone again.

There are so many ways to wonder about the multiple meanings of the group therapist’s purple umbrella for Stacey, the group, and the group leader. (What have you formulated as you have read this narrative?) There are likely questions to raise as to how I responded to all that transpired with Stacey, the group, and the umbrella. What seems most important to me in this vignette is what the group space signifies for our group members. There is magic and wonder and terror in the middle of the group circle and with all that surrounds it.

Oh, the purple umbrella and its still handsome new replacement were in the cylinder after the ending of the following group. The two storm protectors lie side by side. I wonder when one or both might be called into use again.

Readers are welcome to comment on this and any other article in the newsletter. Any suggestions for new, creative features in TGP would be most appreciated.
President's Column

(Continued from p. 1)

Midwinter Board meeting in January of 2007. The Treasurer was charged with preparing an Annual Budget for the Division in accordance with bylaws and the proposed budget was presented during the Board meeting at the New Orleans Convention. For the first time, the Division’s treasury is showing a small surplus. This achievement can be attributed primarily to the income produced from the Journal. Membership is still on a slight decline, but plans are underway to invest funds from a tight budget to improve recruitment and retention of members.

The Division is now proudly represented on the Committee on Division/APA Relations (CODAPAR) by the selection of Dr. Allan Elfant from our Board of Directors.

The history of the Division has been completed (see Part III in this newsletter) updating the earlier work of Dr. Michael Andronico.

The Board welcomes the newly elected members, whose terms begin in January, 2007: Dr. Donelson Forsyth, President-elect; Dr. Josh Gross, re-elected to Member-at-Large of the Board and Dr. Michael Andronico, elected once again to the Board as Member-at-Large.

Space does not permit a complete review of Division activities during 2006, but let me assure you that your officers and Board of Directors are a conscientious group of professionals who give much of themselves to the profession on your behalf. I am proud to have served with them for you, the members of Division 49, during my Presidential year. I also thank you for your support and for the opportunity to serve you and the profession. I invite the members of Division 49 to volunteer for committee assignments and to offer to be a candidate for office in the Division.

President-Elect’s Column

Lynn Rapin, PhD

As President-Elect I have several responsibilities: to plan for the governance of the Division for the year 2007; to ensure that initiatives in-process are given proper time and attention in our major business meeting in January, 2007 and beyond; and to plan for future initiatives. I would like to comment about each of these responsibilities.

To maintain an active, viable Division, the Board has devoted considerable attention to finances over the last several years. As you are reading the newsletter, you will see that the Division is now profitable. The Division has paid APA for its seed funds and this year the journal is bringing in profits for the first time. This is a very significant turning point for the division in that the revenues generated through paper and electronic sales will provide for more services to members. Board costs for business meetings have remained fairly constant over the last several years, and the Board plans to continue its fiscally conservative stance in conducting its business. It is good to have our business side in order.

The Board has been working on our Division Policies and Procedures over the past year, and that work will continue in 2007. Jennifer Harp has done yeoman’s service in guiding us in this important, but sometimes tedious, task. Usable policies and procedures will assist current and future officers and committees in their roles. Some of the Division committees are adequately staffed and running well. Others are committees in name only. We are examining the functional use of all of our committees. We need your contributions, ideas, volunteer time and energy to make the work of the Division successful. If you have interest in serving in any volunteer capacity, please contact any Board member.

As important as is the governance of the Division is the vision of the Division. Perhaps more important than our fiscal health is how we educate others about the role of group work in psychological practice. I think we need to do a better job in talking beyond our own comfort zone. We have stimulating dialogue with ourselves. We need to have the dialogues with others. I think that if we work on providing psychologists and other mental health professionals information on the importance of the group work they do in the course of their normal work, more people will be interested in the Division. If we engage other APA Divisions and other professional associations in talking and sharing ideas about group work, more people may be interested in the Division. If we make a commitment to bring more students along to Division functions, continue to encourage and promote their involvement in program presentations, and give them active roles in governance, we may bring a next generation of leaders to the Division. If we do not take a very active role in developing future members of the Division, we will slowly fade away. As you will read in the Membership Report, we are an aging group. We must involve more and younger professionals and to do this we have to engage them in discussions about group work.

I have committed my presidential time to do the advance planning for a summit on group work. A small group of volunteers was generated during our meeting in August. If YOU are interested in helping to plan the summit, please contact me. The working group will contact other APA Divisions and other professional associations (e.g., ASGW and AGPA) to enlist their involvement. We already have active co-sponsorship with ASGW. We need to identify who should be involved, what the critical questions and topics about group psychology and group psychotherapy, counseling, and related professions are and which ones can be addressed in a summit. I am excited about the potential of such an effort and I hope you will be also. The Board and I will keep you posted on our planning progress via this newsletter, the Division Listserv, and the website.
Secretary's Report

New Orleans
August 2006
8:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Present: Lynn Rapin, PhD, President-Elect; George Gazda, EdD, President; John Dagley, PhD; Treasurer; Dennis Kivlighan, PhD; Journal Editor; Joseph Kobos, PhD, Council Representative; Allan Elfant, PhD, Member-at-Large; Newsletter Editor; Gloria Gottsegen, PhD, Member-at-Large, Fellows Chair; Jennifer Harp, PhD, Member-at-Large; Conference Program Chair; By-Laws Revisions; Sally Barlow, PhD, Member-at-Large; Liaison to CoS; Education and Training Chair; Joshua Gross, PhD, Member-at-Large; Membership Chair; ABGP Liaison; Billy Yarbrough, Student Representative; Robert Kaltenbach, PhD; Social Chairman.

Absent: Janice DeLucia-Waack, PhD, Secretary; Zipora Shechtman, PhD; Member-at-Large

President’s Welcome, Introductions, Announcements from Dr. George Gazda.

Policy & Co-Director, Congressional Fellowship Directorate: Ellen Garrison, Executive Director for Public Interest discussed opportunities for psychologists in federal policy making were discussed: congressional fellow, mental health policy fellow, practice directorate fellows, and advocacy training programs. A session was held at APA with current fellows.

Practice Directorate: Dr. Lynn Bufka & Elizabeth Winkelman highlighted recent activities:

1. Defeat of HIMMA act
2. FL reimbursement for health & behavior codes
3. 6 states working on prescription privileges
4. Center for professional development on website
5. Healthy mind/body campaign
6. Psychologically healthy workplaces awards
7. Task forces on licensure, psychopharmacology, and paper performance issues.

Minutes: Minutes from the Mid-Winter board meeting in DC were distributed and unanimously approved with minor changes.

Treasurer’s Report from Dr. John Dagley: Treasurers’ report was distributed and unanimously accepted. We will now have a tentative budget that APA will work with us to set. Our membership has declined slightly but our revenue stream has also increased slightly due to journal revenue. A budget was proposed for next year.

President-Elect’s Comments, Dr. Lynn Rapin: Discussion of plans for the calendar year 2007 major initiative of planning for a group summit. She introduced a planning committee and received volunteer names for participation. She discussed with the Board relevant APA Divisions with whom to collaborate and other professional associations with whom to plan for the summit. APGA and ASGW are currently interested in the joint planning.

Convention Social from Dr. Bob Kaltenbach: The party is tonight from 6 to 9 p.m. It will be catered by a local place.

APA Council Report by Dr. Joseph Kobos: The ethical issues of providing crisis services as a psychologist have been raised. Dr. Kobos’ term is ending and he will not run for another term on the APA Council. A call for nominations for the Spring election is in order.

ABPP by Dr. Allan Elfant: A report was given. We have 42 ABPP specialists in group, with 5 current candidates. Dr. Gross is the exam coordinator.

Nominations and Elections by Dr. George Gazda: Dr. Donelson Forysth has been elected President-elect; Dr. Josh Gross and Dr. Michael Andronico, Members-at-Large to begin their terms in January, 2008.

Journal by Dr. Dennis Kivlighan: A report was given. Craig Parks, the current associate editor, is the new editor. Will and Gayle from the APA Publications staff discussed the transition process to the new editor as well as the transition to the electronic portal for submission of manuscripts. A new editor is a key term in marketing the journal. Two persons at APA are now responsible for marketing.

Newsletter by Dr. Allan Elfant: Dr. Elfant is enjoying being newsletter editor, and is gratified by the significant contributions. Group presentations at APA are now being featured in the newsletter. Feedback and suggestions about special topics are welcomed.

Website and Listserv: It was noted that the By-laws are not coming up there.

Awards by Dr. George Gazda: A report was submitted by the Dissertation Awards Committee. The Dissertation Award was given to Dr. Floortje Rints. Recognition Awards were given to Past President, Dr. Steve Sobelman; retiring journal editor, Dr. Dennis Kivlighan, Jr., retiring Associate Editors, Drs. Glenn Littlepage and Craig Parks; and retiring Board of Directors Member-at-Large, Jennifer Harp. The gavel was presented to incoming President, Dr. Lynn Rapin.

Program Committee Report by Dr. Jennifer Harp: A report was given. The Program Committee was acknowledged (Jennifer Harp
Secretary's Report

(Continued from p. 5)

(chair), Jeanmarie Keim (co-chair), Janice DeLucia Waack, Allan Elfant, Josh Gross) for their work in bringing together a solid program for APA. Twenty-five sessions are scheduled for the convention including posters within our poster session. The final Division 49 program was submitted to The Group Psychologist, the newsletter of Division 49, and printed in the Convention Issue that was distributed to members in July 2006. A copy of the Division 49 Convention Program was also posted on the Division 49 website.

Fellows by Dr. Gloria Gottsegen: A report was submitted. Two new fellows were accepted by APA and one current fellow as well. Dr. Gottsegen will contact the 41 current members of Division 49 who are already fellows in APA about their desire to be a fellow in Division 49. A call for nominations will be in the newsletter.

Membership and Recruitment by Dr. Joshua Gross: A report was given. We currently have 598 members with a mean age of 62. Less than 5% is under 45. The goal is to recruit more members particularly those new to the profession with an interest in group work.

Research: Dr. Zipora Shechtman, chair of the Research Committee, is also serving as guest editor of the journal entitled “Group Dynamics in Education” recommended by President Dr. George Gazda.

Diversity: A complete report will be provided at the mid-winter meeting.

Graduate Students by Billy Yarbrough: A report was given. The committee will establish a listserv, feature a student in each newsletter, recognize students as outstanding at APA, and identify internships that offer experiences in group work.

Bylaws by Dr. Jennifer Harp: A report was given. An outline of the committee’s work and progress since January 2005 was presented and reviewed. The outcome of the Spring online discussions was also presented. Point of discussion included the identification of areas where further Board input and discussion is needed, especially related to the status of committees and questions around philosophical considerations and current compliance with existing bylaws. Tentative plans for a discussion approach were made for the January Board meeting.

Mid-Winter Meeting: Location and Dates: It was decided that the mid-Winter meeting would be the weekend of January 14th, 2007 in DC.

Policy Manual: A preliminary draft will be presented at the mid-winter meeting.

Meeting Adjourned, 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice DeLucia-Waack, PhD
Division 49 Secretary

Treasurer’s Report

John Dagley, PhD

Thanks to the recent infusion of revenue from the annual sale and electronic licensing income of our journal, Group Dynamics: Theory, Research and Practice, our division’s financial picture is relatively strong. Our journal editors, past and present, are due much credit for their diligence and effectiveness in creating and nurturing what has become a highly respected and profitable scholarly publication. Evidence of the Journal’s value is reflected not only in various citation indexes but also in the revenue stream itself, in that, part of the electronic income is directly tied to access and use.

In a similar vein, we are also indebted to the past and present editors of our Newsletter, The Group Psychologist. While its impact on our revenue picture is less direct and identifiable, it nevertheless represents one of the more tangible services we provide our membership. Over the years, as its quality has continued an upward trajectory, it has become one of our more recognizable contributions to the discipline, thus, indirectly impacting membership.

Expenses vary somewhat in mid-year comparisons because of billing dates and the timing of various divisional activities, but at present the mid-year financials show a current surplus of approximately $10,000; this does not include a recently received revenue check for approximately $15,000. Specific expense categories, such as the Newsletter, may range widely from year-to-year depending on the number of issues as well as the size of the issues. As for highlights, it is important to note that travel and meeting expenses at this point in the year are down significantly from previous years. Fiscally responsible leadership is critically important to a small-revenue organization. To date we have benefited from years of this type of effective leadership.

Unfortunately, we have experienced a slight decline of 4% in membership revenue from comparison figures of June 2005. Because membership dues have been a main source of income, any drop should be of some concern to us, so it’s important that we renew our efforts to provide quality service to our members, and to trumpet the personal and professional value of membership with more aggressive and effective marketing.

Newsletter Deadlines

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APA Council Report

APA Convention Meeting
August 8–15, 2006

Joseph C. Kobos, PhD, ABPP

Psychologists returned to New Orleans with mixed emotions. Some were concerned that the city might not yet be prepared to host our large meeting. Some voiced worries about health issues. When the Convention was concluded most were pleased that the Association followed through with the original plan to meet there. To be sure, the city carries the scars of the devastation that came with the hurricane and the breaking of the levees. But the people in the hotels, restaurants and taxi cab drivers were very pleased to see us and urged us to tell our friends that NOLA was reviving and they wanted people to know that the recovery was in process.

APA did several things to assist in the recovery process, the most important of which was deciding to go forth with the meeting. A campaign was organized to have people donate school supplies since school was in the process of starting and one never has enough pens, pencils, crayons and other supplies. Two large entertainment events were also organized to generate money for contributions to the effort. Both the Preservation Hall Jazz concert and an evening with Bill Cosby were very well attended and were thoroughly enjoyable. Our Association can be proud of its efforts in meeting in New Orleans. For those who measure outcomes with numbers, the total attendance at the meetings was approximately 9,500. This compares very favorably with the last meeting in NO and also the SARS meeting in Toronto a couple of years ago. The association budgeted for 9,200 participants and met this mark and likely more by the end of the meeting.

Council meets for 7 hours on Wednesday and 3 hours on Sunday. Almost four hours of our time together were spent focusing on issues related to terrorism and the role of psychologist in interrogations. Leading up to the convention there was an ongoing debate about the role of psychologists in participating in interrogations in Guantanomo and other settings. Many of you may have seen the debate enter into the public media. Many issues are interwoven into all of our concerns about our military involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world. Interjected into all of our discussion about interrogations was the situation in London where 22 people were arrested and airline travel across the world was disrupted.

Those of you who have been active in doctoral, internship and post doctoral education will be saddened to learn that Paul Nelson is retiring from APA after 24 years. He has helped to shape all or most of the current education policy in some form or the other over the past three decades. He will be missed. I wish him well in his retirement.

Look to see major design changes to the APA web site in the months ahead. Consultants have been retained and the process has begun to develop a more unitary look with a more user friendly style.

Congratulations to Drs. Virginia Brabender of Pennsylvania and Susan Gantt of Georgia on being elected to Fellow status in the Division. We are most proud of their continuing contributions to the practice of group interventions.

The following material is an edited summary of the actions of Council. This summary was prepared by Rhea Farbermann of APA and edited by me. The complexity of the issues is best served by offering my report in this format.

The APA Council of Representatives deliberated the issue of the role of psychologists in national security interrogations.

As it has in its last two meetings, the APA Council devoted considerable time to discussion of the ethics of psychologists’ involvement in national security interrogations. Lt. General Kevin C. Kiley, Surgeon General of the U.S. Army, spoke about the work of psychologists in consulting to interrogation teams at the U.S. Navel Station at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Kiley emphasized his belief that military psychologists are able to do their jobs and adhere to the APA ethics code. Dr. Steven Reisner, a senior faculty member at Columbia University’s International Trauma Studies Program, also spoke, expressing his belief that psychologists should not be present in any capacity at Guantanamo or places like it.

The Council also received an update on the continuing work of the APA Ethics Committee concerning the ethics of psychologists’ role in national security investigations from Dr. Olivia Moorehead-Slaughter, chair of the committee. The committee is beginning work on a commentary/casebook which will address how to define such terms as cruel and degrading.

In separate action, Council adopted a resolution affirming the organization’s absolute opposition to all forms of torture and abuse. The resolution also reiterated psychologists’ duty to intervene to attempt to stop acts of torture and abuse as well as the obligation to report any instances of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. The resolution also affirmed the centrality of United Nations human rights documents and conventions to APA policy.

Council also requested that APA President, Dr. Gerald Koocher, write a letter on behalf of the Council to all military psychologists and those working in the National Guard and Veterans Administration commending them for their many significant contributions and sacrifices.

(Continued on page 8)
Council also:

Adopted Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major. The guidelines provide support to academic departments by describing a set of learning goals and outcomes for the undergraduate psychology major designed to improve the quality of learning and teaching in psychology. APA’s Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) Task Force on Undergraduate Psychology Major Competencies drafted the guidelines. The guidelines (www.apa.org/ed/resources.html) address development of competencies in students seeking entrance to graduate or professional schools, as well as those entering the labor force. The task force also developed a companion resource on effective assessment strategies for the competencies called the “Assessment Cyberguide.” The guide is available online at www.apa.org/ed/guidehomepage.html.

Adopted the report of the APA Working Group on Psychotropic Medications for Children and Adolescents. The report cites an urgent need for improved access to evidence based mental health care for children and adolescents and identifies serious gaps in the knowledge base for treatment of young people with mental health disorders. (A press release and full text of the report will be available the second week in September at http://www.apa.org/releases/)

Adopted the report of the APA Zero Tolerance Task Force. The task force reviewed 10 years of research on zero tolerance policies in schools and found that they did not have the desired effect of reducing violence and disruption and in some instances can actually increase disruptive behavior and drop-out rates. The report recommends that zero tolerance polices not be abandoned but that teachers and school administrators be given more flexibility in the implementation of disciplinary actions.

Adopted the report of the APA Task Force on Socioeconomic Status and established a Continuing Committee on Socioeconomic Status. The Committee will look at the effects of socioeconomic status on psychological development and well-being.

The Council took two actions concerning the accreditation of programs in professional psychology. The first item adopted as changes to the Association rules the recommendations of the June 2005 Summit on Accreditation. The item included changing the name of the Committee on Accreditation to the Commission on Accreditation and adding to the membership of that body. The membership changes include additional seats for internship programs, postdoctoral residency programs, a diversity seat, as well the inclusion of open seats. Further, these changes highlight the continued efforts of the Committee/Commission for the inclusion of individual and cultural diversity in all aspects of the accreditation process. The second action deleted a clause in the Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation allowing for doctoral accreditation in “emerging substantive areas” and set forward a mechanism that allows for “developed practice areas” to be added to the scope of accreditation for doctoral programs.

Additionally, Council passed the association’s 2007 budget that included reauthorization of the Association’s public education campaign, modified the eight-year dues ramp-up schedule for early career members and increased the members’ journal credit to $55. Dues for 2007 will be $270 for full members (dues increases are based on the consumer price index) and $50 for APAGS members.

And, the Council passed an action item restructuring the Membership Committee into a Membership Board and creating a separate Fellows Committee reporting to the new Membership Board. This action requires a change in the association’s Bylaws. The Bylaw amendment will be sent to the full membership for a vote in early November. If approved, the Membership Board will begin seating members in January of 2008.

CALL FOR 2007 DIVISION 49 FELLOW NOMINATIONS

The Fellows Committee invites you to apply for initial Fellow status if you:

1. have held a doctoral degree in psychology for at least five years,
2. have been a member of the Division for at least one year,
3. have made an outstanding and documented contribution to the science, teaching and/or research of group psychology and/or the practice of group psychotherapy,
4. are endorsed by three APA Fellows, including two Fellows within the Division, if possible.

Current Fellows, who are already Fellows in other divisions, and who seek Fellow status in Division 49 should submit a statement outlining their involvement in group psychology and/or group psychotherapy.

Please send for your application forms early since the process is a lengthy one. The deadline for final submission of materials for 2006–2007 is December 1, 2006.

Requests for application forms should be sent to:
Gloria B. Gottsegen, PhD
Chair, Fellows Committee, Division 49
22701 Meridiana Drive
Boca Raton, FL 33433
561/393-1266    Fax: 561/393-2823
E-mail: GGottsegen@aol.com
Part III of the History of Division 49

George M. Gazda, EdD

Yearly Highlights from 1993–2006
Division 49 initiated the use of the hospitality suite at the APA convention in Toronto which gave the division two full days for committee meetings, additional programs, and a more informal social hour. An intensive membership drive was led by Richard Mikesell, a consultant. He was given an award of recognition at the business membership meeting during the 1994 APA convention. President Joseph Kobos, who followed Arthur Teicher, the division’s first president, stated that “My major responsibilities included putting some structure on the new division and dealing with the APA bureaucracy” (J. Kobos, personal communication, 2005). Putting structure on the division included submitting the initial bylaws to the APA and developing the early slate of elected officers. It was in 1995 Division 49 received permanent division status. Several other initiatives were pursued during President Kobos’ tenure including development of a journal and pursuing the Diplomate in Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy through the American Board of Professional Psychology. Kobos continues to serve the division as its APA Council Representative.

During Morris Goodman’s presidency in 1994, he came up with a working principle for the journal that was approved. Goodman proposed that each clinical article would be commented on by a researcher with possible suggestions about how to study the clinical concepts within the article. The same would be true for research articles where clinical applications would be suggested. (These principles were applied to the lead articles in each of the four issues published in 1997, but the policy has not been continued consistently.) President Goodman also continued to pursue long-term projects and especially the development of committees.

Michael Andronico was president in 1995 and it was the year that the contract for Division 49 journal was signed with APA as publisher and the editor and his associate editors were approved. The title of the journal was also decided: Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice. The editor was Donelson Forsyth and associate editors were Gary Burlingame and Kipling Williams. The first Division 49 Membership Directory was published with David Kipper as editor. During his presidency Andronico (1995a, as cited in Andronico, 1999) emphasized as the main thrust of the division to expand the scope of the division beyond making APA aware of the value of groups “to include ‘cultural diversity of groups,’ both in a variety of theoretical orientations and a variety of environments such as academic, clinical, industrial, and political” (Andronico, 1999, p. 192).

According to Andronico (1995b, as cited in Andronico, 1999,) the future holds promise for the application of clinical practice to groups. A comprehensive model of group practice would involve a combination of psychoeducational groups; time limited groups and on-going psychotherapy groups. (Andronico, 1999, p. 192).

In 1996 John Borriello assumed the presidency. He noted the change in psychological theory and practice and urged division members to re-examine practices in light of new knowledge. He had made a concerted effort to recruit social psychologists for division membership and to recruit a group dynamics expert to be the journal editor for Division 49. As chair of the convention program for Division 49, Borriello called for papers focused on small, large, and intergroup dynamics; team building; and group therapy. He received papers and programs on self-help, support, therapeutic, team building, psychosocial, behavioral–cognitive, change-agent, systems-centered, and prevention groups.

Borriello stressed the need for more research evidence to support theory and practice, the need to set boundaries and define group psychotherapy more succinctly. Borriello also warned the division about the dangers of a closed system if new members were not recruited to the Board of Directors. He also challenged the division to recruit more members from the group psychology/group dynamics component of the division.

Allan Elfant was president during 1997. Elfant described the division as at a crossroads during his administration. He focused on helping the two major professional groups that composed the division, the clinicians who practiced group psychotherapy, and the academicians and researchers of group dynamics, to air their differences and use the potency of group process to resolve any differences which would impede the development of the power of groups of various kinds to benefit society. Judith Tellerman became the Newsletter Editor during Elfant’s presidency and held the position through 2002. Elfant continues to serve the division as a Member-at-Large of the division and as newsletter editor since July of 2005.

David Kipper followed Allan Elfant as president in 1998. In a personal communication (March 31, 2006), Kipper wrote: “In general, during the period [his presidency] we solidified the division as an orderly group. We created a professionally sounding Bylaws, we created a Directory, we created professional subcommittees (SIGs) and, in my urging, we decided to give more (and different) awards to group psychologists, e.g., past presidents, young researchers for outstanding doctoral dissertations (Moreland has been in charge of this.) During that period [his presidency] we also pushed for the publications of the journal.” It should be noted that Kipper was the editor of and produced the first and only Directory of Members.

The 1999 president was Richard Moreland, the first non-group psychotherapist, to be elected as president. He proposed that the division had the options of becoming an activist organization that could, through lobbying and public education, provide benefits for group psychotherapists in order to retain their interest and membership in the division. Or, the division could become the “home” for professionals of all kinds including therapists, researchers, academicians, and as such serve as a kind of “clearinghouse” for group workers. Moreland advised that should either option be chosen it would require a division much different from that which existed in 1999.

(Continued on page 10)
In his Annual Report to APA, Moreland (1998) reported that thirteen members of Division 49 took and passed their ABPP exams the first group to do so for Division 49. Other firsts were the creation of a Division Webpage and work toward the development of a Division Listserv. A Continuing Education Workshop on group dynamics was developed by Dr. Eric Sundstrom for the APA Convention in Boston. Bylaws changes were proposed but not yet implemented. Several new Division Fellows were recommended and at least three were likely to be approved. Work on reviving the Research and Membership Committee was initiated.

The net worth of the division rose for the first time in several years and was approximately $64,000. The Division’s membership was about 1,000. No new chapters or sections of the Division were created. Improvements in the newsletter edited by Dr. Judith Tellerman and the division journal, edited by Dr. Donelson Forsyth were cited. Two features recommended by the Publications Committee for the newsletter were solicitation of book reviews and films produced by division members and a member’s corner where randomly selected division members describe their background and work with groups.

Rex Stockton was president in 2000. Although he was perhaps best known for his research on group process he was also an academician/teacher and practitioner. He was perhaps the first president to have focused his efforts on all components of the division’s purposes. Stockton stressed that because so much of group work’s credibility rested on the research findings to support its application, it was important for Division 49 to support the development of researchers of group work.

In 2001, Richard Wiegel became president. Wiegel had had a background in academe with his emphasis being on training and practice.

In the Division 49 Annual report to the APA, David Drum (2001) reported that two new initiatives were begun during 2001.

One important mission of Division 49 is to bring together psychologists who study and use groups in different ways; hence such linkages were encouraged through informal liaisons with the following groups: APA Divisions 8, 9, 12, 14, 17, 29, 35, 38, 39, 42, and 52; American Group Psychotherapy Association; Association for Specialists in Group Work; Association of Women Psychologists; Association of University & College Counseling Center Directors and American College Personnel Association.

During the Mid-Winter Division 49 Board of Directors meeting, the issue of the relationship between the Board and the chairmen of standing committees was reviewed. A motion was made and passed that starting with the Board that will assume leadership during the APA Convention in 2002, the chairperson of the Publications Committee will be elected from the Members-at-Large representatives on the Board.

Two issues fueled this decision. First, the financial condition of the Division continues to become worse and publications are a major expense. This makes it necessary that the chairs of the Finance and Publications Committees work together closely. Second, for the last two Board meetings, the journal editor was absent, and the newsletter editor announced that she will not be continuing in this role. The Board determined that the Publications Chair would be elected from the Members-at-Large and Don Forsyth was elected as the next chair of the Publications Committee. His term began during the August 2002 APA Convention.

Steve Sobelman became newsletter editor in 2003 and served until 2005 when he assumed the presidency and Allan Elfant became the newsletter editor.

Sally Barlow followed David Drum in 2003. In a personal communication (April 19, 2006), Barlow wrote: “Well, I was the first woman president, I got us on the Council of Specialists, and I worked to put front and center such issues as education and training including credentialing of specialists (CoS), pushing the ABPP for groups,” etc. It should be noted that Barlow continues to represent the division on the Council of Specialists and as a Member-at-Large on the Board of Directors.

President Arthur (Andy) Horne served from August 2004 to December 31, 2005. This was a longer period of serving as president because the Executive Board changed the bylaws so that officers would no longer serve from APA meeting to APA meeting, but would, instead, serve a calendar year. Since Andy was elected and began serving at the APA Convention in 2004, it would have been the shortest presidency (August–December) or an extended one (August, 2004–December 2005); the Board elected that it be a longer period. President Horne lists the following as accomplishments during his presidency (Horne, personal communication, 2006):

1. A new newsletter editor was selected, Steve Sobelman, and the Board worked with Steve to change the format and content of the newsletter. It was determined that it would be important to have...
the newsletter be more than a “stand at the recycle bin to read” document, and instead become more substantive and informative. This involved developing practitioner pieces that would be of relevance to group workers, research material developed by members, and information about “best practices.”

2. The journal, Group Dynamics, under the editorship of Dennis Kivlighan, continued to evolve into a leading journal in the field and also became fiscally beneficial to the Division. APA had provided start-up funds for the journal and during this period of time increased subscriptions by institutions and other subscribers helped the journal move close to self-sufficiency and toward providing income for the Division.

3. Under the leadership of the new treasurer, Susan Gantt, new fiscal policies were established that included an extensive review of budgeting procedures, budget management, and management of Board resources in a very fiscally responsible manner. There were significant savings realized in several categories, including convention, Winter Board meeting, and other avenues.

4. The division website was substantially reworked and modernized, under the leadership of the webmaster, Steve Sobelman. A member listserv was developed as well as a listserv for the officers of the division.

5. The Program Committee was reorganized and Allan Elfant became the Program Chair for two years, and added members to the Program Committee who would be available for a three year cycle, moving from beginning involvement to associate Chair, to Chair. The Program Committee worked with the Board to move toward a balance of convention programs that featured practitioner/applied group work, as well as theoretical and research programs. The Arthur Teicher Outstanding Group Psychologist of the Year Award was presented to Rex Stockton for his career-long contributions to research in group psychology and group psychotherapy.

6. Student representatives became closely involved with the program, with two students from Loyola University of Baltimore serving as ex-officio members of the Board.

Steve Sobelman’s presidency began on January 1, 2005, following the change in the date for assumption of officers by the Division’s Board of Directors from the August APA Convention to the calendar year. Steve offered the following as the Division’s accomplishments during his presidency:

1. Brought the division to a new level of technology:
   a. New website with secure online membership directory;
   b. Listserv technology for Board of Directors and membership
2. Created a foundation for a “group summit” with other professional organizations.
3. Initiated the task of a bylaws review.
4. Provided a responsible fiscal strategy.
5. Initiated graduate student participation in Mid-Winter and Annual Board Meetings.
6. Included graduate student participation in the newsletter. (Sobelman, personal communication, January 2006).
7. During Sobelman’s presidency, a special award was given to Dr. Richard Moreland for his numerous contributions to the division including the Graduation Student Dissertation Award presented annually by the division and refereed by Moreland. Sobelman also appointed Andy Horne to be the first Division Federal Advocacy Coordinator.

I (George Gazda) assumed the presidency on January 1, 2006 and chaired the Mid-Winter Board of Director’s meeting in Washington, DC. In the President’s column of this newsletter I outlined some of my and the Board’s objectives for 2006 and beyond. Immediate objectives include filling the position of Journal Editor for 2007 by getting someone on board by mid-2006. Increasing and retaining members was one of our highest priorities of the Membership Committee. Chair, Josh Gross, was charged to lead the division in this important task. Completing bylaws revision by the end of my presidency was a major goal. Developing a Division Policy Manual was initiated with the first draft to be completed by the end of 2006. Reinstating a feature for the journal, by including occasional theme issues, the first of which will be tentatively titled “Group Dynamics in Education,” was another of my initiatives. The Research Committee, chaired by Zipora Schechtman was charged to develop a theme issue and serve as guest editor. The committee was also charged to study the APA Presidential Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice report and recommend a course of action for Division 49. Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Committees that have been inactive have been activated with new chairs and charges. The Diversity Committee, chaired by Eric Chen has been charged to use the APA Diversity proposal to develop a division plan on enhancing diversity. The Student Committee has been charged to develop a program for students to be held in the Division suite in New Orleans and to contact training programs to encourage establishing local interest groups on group psychology and group psychotherapy.

Other continuing activities include expanding the divisions website and listserv, developing short-term and long-term budgets, increasing collaboration with sister associations, providing opportunities with members to obtain CEU’s during the APA Convention and on-line programs. Obviously, my objectives and the Board of Director’s objectives for 2006 are challenging but with group participation are obtainable.

References
A Perspective on Process-Oriented (Humanistic) and Experiential Group Therapy

Steven A. Sobelman, PhD
Past President, Division 49

At one point or another, those who teach (or have been taught) courses in group psychotherapy wrestle with the notion on how to interpret information on the efficacy of process-oriented (Humanistic) and experiential group therapies. How shall I lead my group? Do process-oriented groups provide better growth experiences for the members of the group? Should I provide simulated experiences in order for members of my group to “experience” their pain or joy, their resistances, their dependency features? As a group leader, what approach should I take? What makes me feel most comfortable? Whose needs are being met by what is being done?

For example, graduate students are intrigued with “touchy/feely” types of groups and group exercises (communication ice breakers, trust exercises, etc.). It seems to me that most prefer to know about these experiential exercises from an academic or intellectual perspective, while others are chomping at the bit to practice and experience the techniques in class. That is, until the student is paired with the class outlier for some sort of nonverbal exercise.

Other students are curious about process-oriented group psychotherapy, the stages of a process-oriented group (Corey, 2004), and what realistic expectations the leader might have for a successful outcome. As an aside, it is always interesting to note that graduate students never really define whether successful outcome is (1) associated with the patient/client experiencing relief or mitigation from the symptoms that brought that individual to the group or (2) whether the patient/client has a real prizing of the leader as an effective group therapist that accounts for the success of the group. For this, the instructor or group supervisor would be wise to explore issues related to counter transference.

And as the years of training and confidence in conducting groups increases, we feel much more comfortable with the knowledge that we have learned many of the “dos and don’ts” of group psychotherapy. For example, early on in my training I remember thinking that group psychotherapy was all about problem solving by having 5 or 6 heads/brains working together to solve the IP’s (identified patient) problem. I’d start my group by saying something like, “And who has a problem we can work on today?” Ouch!! Needless to say, it was me, the leader, who had the problem. I just didn’t quite get it…. I didn’t really understand how I was supposed to lead groups, but giving advice to solve someone else’s problem made good intuitive sense. It was no small wonder that group members actually came back for continued sessions, even with my “advice giving and problem solving” mentality. I guess they hadn’t read their charts to see their diagnostic label—masochist.

And then there was an enlightenment called “training” and sub-sequent supervision. By reading the research and learning to lead groups with my supervisor, I quickly learned that “giving advice” is probably the worst technique one could use in running a group. It all sounded very much like what I learned about providing individual treatment, where “advice giving” was forbidden. The key, of course, was to respect the group patients/clients enough to provide an atmosphere that would assist these patients/clients in processing in the “here and now” what was going on in the group (and life). And, all of this was supposed to happen while not imposing my own values and judgments on the patient’s personhood or behavioral choices. What a challenge confronts the group therapist!

Group Therapy—Efficacy

Group therapy has been shown to reduced symptoms in a variety of patient populations and in populations with a variety of diagnosed disorders, to include the following small sampling: Anxiety Disorders (Dugas, Ladouceur, Léger, Freeston, Langlois, Provencher & Boisvert, 2003); Breast Cancer Survivors (Lane & Viney, 2005); Children with LD (Shechtman & Pastor, 2005); Dementia (Cheston, Jones & Gilliard, 2003); Eating Disorders (Agras, Telch, Arnow, Eldredge, Detzer, Henderson & Marnellet, 1995); Incarcerated Offenders (Morgan, & Flora, 2002); Insomnia (Jansson & Linton, 2005); and Social Phobia (Rosser, Erskine & Crino, 2004).

Further, current research endeavors reveal significant findings when investigating specific group leader and group member variables and conditions that lead to reported successful group experiences, which include the following: Johnson, Burlingame, & Olsen (2005) investigated the relationship constructs of group climate, cohesion, alliance, and empathy across member–member, member–group, and member–leader relationships; Shechtman & Gluk (2005) investigated the therapeutic factors of emotional awareness–insight, relationship–climate, other–versus self–focus, and problem identification–change in children’s groups; Scaturo (2005) researched important factors related to group psychotherapy, to include, homogeneity versus heterogeneity in patient selection for various types of groups, the integration of psychoeducational methods with interpersonal process in group therapy, the effects of time limitations on the collective therapeutic focus of the group, the balance between support and confrontation in time–limited group treatment, and the dilemmas surrounding the therapist’s relative degree of transparency versus opaqueness in the group; DeLucia-Waack & Bridbord (2004) reviewed reliable and valid measures used to assess group process variables; Burlingame, Fuhriman & Johnson (2004) reviewed group psychotherapy process and outcome research over the past 30 years; and, Stockton, Mornan, & Clark (2004) researched group leader as they recalled their intentions (i.e., purposes, plans, goals) in relation to interventions they made in a group session. Additionally, Greif & Ephross (2005) provided pertinent and relevant group psychotherapy research with under–served populations.
Historical Perspective
Group therapy, as a therapeutic intervention strategy, has an interesting history, spanning time from 17th century group “plays,” to the late 18th century psychodramatic work of Pinel, to Pratt’s early “lectures” to groups of patients in the early 20th century, to Moreno’s work in the early 1920’s and his coining of the terms “group therapy and group psychotherapy” in 1932, to Schilder’s psychoanalytically oriented groups in the mid 1930s, to the first AA group in 1937, to Slavson’s founding of AGPA in 1943, to the mid 1940’s work of Bion, to NTL’s community development conferences in Bethel, Maine in the late 1940s, to the children’s groups of Frank Sager, Durkin, Ginott, and Redl in the mid 1950s, to the Days of Fritz Perls at Esalen in the 1960s, to the self help and awareness groups of the 1970s, and to the current cognitive (Beck, Ellis) groups and process-oriented groups (Yalom) of today. (see A Historical Chronology of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama compiled by Adam Blatner, MD)

Process-Oriented (Humanistic) Group Therapy
“The aim of humanistic therapy is not to solve a particular problem, but to assist the individual to grow, so he can cope with the present problem” (Kirschenbaum (1979, p. 113).

Experiential Group Therapy
“Experiential therapy is defined by action-oriented techniques, and whether spoken or unspoken, there is value placed on people participating in action-oriented experiences.” (Klontz, 2004, p. 174).

Process-Oriented (Humanistic) Group Therapy
In his early research, Truax (1961) found that accurate empathy, unconditional positive regard, self-congruence (genuineness), assumed similarity, leadership and responsibility in the therapist were closely correlated with intrapersonal exploration of the patients. Additionally and building on his earlier research, Truax, Wittmer, & Wargo (1971) revealed that there was a positive relationship between level of conditions offered during group psychotherapy and the degree of therapeutic outcome. Yalom’s (1995) interpersonal and humanistic theory was rooted in existential psychotherapy. The therapeutic factors he proposed (e.g., catharsis, cohesion) emphasize emotions and therapeutic relationships. Page, R., Weiss, J. & Lietaer, G. (2002) revealed how humanistic group therapy is an underutilized approach which helps clients make positive behavioral and attitudinal changes.

What is Group Process?
The term group “process” refers to the nature of the relationship among group members who are interacting with one another. Process is not content. Content consists of the explicit words spoken, the substantive issues, spoken objections, and arguments. Process is all about what the content is telling us about the interpersonal relationship for the group members (Yalom, 1995).

Group process can most easily be understood by describing its relationship to three conditions that directly affect group interaction. These conditions are: a) group climate or atmosphere; b) the relationships that develop between group members; and, c) the communication system that is established (relationships). Analyzing these three areas can explain what is happening in a group in terms of process (Robinson & Clifford (1974).

Yalom (1995) discussed two aspects that are required for the here-and-now focus to be effective. These two symbiotic layers have no therapeutic power without the other.

1. The “experiencing” layer or activation process, which consists of strong feelings toward the other group members, the therapist, and the group. These feelings become the major discourse of the group and produces involvement in the group.

2. The illumination of process which involves the group examining itself.

Yalom (1995) points out that “process focus” is the very power source of the group due to exploratory nature. This is the core as to why groups are so therapeutic. Social functions do not allow for process focus. “Process commentary is complicated and is found to be involved in socialization anxiety, social norms, fears of retaliation, and power maintenance.”

Experiential Therapy
Group psychotherapy offers a powerful and influential therapeutic dynamic when used in conjunction with experiential methods and experiential tools are often used in a group-therapy context (Wegscheider-Cruse, Cruse, & Bougher, 1990).

Examples of Experiential Therapies include: Encounter Groups, Gestalt Therapy, Psychodrama, Cathartic Therapy, Emotional Flood ing, Multimodal Group Experiential Therapy, Mahrer’s experiential psychotherapy and Dance Therapy (Dayton, 1994; Elliot & Green berg, 1995; Kaye, Dichter, & Keith, 1986; Klontz, 1999; Klontz, Wolf, & Bivens 2001; Mahrer, 1983, 1996; Moreno, 1994).

Types of Experiential Therapy
Process-experiential and cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy were compared in the treatment of major depression in a researcher allegiance-balanced randomized clinical trial. Sixty-six clients participated in weekly sessions of psychotherapy for 16 weeks. Clients’ level of depression, self-esteem, general symptom distress, and dysfunctional attitudes significantly improved in both therapy groups. The results also revealed that clients in both groups showed significantly lower levels of reactive and suppressive coping strategies and higher reflective coping at the end of treatment. “Although outcomes were generally equivalent for the 2 treatments, there was a significantly greater decrease in clients’ self-reports of their interpersonal problems in process-experiential than cognitive-behavioral therapy” (Watson, Gordon, Stermac, Kalogerakos & Steckley, 2003, p. 773).

Graduate students participated in a challenge training course as an alternative intervention for improving group functioning. Results indicated that students viewed the challenge course as expediting the development of cohesiveness and as a useful addition to traditional group work. (Hatch & McCarthy, 2003). Those who have been involved in research regarding ropes course training report that trust, teamwork, and communication are greatly increased by group members as a result of the experiential learning (Goldenberg, Klenosky, O’Leary & Templin, 2000).

(Continued on page 14)
Process-Oriented and Experiential Group Therapy
(Continued from p. 13)

Group flooding is used a therapeutic technique for intensive group therapy. It is used when a group member is flooded with intense affect or manifests behavior that does not seem meaningfully related to the individual’s immediate experience or to the group interaction. The idea is introduced of deepening the experience through allowing a fantasy or image to emerge. “The elicited imagery appears to be a useful way of getting around resistances, as opposed to the usual analytic dictum of first analyzing character resistances, or the Gestalt approach of attending to the avoidance responses” (Weddig, 1974, p. 289).

And Then There was Fritz
“Contemporary Gestalt group facilitators can choose from the clarity and focus of the traditional hot seat model and the richness of modern Gestalt group process, which integrates elements of systems theory, the theory of group dynamics, and Gestalt theory (both traditional and contemporary). These models do not need to be mutually exclusive. Facilitators can utilize the resultant integration of theories as a framework for noticing and developing opportunities for greater awareness and subsequent change for the individual member, larger levels of systems contained within the group, and the whole group or, in some cases, even beyond. Facilitator involvement and prior need for training are based on two primary principles. First, facilitators need to be able to generate accurate awareness and recognition of how the integration of the above theories emerges within group process. Second, facilitators need practice and experience in using awareness skills in the application of timely and intentional choices of creative and theoretically grounded interventions, linked to the primary process goal of heightening present awareness” (Schoenberg, Feder, Frew, & Gadol, 2005).

Ethical Considerations
“The same factors and dynamics that make group therapy such a powerful medium of emotional and behavioral change make group therapy such a high ethical risk” (Lakin, 1994, p. 344).

Unfortunately, the reputation of group work has been compromised by irresponsible practitioners who use such techniques in gimmicky or inappropriate ways. The nature and inherent power in experiential techniques make them vulnerable to such abuses and misapplications. APA’s ethical standards provide guidelines for ethical behavior in groups. However, there may also be a need for the group experiential therapist to consider specific ethical principles and guidelines related to the application of experiential techniques, in order to provide safe and effective interventions (Corey, Corey, Callanan, & Russell, 1982).

Corey and Corey (2005) also provided guidelines to avoid abusing techniques in group therapy: “(a) techniques are used to work with emotional issues raised by group members, not used to stir up emotions; (b) techniques are not used to cover up the leader’s discomfort or incompetence; (c) techniques are used in a sensitive and timely manner; (d) the member’s background is taken into consideration when techniques are used; (e) techniques are abandoned if they are ineffective; and (f) group members are invited to participate but are also given the option of not participating in certain techniques.”

It is important for group therapists to be aware of principles and guidelines offered by The “Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct” of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2002) and the “Best Practice Guidelines” of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW; Rapin & Keel, 1998).

The following are some common examples of possible ethical dilemmas that group therapists might encounter:

1. Abuse of power (Greenberg, Elliot & Lietaer, 1994; Wegscheider-Cruse et al., 1990)

2. Regulating the “pace and intensity” of emotionally charged material to ensure a positive outcome for all group members (Glass, 1998, p. 98).

3. Confidentiality and privileged communication (Lakin, 1986; Parker, Clevenger, & Sherman, 1997).


5. Coercion to “perform” (Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Patterson & Forgatch, 1985).


7. Failure to get supervision (Corey, 2004; Rapin & Keel, 1998).

Conclusion
And so where does this leave us? Perhaps you have a fresh perspective on two types of group treatment modalities or perhaps you were reinforced in your knowledge base. As practitioners, researchers, academics and professionals who have a passion and interest in group psychotherapy, we, too, are in a position to choose what works best for the patient/client given our own training and personality constructs. And, perhaps today we are a little wiser as to why we choose what we choose. As Frankel stated, “...(M)an must be equipped with the capacity to listen to and obey the ten thousand demands and commandments hidden in the ten thousand situations with which life is confronting him.” And in keeping in the tradition of Frankel, it is our job—some would say “responsibility”—to assist and guide our patients/clients in developing their own individual consciences and finding and fulfilling their unique meanings. Good luck!

This article was based on Dr. Sobelman’s 2005 Division 49 Presidential Address at the APA Convention in Washington, DC.
Group Intervention in the Aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: The Efficacy of Hurricane Anniversary Wellness Workshops

Darlyne G. Nemeth, PhD; K. Marceaux; and A. Lewis

Dr. Nemeth is affiliated with the Neuropsychology Center of Louisiana, LLC. This article is a follow-up to Dr. Nemeth’s contribution in the last issue of TGP.

Four workshops were conducted this past summer to address the anticipated Hurricane Anniversary Reactions. The primary goal of the first workshop, held on June 24, 2006, was to train the trainers. Specifically, the goal was to train individuals in the mental health community to serve as group facilitators and/or recorders in the public offerings. The secondary goal was to fine-tune the workshop exercises.

The next three workshops, held on July 15, 22, and 29, 2006, were public offerings. Pre- and post-state-trait anxiety measures, along with demographic and symptom data, were collected. For this article, data from the fourth workshop will be highlighted. There were 45 total registrants, including 15 facilitators; 7 people left early, including one of the facilitators; 24 individuals completed the workshop. Of those 24, 16 completed all pre and post data. Of the 16 complete sets of data, 15 participants showed significant changes on their pre and post state and trait anxiety measures (Spielberger, 1977). One individual showed no change. That person was a helping organization executive who had not been directly affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Common symptoms since the hurricanes included constant worry, irritability, tension, headaches, restlessness, sleep disturbance, sadness, and fatigue. Of these symptoms, sadness and fatigue were not reported during the week prior to the workshop.

A brief didactic presentation, explaining anniversary reactions, how they are triggered, and developmental regressions caused by trauma was offered. This was followed by a demonstration of how the balance of work, love, play, and spirit is disrupted by chaos. The group-as-a-whole came to realize that, no matter how well informed, no one can fully be prepared to face the consequences of extreme chaos.

The workshop format included group-as-a-whole, small group, and fishbowl techniques.

Seven exercises were used to facilitate participants’ experiential learning. The first exercise, “My Good, Bad, and Ugly Hurricane Feelings,” was designed to identify participants’ pre-hurricane feelings, their post-hurricane feelings, and their anniversary reaction feelings. Each feeling was paired with a behavior so that participants would come to understand how their behavior and feelings were related. For example, the post-hurricane pairings used the following format: When I was ________, I felt ________. Choices were (1) left alone and scared, (2) punished and angry, (3) pushed away and anxious, (4) disapproved of and embarrassed, (5) ignored and sad, and (6) criticized and unloved. In regard to anniversary reactions, participants then understood that they might be (1) creating tension because they felt frantic, (2) trying to control others when they were angry, (3) saying mean things when they were troubled, (4) yelling and screaming because they felt abused, (5) slapping others or breaking things because they felt neglected, and/or (6) being difficult because they felt betrayed.

At the beginning of the workshop, participants were invited to form small groups and to do each of these exercises within their own group. After completing each exercise, they first processed their feelings within their small group; then they chose a spokesperson to report to the larger group-as-a-whole. This method was very successful. Participants came to feel safe in the small group environment and protected in the group-as-a-whole.

The second exercise was a “RILEE Relaxation Exercise” recorded by Tommy Davis, PhD, and written by Darlyne G. Nemeth, PhD. This exercise helped people to learn that they could “feel comfortable and safe anytime, anywhere.” This was especially important since it followed an exercise that elicited such strong feelings.

A working lunch then took place wherein people stayed in their small groups to continue to process the events of the morning. This allowed for group cohesion and discouraged people from leaving the workshop prematurely.

After lunch, a grief exercise, “Saying Goodbye to Say Hello,” was introduced. Participants were asked to list three Regrets, three Resentments, three Appreciations, and three lessons learned for a New Beginning. During this exercise, group facilitators observed that some group members could read, but not write. Therefore, those members were invited to pour themselves a cup of coffee and share their thoughts with a facilitator who completed the writing portion of the exercise for them. Again, the process of sharing in a small group and then reporting to the larger group-as-a-whole was utilized.

The fourth exercise, “How I Feel,” was then presented. Participants were asked to choose 5 positive feelings and 3 negative feelings from a list of 56 feeling words. Two circles, one inside the other, were presented and participants were asked to fill those words in where appropriate. The inner circle was composed of 3 positive feeling words. The outer circle was composed of 2 positive feeling words and 3 negative feeling words. The inner circle represented an individual’s core feelings, whereas the outer circle represented the feelings individuals relied upon to cope. It was then explained that the outer layer tends to remain in balance, except during times of crisis. The analogy of the levees breaking was used to help participants understand that, during times of trauma, people’s emotional

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boundaries do break down, their positive qualities tend to fail, and their negative feelings usually overwhelm them.

On the fifth exercise, “My Hurricane Feelings Banner,” participants were asked to take their three positive core feelings and their three negative coping feelings from the fourth exercise and form a flag where these feelings equally balanced one another so as to negate movement. Individuals were then asked to create a new banner where the second negative feeling would be countered by a new positive action thereby allowing movement. Participants were asked to choose one of the following six actions: relax, relate, forgive, share, connect, and love to use to break the stalemate.

The last exercise, “Our Banners,” involved developing an understanding of symbolism. Groups were asked to review the symbolic meaning of the Louisiana State Flag, the Baton Rouge Flag, the New Orleans Flag, and the Lake Charles Flag. Afterwards, each participant was asked to design his/her own flag. Then, each group was asked to develop a flag representing their New Beginning. Samples of the flags are included below. The flag titled, “Peace in New Orleans,” was created by a group that included a 91-year-old man and his 68-year-old wife. They highlighted (1) the importance of Peace because there is too much violence in New Orleans (2) the need to Forgive in order to Rebuild, and (3) the responsibility of keeping New Orleans safe from flooding, yet in harmony with the waters that surround it. Another flag, “Louisiana Spirit Reaching Out,” symbolized the importance of helping all ethnicities, cultures, and ages. The various group banners were then displayed, and each group shared their meanings with the group-as-a-whole.

Dr. Judy Kurianski was present at the fourth workshop. Through Division 48, she developed a project whereby pictures of the various flags were sold at the 114th APA Convention in New Orleans to raise money for future workshops. She also wrote an excellent article in the New York Daily News column, dated August 4, 2006, to share her experiences with the nation. Because of her efforts, the entire nation saw the pictures of the various flags that were sold. The flags were also sold at the APA Convention in New Orleans in 2007.

In conclusion, the statistical data from the fourth workshop, along with the experiential data from all 4 workshops, suggests that, indeed, group process was an effective intervention for reducing the anxiety surrounding the one year anniversary of these two dreadful hurricanes. Thus, participants were assisted in finding the emotional strength within themselves to reattach and form a new community.

Dr. Darlyne G. Nemeth, Division 49 APA Fellow, presented this information at APA in New Orleans this past August. For additional information, please e-mail Dr. Nemeth at dgnemeth@aol.com.

Member News

Allan B. Elfant, PhD, ABPP, has been appointed to CODAPAR, the APA Committee on Division/APA Relations, for 2007–2009.

Zipora Shechtman, PhD, has just had her book published. Her book is entitled: Group Counseling and Psychotherapy with Children and Adolescents: Theory, Research, and Practice. The publisher is Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Dissertation Research Award

Richard Moreland, PhD

Each year, Division 49 offers an award for the best dissertation research on small groups. This research can investigate any phenomenon, using any methodology, in any type of group. Next year will mark the 15th year for the award. Past winners, many of whom have gone on to fame and fortune after receiving the award, include Drs. Karen Jehn, Deborah Gruenfeld, Amy Edmondson, and Kyle Lewis.

The most recent winner is Dr. Floortje Rink, who did her graduate work at Leiden University and is currently on the faculty there. The title of her dissertation was “Towards a social identity framework for studying the effects of task-related differences in dyads and groups.” In a series of studies, Dr. Rink explored the idea that task-related differences among group members are more easily recognized and accepted when people differ from each other in multiple ways, rather than in just one way. An accumulation of task-related differences can thus lead group members to use those differences in effective ways, and yet remain focused on their common goals and evaluate their group experiences positively.

Dr. Rink’s award includes $500, a commemorative plaque, and a 3-year free membership in the Division.

The award process for the coming year has already begun. People who complete a dissertation on groups sometime during calendar year 2006 are welcome to enter the competition. To enter, a brief (5 pages, typewritten and double-spaced) abstract of the dissertation should be sent to Dr. Richard Moreland (3103 Sennott Square, Department of Psychology, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260). The deadline for submitting abstracts is January 31st, 2007. Dr. Moreland will send copies of the abstracts to a small review committee for evaluation, and they will select three finalists. The finalists will be asked to submit complete copies of their dissertations, which will then be reviewed by the same committee. The winner will receive his or her award at the Division’s Business Meeting at the APA Convention in August, 2007.

If you are completing a dissertation on groups this year, then please consider entering the competition. And if you know someone else who is completing such a dissertation, then please mention the competition to him or her. Remember, the research described in the dissertation can investigate any phenomenon, using any methodology, in any type of group.
There are several variables that impacted my research on group therapy in jail. When conducting therapy, I was surprised by these factors because I had not originally taken them into account. The first variable is the attendance of participants. Participants could be dismissed at a moment’s notice because jail officials reserved the right to correct improper behavior and remove any participant at any time. Also, participants could discontinue the program for a variety of reasons, such as jail transfer, new work, jail release, etc. The second variable is the setting. Conditions in the jail were not optimal for group therapy; for example, it was not a quiet and closed space. The third variable is time. Group therapy was restricted to a time interval of 12 weeks. The fourth variable is lack in flexibility. It was imperative that counselors mind jail rules and regulations in order to prevent conflict with officials.

Under these restrictions, I was concerned with the effectiveness of group therapy as well as inmates’ progress, especially in their ability to turn down drugs. It is very important that this group therapy program was successful in its goals.

This research is taken from the collected data of three group therapies that took place from September, 2003 to December, 2004. The first two groups were based on a 12-step program that lasted 12 weeks. The third group was 10 weeks long and focused on self-exploration. During the last session of each group therapy, I asked the participants to fill out a questionnaire. This questionnaire consists of four parts: evaluation of group dynamic, evaluation of group leader, evaluation of oneself, and an open-ended section.

All of the participants are substance abusers from Taichung Women’s Correction Center. The majority attended therapy voluntarily through the introduction of the on-site psychologist. None of the participants had attended group therapy before. Of the 36 valid replies, 26 participants are under 30 years of age, and 10 are under 40. All except 4 of the participants had received at least 9 years of education.

The results illustrate that most of the participants found the group dynamic to be supportive, sincere, and safe. They were satisfied with both the group leader and group activities. Many felt that they had improved their communication skills and emotional management through interaction with others under structured group activities. They stated that before joining group therapy, they were pitiable, ashamed, and self-defeating. They were depressed and held many negative beliefs toward their lives. A number of the participants admitted that they took drugs and abused substances to escape reality, an unhappy life, or general boredom. The majority of participants did not hold high expectations for their futures because most had never held decent jobs, and for about half of them, this was their second or third time in jail. In short, each participant struggled with a distressing past that made her feel hopeless and alienated from normal living.

Group therapy gave these women a chance to review their lives and real-efect deeply with empathy. At first, they resisted sharing personal stories about their lives, but they gradually opened up and found enjoyment in the process. Most of them later explained that they had never spoken in front of so many people before and that they sometimes did not know how to respond, partly from fear and lack of communication skills. I was forced to use many different approaches as warm-up to discussions; the participants, however, caught on to proper procedure quickly, and within a few weeks, most began to speak voluntarily and listen to their peers attentively. From then on, the group became cohesive and cooperative, and even boisterous at times. The participants told me repeatedly how much they looked forward to group therapy every week. Only during group therapy did they find peace and hope, and sometimes, joy. When they learned that other participants had similar feelings and experiences, they felt relief and security. Only after discovering this bond of solidarity could they cry and share personal matters without restraint.

An interesting finding to be noted is that although the main purpose of group therapy was to help participants reject drugs, the participants regarded the most beneficial part of the therapy to be the regaining of confidence and self-esteem. According to their replies in the open-ended section, the participants felt that increasing confidence and self-respect strengthened their ability refuse drugs. This was the first time that they had ever truly reflected on their own drug behaviors and its consequences. About two-thirds replied that they learned ways of avoiding drugs and other substances; these methods include cutting off connections with drug dealers, bad friends, or partners, as well as moving to a new location, working, paying attention to family life, and continuing their education. A good example is as one participant wrote: “Now I realize that I can’t resolve problems by taking drugs, which just creates more problems. I must face problems and find different ways to resolve them. I know I need support and encouragement from family members, my dear friends, and particularly my husband.”

Based on results, it appears that group therapy is fruitful in many respects. Participants praised it highly and said that they would like to attend such programs again in the future. The majority noted that they understood themselves better and improved their skills in interpersonal relations. Some participants endeavored to reestablish caring relations with their families. They also discovered special qualities and hidden abilities in themselves through their peers’ encouragement. I observed that these women were only too happy to attend therapy and that they enjoyed the freedom away from their daily jail routine. In addition, since they had not experienced group

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therapy or counseling before, the participants had no preconceived notions of it. For them, it was a completely new experience filled with surprises and comforts. Most of them were too humble and compliant to express their true feelings in a proper way; however, I must point out that I do not intend to underestimate or doubt the participants’ ability of evaluation. On the contrary, I must remind myself not to become overwhelmed by their extreme gratitude. Furthermore, from my interactions with the participants, I am very glad to learn that despite these women’s unfortunate lives and criminal records, they still hold a certain good nature underneath their tough exteriors.

In the long run, this study would be of greater value had I been able to follow-up on these women after their release. Unfortunately, due to the privacy policy, a subsequent examination was declined by authorities. I, however, plan to continue conducting more group therapies in this jail to further identify the effects of group therapy on female inmates and the changes in their behaviors.

Dr. Lang’s Email: lang@mail.dyu.edu.tw

Personal Narratives of the ABPP Specialty Diploma in Group Psychology

Joshua M. Gross, PhD, ABPP
Examination Coordinator, ABPP Specialty Diploma in Group Psychology

The tradition of the ABPP Specialty Diploma dates back to 1947 and involves a process of peer review by specialists in your area of practice. With the development of the ABPP Specialty Diploma in Group Psychology we have a growing number of psychologists who have taken the time and expended the necessary efforts to complete the process of ABPP Specialty Certification. It is my goal to use this column over then the next series of editions to describe some individual narratives about this process with the hope of better describing this process to the membership of APA Division 49.

This edition we are talking with Susan P. Gantt, PhD, ABPP, who was an early participant in the ABPP examinations for Group Psychology.

JMG: Can you tell us about your work?

SPG: I am currently very active in areas related to group psychology. I have a private practice, with two psychotherapy groups weekly, three systems-centered (SCT) training groups for professionals learning SCT (biweekly or monthly), and I work part time coordinating group therapy training for psychiatry residents at Emory University School of Medicine.). I also do a large amount of training and consultation in my role as Director of Systems-Centered Training both in the United States and in Europe.

JMG: Do you recall the specific point in your training or practice as a psychologist when you first came to know of the American Board of Professional Psychology?

SPG: Wow, this turns out to be an interesting question for me. It actually happened very early on in that my clinical psychology graduate program. My program modeled our second year comps on the ABPP exam with a clinical sample and statement of theoretical orientation. So I actually got to “practice” for an ABPP exam. Later as I was working as a graduate assistant, the professor I was working for was chairing an ABPP oral exam. I had the job of helping organize a live ABPP interview, back when the interviews were live. In fact, I think I ended up being interviewed as a client failed to show at the last minute. Thanks for this question as I have not actually remembered any of this in some time.

JMG: What did the ABPP mean to you at that time?

SPG: My very first mentors in graduate school were quite involved with ABPP and supportive of the idea so I think it may have taken hold very early for me. Interestingly enough, it was only when the group ABPP was initiated that I considered it explicitly and seriously.

JMG: What then did you think of the idea of psychologist as specialist practitioner?

SPG: I see myself both as a generalist and specialist and I like very much the specialty aspect related to group. Actually, knowing group and group dynamics is applicable to many contexts, including individual therapy when viewed from a systems perspective.

JMG: Did the development of the new Specialty Diploma in Group Psychology in 1998 influence your decision to apply for your first or subsequent ABPP Diploma?

SPG: Absolutely, I doubt that I would have pursued my ABPP if the group psychology one had not been developed.

JMG: Was there any significant event that brought you to the point of submitting the first application in the series of materials required for the ABPP examination process?

SPG: I wanted to support the idea of a group ABPP. I was approached...
by Mike Andronico, PhD, ABPP who had been involved and active in launching the group ABPP.

JMG: What was the most daunting aspect of it all for you?

SPG: I actually did not find it daunting. It did take some work. Once I had decided to do it, the next challenge was taking the steps to make recordings of my group sessions.

JMG: Did any of it surprise you?

SPG: I was surprised that I quite liked formulating and tracing the steps I had taken to develop my current orientation and theoretical outlook.

JMG: Upon being notified that you passed your diplomate examinations, what then were your thoughts about the many procedures you went through in the course of the examination process?

SPG: I was glad to be done, of course. Actually I enjoyed the exam itself and the challenge of communicating what it is I do and how I see things from a systems-centered perspective.

JMG: Over time, has having the ABPP Specialty Diploma changed your perception of yourself as a professional and/or the way that you think about your practice?

SPG: I have some pride and identity in being a group psychology ABPP and more so than I thought I would ahead of time.

JMG: What advice would you give a candidate?

SPG: Have fun with it. Interrupt the inevitable pull to worrying about passing and re-orient to the task itself.

JMG: From your current perspective what are the most important benefits you have received for your investment in obtaining and maintaining your ABPP Specialty Diploma in Group Psychology?

SPG: Personally, I very much like the process and sense of having a peer review. As a group psychologist, I also see the Group Psychology ABPP as helping establish the understanding of the importance of group psychology in all of clinical practice. This to me is an investment well worth making as group psychology and group dynamics plays such an essential part in the functioning of our world.

JMG: Thank you once again for your time and efforts on behalf of this project.

Zipora Shechtman, PhD
University of Haifa, Israel

In the past decade, a growing interest in evidence-base psychotherapies has emerged. To respond to this trend outcome studies have become more frequent indicating the effectiveness of group interventions with adults and with children. However, while the literature on groups for adults has advanced to include information beyond outcomes, such as various process variables, using programmatic lines of research and sophisticated research and statistical models (Burlingame, Fuhriman, & Johnson, 2004), such research in child group counseling and psychotherapy is largely missing (Barlow, Fuhriman, & Burlingame, 2000). This research is important because it explains how and when group counseling and psychotherapy works, thus, bearing important clinical implications. As children and adolescents constitute a unique population, group processes in groups with them may be quite different from those in groups with adults. It is of utmost importance to understand those ingredients that make group counseling and psychotherapy with young clients effective. This article will discuss some of the lessons learned from our process research studies and will suggest clinical implications for practitioners.

Lesson 1: Selection and Prediction

A group leader’s task starts long before group members actually come together. According to the American School Counseling Association Code of Ethics (1998), the leader’s task at this stage includes member selection, group composition, and a detailed plan for starting the group.

Selecting the right candidates is particularly important in working with young clients in a school setting, primarily because students are mostly referred clients. We need to be careful not to impose on them therapy against their will.

In a study investigating attachment style as a predictor of behavior in group counseling (Shechtman & Dvir, 2006) we found significant differences between secure, anxious, and avoidant adolescents, with the last being the least effective clients in therapy. For example, the avoidant child disclosed intimate information about 9 times less frequently than the secure one, and resisted 24 times more frequently. In respect to productive client behavior, the avoidant child had about 8 times lower scores than the secure one, and actually did very little therapeutic work. Finally, the avoidant participants were also 10 times less responsive to others.

The conclusion of this study is that the avoidant participants are clearly difficult participants in the group. Such children may be a threat to the group and the group is a threat to them. Thus, such information is valuable for purposes of screening, group composition, and treatment adjustment.

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Lessons Learned from Process Research in Child Group Counseling and Psychotherapy?

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Lesson 2: The Need for Structure

In one of our early studies (Leichtentritt & Shechtman, 1998) we measured the effect of the therapist’s behavior on children’s self-disclosure. Structured activities and questions produced most of children’s self-disclosure even in the very early stages of the group. Support for structure was found in several consequent studies in which the therapist’s verbal behavior was investigated (Shechtman, 2004; Shechtman & Ben David, 1999). The findings suggest that the skills applied by counselors in groups are almost identical to those used in individual treatment. In both situations the counselor used mostly questions (about 65%) followed by direct guidance (about 15%). The remaining response types were infrequent. As the frequent use of questions and guidance is much higher in these groups than in individual adult therapy (Hill & O’Brien, 1999), we suggest that the therapists’ use of the helping skills in both individual and group work with young clients is different from that reported in the literature. This discrepancy may be attributed to the different needs and the cognitive and affective abilities of children. It may also reflect the fact that they are referred clients who do not come to therapy with the intention to do therapeutic work. The implication of these findings are that therapists of groups for children must be quite active, use questions to enhance the children’s participation and be more directive in the attempt to make a change in their thoughts or behavior. To use effectively such short groups, it appears that the leader must knowledgeable about methods, techniques, activities, and games to intensify the processes and the therapeutic work in children’s groups (see Shechtman, 2006).

Lesson 3: Therapeutic Factors

Therapeutic factors are one of the essential aspects of group treatment processes. They explain how people are helped in group counseling and psychotherapy. Despite the extensive research existing on this topic in the literature on adult groups, little is known of the therapeutic factors in groups with children.

In a study investigating therapeutic factors in groups of elementary-age children (Shechtman & Gluk, 2005), relationship-climate was the factor most frequently mentioned by the children (50%). The next most frequently mentioned therapeutic factor appears to be other versus self-focus, closely followed by emotional awareness-insight (about 24% and 21% respectively). Problem-identification-change accounted for less than 10%. Moreover, boys and girls agreed on relationship-climate being the most important therapeutic factor.

Overall, the conclusion is that relationship-climate is the most valued therapeutic factor by children, in congruence with the literature. Moreover, interpersonal interaction also seems to be important in children’s groups, suggesting that children’s group may be process-oriented. The implications of these results must be considered by all therapists who work with children; even more than therapists in adult groups, they must create a secure climate based on mutual support. This can be achieved through special activities that establish and encourage responsiveness and support, through modeling such behavior, and through direct guidance.

Lesson 4: Children as Clients

The major question was “how effective do children and adolescents function as clients in therapy?” The first study, of elementary-age children (Leichtentritt & Shechtman, 1998) indicated that self-disclosure was the most frequent behavior among the children (occurring at least once in 90% of the sessions), followed by feedback (50%) and questions posed to other group members (30%). Several consequent studies further explored children as clients in therapy (Shechtman, 2004; Shechtman & Ben-David, 1999), indicating that most of the children’s verbal behaviors included simple self-disclosure (informative type) and cognitive and affective exploration, followed by insight. These results suggest that children were mostly engaged in self expressiveness, often on an emotional level, and that some also experienced insight. Moreover, resistance and simple response decreased with time, whereas insight and therapeutic change, although rare, grew significantly along the group process. No change was found in cognitive and affective exploration. These results actually resemble those reported in adult individual therapy (Hill & O’Brien, 1999), thus suggesting that children and adolescents are productive clients in therapy.

An additional study (Shechtman & Yanuv, 2001) explored the interaction among group members. The interpersonal exchange of communication included mostly challenges, followed closely by feedback; interpretation was rare. This is different from adult interactions in group, and is disturbing, because a high rate of challenges children used were not constructive; children perceive them as a personal attack and find it difficult to protect themselves. This is an important study in terms of its clinical implications. The findings suggest that counselors should help children provide feedback rather than offer challenges, and that they should train children to use feedback in a constructive manner.

Overall, the implications for child group counseling and psychotherapy include, first, the fact that children and adolescents are productive clients in group therapy. They use the time effectively, mostly focusing on catharsis and self-exploration, but also gaining insight and undergoing some change. Second, these young clients take advantage of the group processes. They challenge their friends and provide feedback. While the Client Behavior system refers to personal change processes, the interpersonal interactions points to the unique feature of group work. Considering the special need children we work with, it is encouraging to learn that such young clients can be engaged in serious therapeutic work, and function productively in the process of helping others in short term process-oriented groups.

Summary of Implications

A major finding from several of these studies suggests that children and adolescents do express themselves frequently, openly, and intimately. Whether this behavior represents a need or they are guided to such behavior is an interesting question. We believe both have an influence but it is difficult to distinguish between the two without further exploration. Evidence for their need to share
private information lays in their early self-disclosure in group and their appreciation of relationship and climate. However, all these may also result of the counselors’ active and skillful involvement in the group process. Guided by a theory that strongly emphasizes emotional experiencing, and employing methods and activities geared to encourage self-expressiveness, the result may be high self-disclosure, cathartic experiences, and affective exploration. Whatever the reason may be, our groups operate on an affective level within a supportive climate, and therefore, are classified as Affective-Support groups (Kivlighan & Holmes, 2004), or as I name them Expressive-Supportive groups (Shechtman, 2006).

These are only first steps in the science of child group therapy. Further research is needed in all areas explored here to complete our knowledge and understanding of group processes with children and adolescents.

References

Overcoming Challenges in Measuring Group Process and Leadership

Chris Chapman, Jeffrey Elder, and JulieAnn Krogel
5C Research Group, Brigham Young University

The following reports on a symposium delivered at the 2006 annual APA convention in New Orleans, Louisiana. The symposium, titled “Overcoming Challenges in Measuring Group Process and Leadership,” focused not only on methods for the empirical analysis of group relationships, group process, and the effectiveness of group leader interventions, but also explored challenges that often prevent group therapists from engaging in research that requires the observation and assessment of their group therapy sessions.

The symposium represents the work of the 5C research group, based in Brigham Young University at Provo, Utah. The 5C research group has published numerous articles examining the differential impact of client, treatment, therapist, and group variables on outcome within the context of evidence-based group treatment. Research conducted for the symposium demonstrates the ongoing efforts of the 5C research group to develop better understanding of group process and outcome and to build on the established empirical support of group therapy as an effective mode of treatment.


Dr. Shechtman is a Member-at-Large on the Board of Directors of Division 49.

The Group Psychotherapy Intervention Rating Scale: Measurement Development and Cross Cultural Assessment of Validity

Chris Chapman

As recent group process research has focused on the effects of group leader interventions on the therapeutic gain made by clients, increased emphasis has been placed on the need for empirically-based measures to assess the effectiveness of group leader interventions. Unfortunately, no single measure exists that adequately assesses the effectiveness of therapists in delivering these interventions that may improve therapeutic properties during actual group sessions. Due to this gap in available group assessment tools, Burlingame, MacKenzie and Strauss (2004) have called for the development of leader measures as a next step in the group treatment literature.

A new measure, the Group Psychotherapy Interventions Rating Scale, represents an attempt to fill this gap in available assessment tools by evaluating group leaders based on their ability to perform

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specific interventions aimed at improving the therapeutic factors of the group. The GPIRS-R is an observer-rated, behavioral measure consisting of 48 items, each representing a group leader intervention, divided into three categories: Group Structuring, Verbal Interaction, and Creating and Maintaining a Therapeutic Emotional Climate. Developed by Dutch researchers Snijders and Trijsburg (2005), the measure is based on Burlingame, Fuhriman and Johnson’s (2002) literature review outlining empirically supported therapist interventions correlated to the maintenance and establishment key therapeutic factors such as cohesion. The current study attempted to build on previous studies demonstrating the reliability and validity of the GPIRS by exploring the psychometric properties of this promising new measure by employing it in a variety of new treatment settings and populations.

Ten therapy groups were observed and rated at the Utah State Hospital, the Brigham Young Counseling and Career Center, the BYU Comprehensive Clinic, and the Discovery Academy. The groups were rated using the GPIRS-R and two group process measures, including the rater report Hill Interaction Matrix – G (HIM-G), and the member-rated Group Climate Questionnaire (GCQ). Results from the GPIRS-R were compared with these two measures in order to assess the validity of the GPIRS-R.

The results of the study were encouraging, as every domain of the GPIRS-R was strongly correlated with HIM-G ratings for observed groups. These results are particularly positive in regards to the utility of the GPIRS-R, as the HIM-G has previously been correlated with therapeutic group process and member outcome (Toseland, Rossiter, Peak, and Hill, 1990; Fuhriman and Burlingame, 2000). Strong correlations were also found between each GPIRS-R domain and the GCQ domains of ‘Engaged’ and ‘Avoiding.’ This suggests that group leader interventions have a significant effect on therapeutic group process as reported by both independent raters and group members.

The study results support the effectiveness of the GPIRS-R in rating therapists on their ability to enact interventions that are significantly correlated to the development of therapeutic group factors, indicating that the GPIRS-R may have the potential to be used as both a clinical training tool and an assessment of group leader skills. The study also serves to empirically reinforce long-held conceptions of the importance of a variety of group leader functions, including the therapeutic benefit of group structuring, modeling and encouraging group verbal interaction, and the demonstration of leader warmth, empathy and transparency in creating a therapeutic emotional climate. Future research could use the GPIRS-R as a tool to investigate the impact of group leader interventions on outcome, member-member, member-group, and member-leader relationships, and group processes.

Overcoming Challenges in Measuring Group Process and Leadership

(Continued from p. 21)

Research has improved selection, process, and outcomes in group psychotherapy (Horne & Rosenthal, 1997; Burlingame et al., 2004). Despite this fact, research conducted in university counseling centers around the nation sometimes falters from lack of support. In this study 15 practicing group therapists in the Counseling and Career Center at Brigham Young University were interviewed. Each was encouraged to identify key factors that contribute to their participation (or lack there of) in group research and ongoing outcome assessment. In addition, therapists’ perceptions of the systematic use of the selection, process, and outcome measures in the American Group Psychotherapy Associations’ core battery (CORE-R) (Burlingame et al., 2006) were elicited. Prominent and consistent themes from interviews were compiled and reported.

From the interviews, two main themes emerged: 1. the perception among group therapists and group clients that group therapy research can feel intrusive and non-collaborative, and 2. the logistically difficult aspect of actively participating in group therapy research while maintaining a normal work load. The sense of intrusiveness was related to: the time taken out of group sessions, the fact that research often didn’t seem to directly impact their daily work as a therapist, and that they didn’t have a general understanding of the research often due to the nature of the study. Therapists also noted a resistance from clients when there was no immediate benefit and admitted to frequently forgetting to administer the instruments, indicating that group administration of survey often led to the leader feeling too much responsibility for the research—i.e., data collection. These factors affected the therapists’ compliance towards the research.

The therapists’ views on the CORE-R were similar. A general lack of interest for the measures was expressed, due to time costs and unfamiliarity with the measures in the battery.

To overcome these challenges, it behooves researchers to reach out and do some bridge building if data are going to be collected in ongoing clinical practice settings. Such a collaborative relationship might minimize obstacles and foster a working alliance.

The Group Questionnaire: A New Measure of the Group Relationship

JulieAnn Krogel

The Group Questionnaire (GQ) is a new 40 item Likert type instrument designed to measure different aspects of the group relationship. The instrument is built off of the new model of group relationship developed by Dr. Jennifer Johnson in a 2005 publication in the Journal of Counseling Psychology (2005). The model is comprised of three main factors: positive bonding, positive working, and negative rela-
tionship. Each of these factors is measured from three dimensions of the group relationship: member-member, member-leader, and member-group. In the present study the items for the GQ were empirically selected by using structural equation modeling to select the best questions from those used by Johnson to create the factor model. The collective knowledge and clinical expertise of several experienced researchers and clinicians was used to further revise the items included in the GQ. After this revision of the GQ, the measure was shortened to 40 items from the original 60.

One purpose of the current study is to work out any problems in the presentation and scoring. To accomplish this end, The GQ was administered to patients participating in group psychotherapy at the Brigham Young University Counseling and Career Center during the middle working phase of the group. As in Johnson’s (2005) study, Structural Equation Modeling was again used to factor analyze the data.

Despite initial problems with the ‘Positive Bonding’ factor from the GQ, the 3 factor model of the group relationship achieved a moderate fit from the data compiled in the current study. While adjustments should be made in future studies hoping to further development of the GQ, including a larger sample size, the GQ appears to be a promising measure of the group relationship. It is hoped that in the future with further development the GQ can be used to measure and predict outcome for patients in group psychotherapy.

References


Reflections on Being a Group Psychotherapist

Below are two subjective perspectives on becoming and being a group therapist. I invite readers to write their own such perspective as well as offer comments on these viewpoints. —Ed.

Sally Horwatt, PhD

To my way of thinking, group psychotherapy is the most effective, potent source of growth psychologists have in their arsenal. I have been running at least two groups for over 25 years. They are mixed gender, mixed diagnosis, never more than 8 patients with only me as leader. People have participated for as long as 11 years, but usually only for two.

Initially, my model was based on that of Irvin Yalom, which I was taught in graduate school. However, it was also informed by a thorough grounding in family systems theory, cognitive behavioral theory and object relations theory. Finally, however, theory is like a stage: it supports the psychologist, but she, hopefully, doesn’t think about it much as she uses her intuition, senses and self to interact with her “audience” real time.

The group times never changed. In order to participate, you had to have been a patient with me, individually, first. The managed care companies are correct. It is fairly easy for a person to get beyond their anxiety, depression or hypomania with psychoeducation and, often, medication. But those who really wanted to change and, perhaps, outgrow their needs for medication, went into my groups. My groups contain all the personality disorders. And sometimes, the person is both in a group and in individual therapy with me. Sometimes I put each member of a couple into his/her own group rather than having to sit in couples therapy and listen to the evidence that each is presenting against the other as though I’m the judge.

Some of them used to say, “I can’t go into that group….they’ve been together for a long time. I’d be too uncomfortable.”

I’d just respond, “You were born into a cohesive group and spent much of your adult life joining ongoing groups. Now is your chance to see how you do it, and, perhaps, learn to carve out a better niche for yourself.”

(Continued on page 24)
And, ultimately, that’s what it was about: learning to tolerate the feelings of vulnerability that are associated with being one’s own person. I present the goal of participation in group therapy as follows:

We all, if we are honest with ourselves, have self-doubt, feelings of inadequacy, fears of betrayal or abandonment. Those feelings are part of the human condition. Most of us humans learn to cover up those feelings with “tics”. That is, we convert our anxiety into anger and spend our lives collecting injustices. We drink. We have affairs. We withdraw. We pout. We judge. We lie to ourselves. It is those things that we do to cover up our feelings of anxiety that get us into trouble. The purpose of the group is to learn to tolerate the feelings of anxiety while responding to others, giving and receiving feedback, as we would if we were not anxious.

I believe the greatest source of my own personal growth has been as a group leader. I have had to learn to face my own anxiety as I have been, at times, the only one taking on the challenge of being my own person. I have quickly discarded the idea of co-leadership, as I feel it is more for the protection of the therapist than for the benefit of the patient. And as I have watched people learn to manage their lives better, with the insight that comes from experience, I am convinced that group psychotherapy is the way to go.

Eighteen years later an incredible turn of events led me to an educational journey in psychology. It became clear rather quickly that group therapy was my passion, and as time passed crisis intervention became my calling in the mental health arena. I am both exhilarated with my work and at times sure I don’t know a thing about humanity, group dynamics or theories. Sometimes I relegate the latter to my lack of education at a prestigious university, or work with a notable theorist. I wish that could have been my journey. It was not.

I am grateful for today is my work as a group therapist, within a mental health unit at a large acute hospital in the high desert of California. Each day I keep in mind the value of personal experience, coupled with education and training. I am aware that I may be touching someone in ways that will never be known to me, and in ways that I’ve not intended. I am offering them my genuine interest, a lifetime exemplified in more ways than I could imagine, and professional knowledge and experience. Struggle as I may, from time to time, with my competence and lack of education from a prestigious university, I can often value the journey more than the destination, sometimes called ego.

Ann Gassaway, PsyD

I’ve never consider myself an educated and trained group therapist from the ranks of those most notable, nor equal in education to those trained at prestigious universities who have known researchers or theorists. I am a group therapist educated and trained in psychology at two universities of no particular notability. My passion for group therapy preceded my education, by many years, and was due to the incredible value it had to my life at that time, and for a lifetime.

My fifteen years experience as a group therapist and 16 years experience as a group member are difficult to separate, one from the other, in terms of their significant value to how I have lived my life or how I practice group therapy as a professional.

My life experiences brought me to a personal experience with group therapy. Never in those 16 years of group therapy (very little individual) did I consider, or think about becoming a therapist. I am both amazed and deeply grateful today about how that came to be.

Dr. Horwatt is President-Elect, Virginia Academy of Clinical Psychologists.

Ann Gassaway, PsyD

Call for Programs

Dr. Jennifer Harp, Chair of the Division 49 Program Committee invites submissions for the 2007 APA Convention in San Francisco. Workshops, symposia, discussions, and posters in the areas of group psychology and group psychotherapy theory, research, practice and training are invited. Interactive formats are encouraged. Proposals are to be submitted via the Web at http://apacustomout.apa.org/ConvCall/. Dr. Harp can be reached at jsh262@aol.com. Deadline for submissions is December 1, 2006.
Group Sweat Therapy

Stephen Colmant, PhD

Driving between Gallup and Shiprock on Highway 666 into the Navajo reservation, I was full of anticipation. It was 1994. I just graduated with my master’s degree in counseling and was ready to apply my psychotherapy skills at my new job at a treatment center for Navajo boys. After a few months at the job, my excitement turned to frustration and self-doubt as I found my Western therapy techniques ineffective. I was doing more limit-setting and crowd control than group psychotherapy. Then, a Navajo traditional healer took me to a sweat lodge ceremony.

After the leader ordered that the door flap be dropped, plunging the group into darkness, he said that the purpose of the first round was to pray or meditate for resolving a personal problem or bettering oneself in general. He then poured a special mixture of water and herbs over the heated rocks. Hissing blasts of hot steam filled the darkened lodge and I experienced my first real world lesson in psychotherapy—Navajo style. Following that initiation, I incorporated the sweat lodge ceremony as a weekly practice at the treatment center and the positive effects on the boys were dramatic (Colmant & Merta, 1999).

After I left the Rez, I missed the sweat ceremonies. I also thought my clientele at that time—youth coming out of detention centers and psychiatric hospitals—could benefit from the ritual. So, I made a deal with a local gym owner to use his sauna and created my own “sweat therapy” sessions. The boys identified experiential group work, catharsis, universality, imitative behavior, and interpersonal learning as prominent therapeutic factors within the sessions. They also reported that the sweating process helped them relax and relieve stress, left them with a feeling of accomplishment and made statements suggesting the sweating process helped improve their frustration tolerance (Colmant & Merta, 2000).

Cultural Validity

Although separated by oceans, continents and millennia, people have used group sweating for common purposes including physical and mental health, spirituality, and close interpersonal interaction (Colmant, 2005). Examples of different forms of group sweating include the American Indian sweat lodge ceremony, the Finnish sauna, the Russian banya, the Jewish shvitz, the Islamic hammam, the Japanese mushi-buro, the temescal, and the African Sifutu. Today, few modern health clubs are without a sauna or steam room. Bikram Yoga, which combines group sweating with yoga, is becoming increasingly popular and can be found available across the U.S. A museum dedicated to the universality of group sweating opened this summer along the Swedish–Finnish border (Associated Press, 2006).

The study of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) and traditional medicine (TM) focuses on practices that have a wide range of cultural meaningfulness and social significance. The concept of “Cultural Validity” provides a way to articulate the differences in practices along this continuum by appreciating the wisdom reflected in the passing of practices from one generation to another and across cultures by prevalence and by the degree to which a practice is used to promote healing and well-being (Colmant & Eason, 2006).

The strong cultural validity of group sweating indicates that it is rooted in the unconscious and structured by underlying psychobiological features. Like Jung’s concept of the archetype, it is likely that different forms of group sweating will be developed, in different forms, reflecting the rich cultural contexts from which it re-emerges. Sweat therapy emerged as a technique in group work.

Psychobiological Features

Sweating practices cause several prominent acute physiological effects that have many health benefits and few risks. The acute physiological effects include an increase in skin and rectal temperature, sweating, skin blood flow, heart rate, cardiac output, cardiac stroke volume, and systolic blood pressure; and a decrease in diastolic blood pressure, and blood flow to internal organs and muscles. Many hormonal changes have been identified as occurring during sauna use, however, these changes reportedly return to normal levels within a few hours and there are no permanent effects. Sauna bathing is beneficial for the prevention and treatment of some lung, heart, and skin problems (Hannuksela & Ellahham, 2001). In their investigation of sauna on lifestyle-related diseases, Biro, Masuda, Kihara, and Tei (2003) found that repeated sauna therapy improves vascular endothelial function, reduces body weight, and may prevent atherosclerosis. It promotes deeper sleep, pain relief, muscle relaxation, and has been helpful in treating insomnia, arthritis, and as an adjunct to cancer treatment (Berger & Rounds, 1998). However, sauna is contraindicated during high-risk pregnancies and for patients with unstable angina pectoris, recent myocardial infarction, severe aortic stenosis, decompensated heart failure, and cardiac arrhythmia.

There have also been some interesting findings regarding sweating and psychological well-being that have important implications for therapeutic and preventive mental health purposes. These findings include that sweating promotes positive effects on relaxation and stress relief, sleep, mood, and is beneficial to women with anorexia by reducing hyperactivity.

A Supported Treatment

The most recent sweat therapy study was completed at Oklahoma State University and replicates a pilot study with a larger sample, better control, and a more effective measurement strategy (Colmant, Eason, Winterowd, Jacobs, & Cashel, 2005).

The primary purpose was to examine the efficacy of sweat therapy as a group counseling technique by investigating the effects of sweat therapy on group therapeutic factors with a group of college students. The second purpose of this study was to explore the ef-

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Group Sweat Therapy

(Continued from p. 25)

...fects of sweat and non-sweat group counseling conditions on feeling states to investigate one aspect of how group sweating functions. Eighty-five (85) university students were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: (a) Sweat group: Group counseling in a sauna; or, (b) Non-sweat group: Group counseling in a standard office setting. The groups met weekly for six sessions. Measures used included an intake form, the Critical Incidents Questionnaire (CIQ), the Therapeutic Factor inventory (TFI), the Exercise Induced Feeling Inventory (EFI) and the Subjective Exercise Experiences Scale (SEES).

Overall, the sweat therapy groups appeared to have greater therapeutic quality compared to the non-sweat groups as measured by direct and indirect assessment of participants’ perceptions of their experience and by practical variables. Sweat therapy group participants perceived a greater availability of therapeutic factors, reported sessions to be more useful, and had less absenteeism and group dropouts than non-sweat group counseling participants. Secondly, participants in these two conditions differed with regard to their feeling states of fatigue, revitalization, and physical exhaustion two hours following the group intervention. In particular, sweat participants, on average, felt less fatigued, more revitalized, and less physically exhausted two hours following the group experience compared to non-sweat participants.

There is nothing new under the sun, as the saying goes. Group sweating is an ancient wisdom practice highly regarded throughout the world for its ability to promote healing and well-being. This study contributes to the evidence needed to determine whether group sweating should be added to standard psychological practice. The results of this study provide empirical support for the theory that sweat therapy enhances the quality of group process and is a useful medium for group work. At this point, a priority for future research should be to explore the use of sweat therapy with specific group populations and issues. Trying to understand the full effects of group sweating, the underlying mechanisms and why this practice remains central to many cultural groups, promises critical insight into multiple psychological, biological and sociological areas of knowledge.

References

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Membership Chair’s Report

Joshua M. Gross, PhD, ABPP

This is my second membership report since joining the Board of Directors of Division 49 in Fall 2005. I hope to give some perspective of what I believe we need to focus on in the coming year.

In 1992 we had 877 members which represented about 1% of the total division memberships in APA. Our highest year of membership was 1994 when we had 2,021 members for about 1.6% of the APA total. We have had a steady decrease in membership each year since 1994 with a concomitant decreasing percentage of the APA division membership total. In 2005 we had a meager 598 members for a total of .79% of the total division memberships in APA.

What does this mean to us today? Clearly a new division, as we had in 1992 brings in the psychologists who want to participate in the new area of specialization. It would appear that this draw endured for about three years and we have been on steady decline since then. Today we need to consider this data both in terms of APA overall as well as our specialty domain of group psychology and group psychotherapy.

At the time of this writing we are still dealing with 2005 membership statistics and I would like to describe some of the characteristics of our membership. Of our 598 members we have 392 men and 204 women with 82.8% describing themselves as being of Euro-American descent. Less than 1% of our members describe themselves as being American Indian, Multiracial/multi-ethnic or not specified. 1% describe themselves as Asian, 3.2% Hispanic, 2.5% Black and 10% not specified.

In terms of age our largest demographic is 70 years or older at 26.8%. In decreasing proportion of membership our demographics reveal that 55–59 years represents 17.6%, 60–64 years 16.7%, 50–54 years 11.7%, 65–69 years 9%, 45–49 years 6%, 40–44 years 2.3%, 35–39 years 2.2%, 30–34 years .5% and not specified 7.2%. Our mean membership age is 62.9 with a standard deviation of 12.3 years. It is very clear that the majority of our members are mature in their life years and likely their practice in psychology. Less than 5% of our membership is under 45 years of age.

This age and cultural diversity data has some long and far reaching ramifications for the future of our Division and perhaps also gives us some guidance about where we should be putting our membership focus. Clearly, we need to work to develop a membership that is younger and more culturally diverse if we are to do a good job of promoting and developing group psychology.

The history of group therapy is that it came of age in times of war when there were too many patients and not enough doctors. Group therapy has offered the promise of more care for fewer dollars for close to a century and the issues and difficulties in today’s mental health care system needs our attention. The leadership and membership of Division 49 are in the position to do something about these trends.

It is my goal to carry on with the plan described by Division 49 Past President Steve Sobelman, PhD, who has encouraged each of us to recruit a new member each year. Over and above this simple and effective plan we need to start an active discussion among our membership about how we can draw a more diverse and younger membership into Division 49. As the old ditty goes we need to “Make new friends and keep the old, one is silver and the other is gold.” Our mentorship, wisdom, and keeping of the traditions rests in the hands of our elders and we appreciate their longstanding dedication to our work. We also need the benefit of more newly minted and early career psychologists joining with our ranks who bring new ideas and cultures into our membership.

The process of membership development has many facets. It starts with the leadership making it clear that we have room for new members and that they are welcomed. It is also necessary for all of the Division 49 members to take some responsibility for bringing new psychologists into the fold. If each of us took on the mission of mentoring and encouraging new psychologists to join with the Division we would soon double our membership.

Perhaps the following three questions may help to focus our thoughts on how to make this work: How many of you are involved with the supervision of interns and residents in professional psychology? How many of you are involved with the mentorship or administrative direction of early to mid-career psychologists? How many of you know psychologists who practice as you do but are not involved in Division 49? These three groups represent the group psychologists in our surrounding communities who are eligible for membership in Division 49. Unless we work together bring in this population of outsiders our long term viability is clearly in question.

I would like to see each of us take on the challenge raised by Steve Sobelman, PhD, by bringing in at least one new member to our Division in the coming year. We need to fight the tendency for diffusion of responsibility and recognize the writing on the wall. Our division is not thriving, and the bulk of our membership will not be active in the next five years.

In the coming year I hope to hear from more of you about your ideas about how to increase our diversity and size of membership. Thank you for your interest in Division 49 of APA. I can be reached at jgross@admin.fsu.edu or 850-644.8875.

Help Us With Our Membership! Please encourage your colleagues to join Division 49. An application form is in every issue. Our Membership Chair, Joshua Gross, PhD will be pleased to help. He can be reached at JGross@admin.fsu.edu.
Up to the Task? Challenges in Group Work with Adolescents

Jennifer Harp, PhD

Group work with adolescents requires knowledge of developmental theory, keen awareness, and an appreciation for adventure and surprise. Given the significant and sometimes changing needs of adolescent groups and group members, group leaders are faced with a multitude of opportunities and challenges. Although not for the faint-hearted, group psychotherapists and counselors who work with adolescents find themselves in unique positions to impact and offer meaningful assistance to their young group members. Today’s youth face a world that we could not have imagined in our own tender years; sensitive awareness of emerging, contemporary difficulties affecting today’s adolescents is crucial. At the same time, adolescents continue to face more universal trials and triumphs inherently necessary for growth and maturation. As these and other themes predominate, contextual matters remain a primary consideration in group work with adolescents as such work most often includes parents, school systems, and others who might be peripherally involved.

We are fortunate to have two group consultants who share their skills and knowledge in this difficult and rewarding area of group work. Dr. Andy Horne and Dr. Maria Riva respond to our reader’s dilemma with insight and compassion. Special thanks to Dr. Janice DeLucia-Waack for her assistance in helping to locate this particular dilemma related to group work with adolescents.

EDITORIAL QUESTIONPOSED:

Dear Consultation Corner,

I am currently leading several groups with high school students. I have found that having a theme for these groups, along with designing sessions to teach skills based on a needs assessment around the theme of the group, helps to set goals, individually and for the group, and also to draw students into the group initially. However it seems that every time I have a clear plan of what to do in a session with an activity, either something happens in group that seems important but is not related to our group goals, or a group member brings up a topic that is important but then again doesn’t seem to relate directly to our group goals.

Two recent examples occurred during a training session for peer mediation and a discussion of assertiveness. Four of the eight members began to talk about their parents’ recent divorces and how they felt caught in the middle of their parents’ conflicts. They then began to talk to the other four members saying how lucky they were and how great their lives must be because their parents were still together. Having met with all the group members individually, I knew that each group member had some struggles with their parents and felt concerned that struggles were being minimized. At the same time, some significant issues had emerged. I wasn’t sure whether to stick to my agenda and proceed with practice situations with assertiveness skills or encourage a discussion of difficulties that all group members might be having and how they might cope with them.

Another recent example was during a body image group. Two group members were obviously upset with each other about something that had happened outside of group. We were examining myths about women’s bodies and the impact of media. The tension in the room was clear but I wasn’t sure how to relate this to our group and if it was ok since it wasn’t really about group and didn’t happen in group.

So I guess I need some help figuring out how to meet group goals and at the same time deal with unpredicted but meaningful group events. Any ideas?

Signed: Not Quite Certain

RESPONSE #1:

Dear Not Quite Certain:

The issue you present is one that has been prevalent in group work since its beginnings, and it is one that has a number of different possible directions to take. The selection of the best approach for you will be difficult because there are several equally enticing options to consider.

The first issue to be addressed is the ethical and professional demands to provide the service that you offered. When the group you offer was accepted by the students, it was with an understanding and expectation of what would be covered, how it would be managed, and what the potential outcomes might be. Now that the group is in session, the agenda seems to be changing by the participants. To change the group to meet the needs of those expressing new and different concerns than originally agreed upon may be a violation of the agreement with the concerned students and the other members. Similarly, it may be difficult to explain to others (administrators, parents) that you made the change mid-offering of the group since the change could be considered by critical outsiders as a “bait and switch” tactic to get a group going but then not following through with what was promised.

To address this first issue, you seem to have several choices: (a) inform the group that there was an agreed upon agenda and then follow that agenda. (b) Inform those expressing different needs that this group may not be appropriate and work with them to change to an alternative group format, then continue the agreed upon agenda with those who remain. (c) Negotiate changing the focus of the group from a psycho-educational model as originally defined and move toward a counseling and/or therapy group model, but only after...
informing stake holders (group members, administrators, parents, and others involved) about the change.

The second issue is related to competence of the facilitator; you in this case. While it may be relevant and engaging to follow the issues presented, this approach does not adhere to the original group agreement, and it also requires a different level of skill and intervention on the part of the leader. The skills necessary for psycho-educational group facilitation are not the same as for a counseling or therapy group; the differential training standards have been spelled out by the Association for Specialists in Group Work. If you do not have the skills to conduct the more intensive nature of the counseling or therapy group, then this should be acknowledged and referral to another facilitator should be considered.

Given that both issues above are considered, the third consideration is the ethical dilemma of possibly ignoring the presenting concerns of the students in the group. In the current environment of shuffling student concerns off or ignoring them, it is critical that the pain and conflict these students experience be acknowledged. If the topics can be acknowledged, and if you have the competence to address them in a counseling or therapy approach, either through development of an alternative group model or by reconfiguring—with permission of all group members involved—the current psycho-educational groups, then address the problems.

All too often we have group facilitators who hear the pain of the students in their groups but avoid addressing the issues because “it isn’t their job” or because of fear or apprehension of where the journey may lead. If there is an elephant in the room, acknowledge the elephant. Then find the best way of managing the elephant but do not ignore it, for that is an ultimate expression of disrespect and care for those who have turned to us for support, modeling, encouragement, and mentoring. In short, it is our job to acknowledge and address the concerns of the students we serve, but it must be done ethically, professionally, and competently. The very fact the issues are occurring in your groups indicates students feel safe being open and disclosing with you. It is time to take the next steps and help them take their disclosures to a level of healing and growth.

And the best to you in the journey.

Andy Horne, PhD
University of Georgia
Athens, GA

RESPONSE #2:

Dear Not Quite Certain,

First you seem to have some very good judgment about how to plan for your groups. I agree that when working with adolescents, you need to think about the themes, plan sessions, and focus on teaching skills. You do not say specifically what the themes of the groups are, what type of groups you are conducting (e.g., psycho-educational), the members’ ages, gender, or the ethnic/cultural background of your members. These are all important considerations, yet there are some general guidelines that will be helpful in working with adolescents in groups. I believe that almost all information raised by adolescents can be connected to your group goals and that almost everything that seems important is important.

One idea for you to consider is to have your members be more active in helping plan the themes and decide on group goals. For example, you suggest that for one of your groups the members need to become more assertive. I see a wonderful opportunity to help your group members learn to talk more effectively to others. Therefore, I do not see the theme of parenting as being off of your goal but rather a great way for them to learn to be more assertive and honest with the people in their lives, including their parents. Since you know that all of the members are having some difficulties with their parents, I might say, “you have all talked about having some problems with your parents. Some of you have talked about the struggles of having divorced parents while some of you have a hard time talking to your parents even though they are not divorced. This seems like an important discussion. Is this something that you want to talk about today?”

In your second example, you state that you think that something has gone on outside of group. This is a common characteristic of groups for adolescents since they often know each other prior to starting the group, or if your group is in a school setting, they run into each other daily. Addressing the tension in the group seems like an excellent way to connect them to your goal of assertiveness, even if this group’s theme is body image. Learning how to address difficult situations is important for all adolescents and I suggest you weave it into all groups when appropriate. You could say to the members, “I can feel some tension in the group today and wonder what is going on? Sometimes things happen between members outside of our group that gets in the way of our work inside the group.” You can certainly connect the expectations about whatever happened, to your group norms of honesty, respect, and assertiveness. Sometimes it is difficult for group leaders to remember that the themes and group goals are guidelines rather than requirements. Being a flexible and creative group leader allows you to listen to what is going on in your groups and connect this material to the group goals. It also shows adolescents that you are willing to listen to them and see them as collaborators in the group. Very few adolescents are self-referred for group treatment and hearing them and incorporating their ideas and themes into the group models for them very essential life skills.

Maria Riva, PhD
University of Denver
Denver, CO

From the TGP Editor:

Our Journal Editor, Dennis Kivlighan, is adding a Group Case Studies Section to our Journal, Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice. These case studies can be clinical or non-clinical (organizational, sports, naturally occurring groups). I would especially encourage group psychotherapists to contribute to this section as our Journal would be enhanced by more clinical articles. E-mail Dennis at dennisk@umd.edu, or feel free to contact me at abelfant@aol.com for any ideas or suggestions you might have.
Division 49 APA Convention Awards Photos

These photos were taken by Dr. Deborah Gerrity.

Dr. Gazda acknowledging our outgoing Journal Editor, Dr. Dennis Kivlighan

Dr. Gazda appreciating Dr. Jennifer Harp for her contributions to our Board of Directors

Passing the Presidential gavel to Dr. Lynn Rapin

Dr. Gazda presenting a recognition plaque for Dr. Steve Sobelman

Dr. Gazda and our Treasurer, Dr. John Dagley

From left to right: Our two Group Psychologists of the Year, Drs. Addie Fuhriman and Gary Burlingame, and to their right Dr. Sally Barlow
Self-Nomination Form
Standing Committees

If you are interested in serving on a standing committee of Division 49, Group Psychology, please complete this form.

Name __________________________________________________________________________________________________

Mailing Address__________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________ Phone__________________________________   Fax_____________________________   Email_________________________

Job Title________________________________________________________________________________________________

Institution/Affiliation_____________________________________________________________________________________

Division Status
_____ Affiliate                                  _____ Member                                   _____ Fellow

Area of Preference
If you have a preference concerning service areas, please indicate your top three by writing the number 1, 2, or 3, respectively, by the names of first, second, and third most preferred assignments. Note, however, that you need not provide those ranks if you are uncertain about your preference.

_____ Action Oriented Approaches   _____ Alcohol/Substance Abuse   _____ Awards
_____ Cultural Diversity          _____ Education and Training    _____ Ethical Guidelines
_____ Fellowship                 _____ Finance                     _____ Gender Issues
_____ Group Practice             _____ Membership                   _____ Program
_____ Publications               _____ Students

Special Interests and/or Qualifications
If you have any special interests or qualifications (e.g., previous service on Div. 49 or APA Boards/Committees that the President should consider in making decisions about committee assignments), please note them here.

________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Signature___________________________________________________________________  Date_____________________

Please mail, email, or fax the completed form (or a copy of it) to:

Lynn S Rapin, PhD
4022 Clifton Ridge Dr
Cincinnati, OH 45220-1144
Phone: (513) 861-5220
Fax: (513) 861-5220
Email: rapinls@email.uc.edu
Name: ____________________________ Degree: ____________________________

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Home Telephone: ____________________________ Office Telephone: ____________________________

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Present Status in APA: □ Member □ Associate □ Fellow □ Dues Exempt Member □ Non-Member □ Student Affiliate

APA Membership Number: ____________________________

I am applying for: (check appropriate category)

□ Member: A member of APA and have an interest in the science and practice of group psychology and/or group psychotherapy.

□ Associate: An associate member of APA and have an interest in the science and practice of group psychology and/or group psychotherapy.

□ Affiliate: A non-APA person who has an interest in the scientific advancement of group psychology and/or the professional practice of group psychotherapy.

□ Student Affiliate: A person enrolled full-time in a graduate program or school of recognized standing in psychology with an interest in the science and practice of group psychology and/or group psychotherapy.

DUES STRUCTURE
(Includes Division Journal)
Member ....................... $49.00
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Mail this application with a check payable to Division 49, American Psychological Association to the following address:
Division Services
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242

Signature of Applicant ____________________________ Date ____________________________