Group Facilitation Session and Reflection

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Group therapy can be highly valuable, especially for minors. Adolescents can benefit from a sense of connection and belonging, peer support, and opportunities to learn from others (Lameky et al., 2025). In addition, group therapy is often more affordable and provides greater access to mental health services for underserved populations. This reflection discusses my experience as a group facilitator including the purpose of the group, techniques used, and the ethical and legal considerations involved in group therapy facilitation.

Group Session Objectives and Therapeutic Techniques Utilized

The group I co-facilitated was a psychoeducational group for teens ages 11–17. The group typically incorporated CBT, DBT, and art therapy. Each session lasted three hours, with approximately 8–10 teens participating. The topics for this session were self-care and sleep hygiene. At the beginning of the group, we reviewed the group rules and checked in about how everyone's week had been. Next, we completed an "A–Z Self-Care Activity," in which group members identified self-care activities for each letter of the alphabet on a whiteboard. Members also completed a self-care assessment to identify how frequently they practiced physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and school-related self-care. They then created an action plan for incorporating self-care into their daily lives.

During the second hour, we discussed sleep hygiene and watched a psychoeducational video about teens and sleep. This was followed by a group discussion about how the information related to their experiences. We also reviewed specific strategies such as establishing a sleep schedule, avoiding caffeine later in the day, and using the bed primarily for sleeping.

During the final hour, group members created self-care vision boards using drawings and magazine clippings. They included activities that helped them manage stress, affirmations, things

that made them happy, and other personal interests. These activities encouraged participation, self-reflection, and creativity while helping members identify practical ways to improve their well-being.

Reflection on the Experience of Facilitating a Group Session

I really enjoyed working with this group because I was able to be creative and incorporate games and art into the interventions. However, I noticed that I needed to navigate conversations when certain group members took up too much time during reflections. To address this, I discussed using a code word with the group to signal when someone needed to wrap up what they were saying. I wanted to make sure everyone felt heard while also allowing other group members time to speak.

I also found facilitating the group challenging because I had to navigate different personalities and group dynamics simultaneously. Each member came from different backgrounds and circumstances, which influenced how they participated in sessions. For example, when members discussed interventions or strategies that could help others, I needed to address how they approached these conversations. Some members did not have access to the same resources as others, so it was important to encourage understanding and consideration of individual circumstances. This experience helped me recognize the importance of maintaining a supportive environment where everyone feels respected and included.

Ethical and Legal Considerations

One major ethical and legal consideration addressed before the group process is informed consent. Each group member completes an intake process to determine whether group therapy is appropriate for their therapeutic needs. During intake, the coordinator reviews informed consent with both the minor and their guardian, including client and parent rights, participation

expectations, the risks and benefits of group therapy, financial policies, and limitations to confidentiality. The coordinator also addresses questions or concerns so families can make informed decisions about care.

Confidentiality is particularly important in group therapy. During intake, the coordinator explains circumstances that may require breaking confidentiality, including situations in which a minor is a danger to themselves or others, reports of abuse of vulnerable people, or a court order. Families are also informed that although facilitators safeguard client information, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed by other group members (Lameky et al., 2025). At the beginning of each session, facilitators review group rules and emphasize maintaining confidentiality to promote trust and safety.

Conclusion

Overall, this experience increased my awareness of the challenges that can arise during group facilitation, including navigating different personalities, life experiences, and individual interpretations of what is shared during the session. It highlighted the importance of a facilitator being adaptable and equipped to address these challenges effectively to maintain group cohesion and foster a supportive environment for all participants.

References

Lameky, V. Y., Saudi, L., & Anjarwati, N. (2025). Christner, R. W., Stewart, J. L., and Mulligan, C. A. (2024). Handbook of Cognitive-Behavior Group Therapy with Children and Adolescents: New York, NY: Routledge, 546 pp., ISBN 9781351213073, Ebook: $58.26 USD. Child & Family Behavior Therapy, 47(2), 233–240. https://doi.org/10.1080/07317107.2024.2428928