

MAKING YOUR GROUP A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE



THE GROUP PROCESS

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AGENDA



- 1. Group Models**
- 2. Benefits of Group**
- 3. Organizational Preparation**
- 4. Tuckman's 5 Stages of Group Development**
- 5. Group Management Tips**

GROUP MODELS

Types of Group

Group Type	Description	Examples
Educational Groups	Help group members attain information and develop skills	Parenting groups, MH First Aid
Consciousness Raising Groups	Status groups meet for self-exploration and empowerment	Women, People of Color
Social Support Groups	Help participants share support and cope w/feelings of isolation	AA/NA, Grief Groups,
Skills Groups	Similar to educational groups but focus more on behavior	Social skills, leadership
Social Action Group	Oriented towards change thru political engagement	FTNY, Black Lives Matter

BENEFITS OF GROUP: WHY ARE GROUPS IMPORTANT?

- Reduce isolation
- Share knowledge of local resources
- Reduce stigma
- Safe place to talk and try new ways of communicating
- Opportunities to give and get support
- Offers hope
- Connect to others who really ‘get’ your experience
- Empowers parents to make changes in their lives

ORGANIZATIONAL PREPARATION



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DECIDING TO FORM A GROUP...

- Is there a need expressed by the community?
- How does it fit with your agency mission and priorities?
- How does it fit with the other programs we have?
- Does your agency support the idea?
- Do we have staff who can facilitate?
- Is it financially wise?



MEMBERSHIP

- Who will the members be?
- Will group membership be open (new members can join anytime) or closed (you can only join at certain times)?
- Will this group be on-going or for a set period of time?
- How will we accommodate the needs of members who speak a different language?



LOGISTICS

- Where will the group meet?
- When will the group meet?
- How long will the meetings last?
- Do we need supplies or curriculum materials?



ACCOMMODATIONS

- Can we provide special accommodations for participants with disabilities?
- Can we provide help with transportation?
- Will we serve food?
- Will there be childcare?



STAFFING

- Who will facilitate the group?
- Who can serve as the back-up facilitator?
- What other staff support do we need (e.g. custodian, someone to help with set-up, make reminder calls)?
- Do we need support from a supervisor and/or clinician?



UNDERSTANDING THE OVERALL GROUP PROCESS



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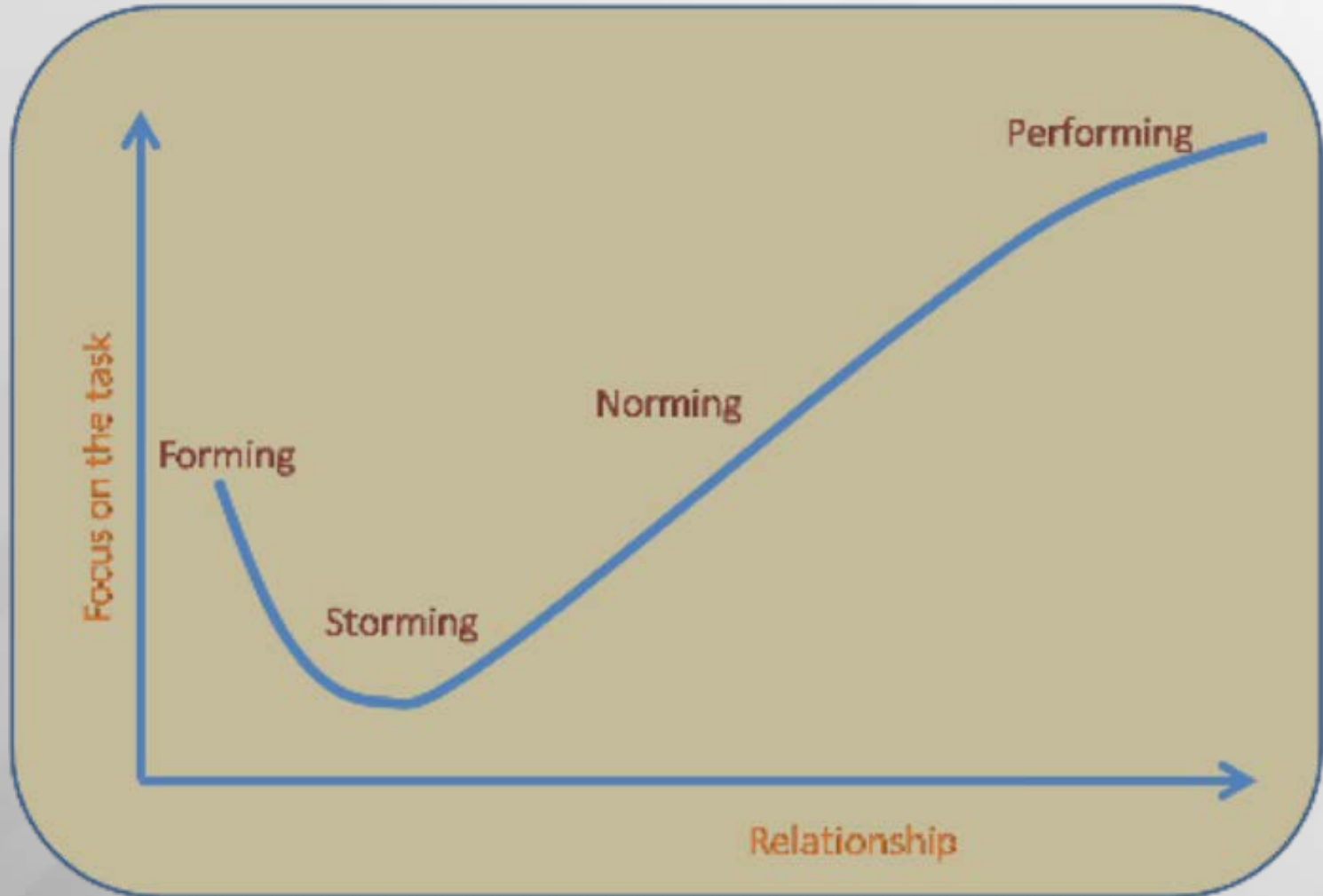
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Tuckman's 5 Stages of Group Development

- 1. Forming**
- 2. Storming**
- 3. Norming**
- 4. Performing**
- 5. Adjourning**



Goal of Group



STAGE 1: Forming



- ▶ The Polite Exploration Phase
- ▶ Facilitators play a central role at this stage
- ▶ Create a welcoming environment
- ▶ Help everyone understand and discuss the purpose and goals of the group
- ▶ Support anyone who feels anxious
- ▶ Create a group agreement about members' responsibility to the group and to one another

STAGE 2: Storming



- The Conflict Stage
- By now, the group members have gotten to know each other
- Help the group get into a routine and make expectations clear.
- Build trust and create opportunities for group members to get to know one another better.
- Work to resolve conflicts if they occur. Provide support, especially to those group members who are less comfortable or outgoing.
- You can explain these group phases so members can see that what they are experiencing is typical and that things will get better in the future.
- Help members appreciate each other's differences and strengths.

STAGE 3: Norming



- The Accommodation Stage
- In this stage, the members work toward the success of the group's goals.
- Step back and help team members take responsibility for progress towards the goal.
- Be sure to recognize each member's contribution
- Hold an activity or fun event to build a sense of 'team'



STAGE 4: Performing



- The Ultimate Stage
- The performing stage is where goals are met and tasks are accomplished.
- Once the group is going smoothly, you can and should step back.
- Actively look for opportunities for group members to take on duties and leadership roles.
- Sometimes this stage is positive and constructive, at other times it's tense and uncomfortable.

STAGE 5: Adjourning



- The Dismantling Stage
- Once all the tasks and goals have been accomplished the group will break up.
- For some members, the end of the group feels like a loss. Acknowledge this and take steps to prepare members as this time approaches.
- Take the time to celebrate the group's achievements
- Create opportunities for group members to stay in touch with each other (as a group or between individuals)

GROUP MANAGEMENT TIPS



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HOW TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP FACILITATOR

- Be Prepared!
- Be Responsible!
- Be Responsive to the Group!
- Be Respectful!
- Be Generous!
- Be Active!



TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

- Prepare for the group session
- Establish guidelines or rules
- Tips for getting started
- Keep the discussion orderly, efficient and productive



TIPS FOR GROUP FACILITATORS

- Give all members an equal opportunity to participate
- Promote cooperation and harmony
- Encourage critical thinking
- Consider co-facilitation



CO-FACILITATION: THE BENEFITS

- Facilitating a group works best with two people.
- Finding a co-facilitator makes the job easier.
- Provide support for each other.
- Assist when potential conflict arises.
- Allows for breakout exercises.
- Can provide mutual feedback and review



GROUP CHALLENGES

Facilitator Traps

- ▶ **Facilitation domination**
 - Facilitator being seen as the expert
 - Facilitator preconceptions
 - Facilitator discomfort with silence

GROUP TECHNIQUES FOR MEMBERS WHO DOMINATE

If members of the group dominate the discussion, try some of the following techniques:

- When a question is asked of the group, you can engage those who have spoken infrequently
- When a frequent talker has made a point, ask the group, “How do the rest of you feel?” or “Has anyone else felt this way?” or “Experienced this?”
- Point out the problem and ask others to contribute more.
 - For example: “We’ve heard a lot from Jerry and Ervin, but what do the rest of you think about.....?”
- In private, ask the excessive talker to help .
 - For example: be the timekeeper, give out handouts, etc.



Give All Members an Equal Opportunity to Participate

- Address comments and questions to the group.
- Make sure all members have a chance to participate.
- Scan the group looking for indications that a member wants to speak and help to bring them in the conversation.
- Don't comment after each member has spoken; it is too easy to get into a "wheel" pattern of communication, with the leader becoming the hub of the wheel.
- React to what members say with acceptance and without judgement, showing that a point is understood or needs clarification.



*“Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much.”*

Helen Keller



Panelist Discussion

- ▶ **What has helped you run a successful group with each of your specific populations?**
- ▶ **What are some of the challenges you have experienced and how did you address them?**
- ▶ **Any final tips or suggestions around working with children or families within a group setting?**

**Thank You
For
Joining Us!**



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