

Jeremy Gillentine—November 28, 2024

COUC710-- Discussion Six: Yalom, chapters 15-16 Specialized Groups & Group Supervision

### **Initial Question**

On page 639, the authors put forward that group counseling is a Triple E therapy: effective, equivalent to individual therapy, and efficient. Do you find the assertion that group therapy is “equivalent to individual therapy” to be an over statement by a huge proponent of group therapy or find from your own experience and your research that this is supported? My dilemma is, if group therapy is equivalent to individual therapy (certainly not true across the board but potentially for some if not most issues), would it be unethical to charge clients or their 3<sup>rd</sup> party payers for individual counseling when a group would be “equivalent to individual therapy”? Thanks!

### **Response #1 Question**

Kelley Ryals—Posted October 28, 2024, 5:12 PM

In chapter 16 of the text, Yalom and Leszcz (2020c) suggest that leaders do not deviate from the guidelines laid out in the book. Many different situations are listed, and my question is: How do you feel about stepping into a group and co-leading with your students to show them different techniques and group skills in a real group?

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I am not certain how I feel about co-leading a group with a student. I suppose it depends if we are speaking of master's level students or PhD level students. I think I like the way (I understand that) Liberty has been doing this. My understanding is the master's level instructors and on occasion PhD students lead groups as a demonstration of how this process could look. I think I would be more than happy to lead side-by-side with a PhD student, but I currently think the idea of allowing the master's student to perform the best they can, individually or with a student co-leader, as the group leaders and then to be given feedback seems like a better model. Additionally, I really prefer the way Dr. Hull allowed me to lead the group demonstration in his class. This helps with the gatekeeping aspect of the instructor's role to be able to observe PhD students and help them to sharpen their skills while also helping the master's student to evolve. Taylor et al., (2023) share the idea of utilizing a "reflective group". This is the general model that is being utilized in the Liberty COUC512 classes (or at least the one I was in). The instructor split the class up with half of them being in the mock group and the remaining student remaining silent to be able to observe and then share direct feedback from an outside-in approach. Those in the mock group are then able to give feedback from a different perspective and then the instructor can come along and reinforce the strengths and weaknesses observed. This seems to me to be a wise way of meeting the CACREP mandates to teach students about groups (CACREP, 2016).

## References

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs. 2016  
CACREP standards (Section 2). <https://www.cacrep.org/for-programs/2016-cacrep-standards/>

Taylor, E. R., Campbell, M., & Ottone, K. (2023). Using reflecting teams in solution-focused group counseling experiential training for master's students. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 48(4), 317-334. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2023.2253467>

Yalom, I. D., & Leszcz, M. (2020). *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* (p. 639). Basic Books. Kindle Edition.

### **Response #2 Question**

Karina Blest—November 8, 9:02 AM

As future counselor educators, how can we encourage students who appreciate the individual therapy setting more than the group therapy setting to see the value in both spaces?

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This can be a challenge due to the concern of going from one person to be focused on to now being engaged with multiple people at one time. The authors of our text state that group counseling is a Triple E therapy: effective, equivalent to individual therapy, and efficient (Yalom & Leszcz, 2020, pg. 639). I believe it is effective and efficient, but I do not buy into it being equivalent to individual (at least not across the board). The greatest benefit I see in group therapy is the ability for multiple individuals to be affected at the same time. There are many issues that

can be helped through group, but there are some issues that may be better suited for individual counseling sessions. However, there are some issues that may be better helped in group where the group can help one another to grow and mature and see various perspectives that each participant may not have been exposed to previously. There are also certain behaviors that may not be tolerated by the group and can possibly help the members exhibiting the behaviors to be forced to consider alternative modalities of interactions. A real hope is helping students to see all the potential benefits that can occur in/through group and to be motivated to put the efforts in to having group opportunities available to their clients. Ieva et al., (2009) shared in their study regarding the impact of experiential groups on master's level students, "They reported that in order to grow from the experience, they had to allow themselves to take a risk in sharing with others. Although participants felt uncomfortable at times, they were consistently able to identify the benefits of sharing." Trainings that take place in the master's level classes will hopefully introduce the concept of group in a manner that will allow the students to see the benefits and act to actively utilize group work as they move into the role of professional counselors.

Ieva, K. P., Ohrt, J. H., Swank, J. M., & Young, T. (2009). The impact of experiential groups on master students' counselor and personal development: A qualitative investigation. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 34(4), 351-368. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01933920903219078>

Yalom, I. D., & Leszcz, M. (2020). *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* (p. 639). Basic Books. Kindle Edition.