The Art of Group Counseling in Schools: Engage, Get Creative

Webinar Presenters: Christine J. Schimmel & Ed Jacobs
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Learning Outcomes:

• Define at least four essential group leading skills (e.g. cutting off, drawing out, using rounds, and using eyes).
• Identify at least three movement activities that can be used in small group.
• Identify at least three writing and drawing activities that can be used in small groups.
Group Leading is about the Art of Engagement & the Art of Control

The Key: What is my Purpose?
Purpose of Small Groups in Schools

• Psycho-education
  – Primarily Educational
  – May be psychological or emotional component
  – Commonly focused on prevention

• Counseling
  – Typically focus on students’ mental health & wellness
  – Commonly focused on intervention

Clarity of Purpose drives decision making with regards to drawing out, cutting off, and choice of activities!

Focus

• The Leader is always:
  – Holding
  – Shifting
  – Deepening
Drawing Out

- Generally a good idea to hear from everyone
- Use Your Eyes to pick up on energy!
- Avoid “Spotlighting”
  - Use Written Exercises (more later!)
  - Use Rounds (more later on this too!)
  - Use Dyads
  - Gently “nudge” members
  - Use Movement

Cutting Off

- Effective Group Leaders MUST Cut off!
- Most difficult skill to master!
  - Rambling members
  - Story tellers
  - Attention seekers
  - Offensive Comments
Cutting Off Essentials

• Rounds
• Eyes
• Listen for Voice Tone
• Use your body language
Uses & Purposes of Rounds

• Get information quickly
• Get members focused
• Get members involved (drawing out)
• Helps with cutting off (rounds have “rules”)

Kinds of Rounds

Designated Word or Number
Here/Not here/Getting Here
Yes/No (Something you want to share?)
1-10 Rating (On a 1-10, how has school been this week?)

Word or Phrase Round
On a topic
About someone’s ideas

Comment Round
“What stood out to you?”
“How was your week?”
Creative Group Exercises

Writing & Drawing

- **Sentence Completion** *(The one thing I wish I did better in school is ...........)*
- **Listing** *(List two things you would like to know about applying for college.)*
- **Feed-BACK** *(Combines writing and movement)*
- **Checklists** *(REBT Disputing – Circle the assumptions that you tell yourself.)*

Group members will often feel more comfortable reading what they wrote!
Movement

• Continuums
• Feedback Lines
• Sculpt how you feel about the group
• Move to a spot in the room

Even hesitant group members will “speak with their feet!”

Props

• Fuses
• Cups
• Shield
• Filter
• Small Chair
• Empty Chair
• Rearview Mirror
• Hammer
• Bottle of Soda

Props get members engaged and focused in a timely manner!
Questions & Comments

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