

# **Group Counseling**

## **Lecture 8**

### **Person - Centred Group Counseling**

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# Introduction

Person- centred therapy approach focuses on value of the human person. This theoretical approach found behavioral therapy too mechanical and sought to bring the face of humanity in therapy.

It borrowed a lot from Maslow's hierarchy of needs and existential therapies. One of the most powerful outcomes of person-centred therapy is self-actualization.



# Introduction

Counselors facilitate these goals by providing an open, accepting environment where clients can openly discuss their feelings and experiences with each other.

Techniques such as active listening, reflective dialogue, role-play, problem solving exercises, art activities, and more to encourage self-discovery.

In this lecture, we shall learn more about how this theory can be applied in group counseling.



# Expected Lecture Outcomes

Be

At the end of this lecture, you will be expected to:

Define

Define the term person centred group counseling.

Describe

Describe person centred group counseling process and techniques.

Discuss

Discuss the benefits of person centred group therapy.

# Person-Centered Group Counseling Process



- Person-centered (PC) group counseling is a great way to provide support to individuals who may be struggling with mental health and social issues.
- It provides an environment where people can come together to share their struggles and experiences and receive feedback and support from others who have been in similar situations.
- This brings a sense of belonging and togetherness.
- This type of counseling process helps individuals work through their issues in a safe and supportive setting for all.

# Defining Person Centred Group Counseling

Focuses on the individual's experience and encourages them to explore their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in a supportive environment.

It emphasizes the individual's own ability to find solutions to their problems.

In PC, counselors create an atmosphere of trust and safety where members can feel comfortable taking risks and exploring personal issues.

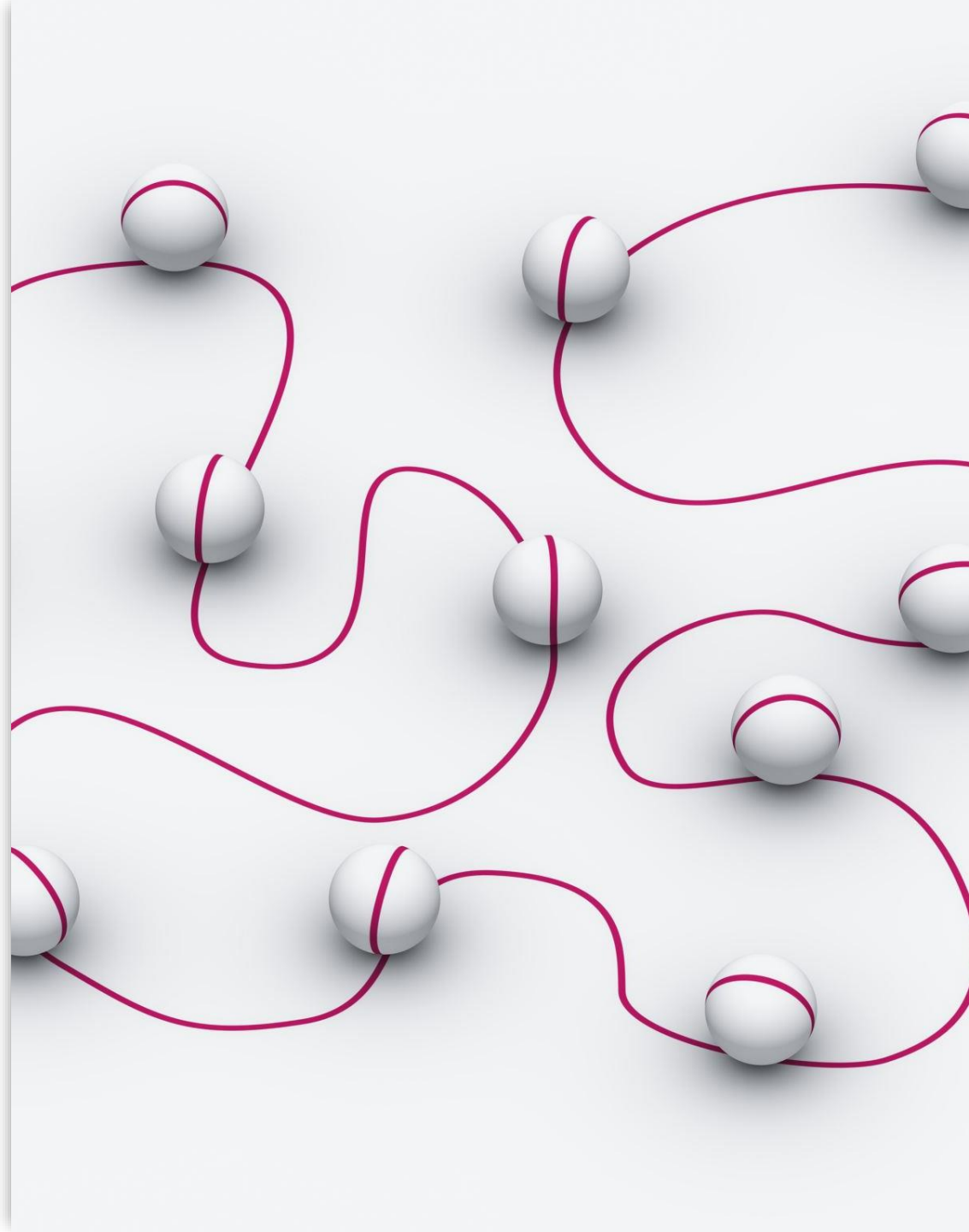
Members with mutual support, are encouraged to take responsibility for their own growth and development

# Foundations of Person Centred Therapy

The self-concept is a central aspect of the person-centered approach to counselling.

It is basically how people define themselves, for example, 'I am caring, I am cheerful, I can sometimes be funny.'

It is 'a fluid but consistent pattern of perceptions of the 'I' or 'me' in relation to the environment, personal values, goals, and ideals'



# The Ideal Self

As well as a self as it exists in the present, people also have an 'ideal self' which is the self they ideally want to be.

This makes the interesting point that the self-concept might have been more accurately named the 'self-process', as this term more precisely captures the fluid, ever-changing nature of the self as conceived by Carl Rogers.

Carl Rogers had deep philosophical belief that one can shape their own pathway given a supportive environment.



# Primary PC Goal

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The primary goal of person-centered group counseling is to create an environment where people feel comfortable discussing their feelings and concerns without judgement or criticism.



The counselor will help facilitate conversations by providing guidance, asking questions, and encouraging open dialogue between members.



This type of counseling differs from traditional individual counseling as it allows members to learn from each other's experiences and provide feedback on how they are dealing with their own issues at a personal and communal level.



# Relationship Building Core Conditions



**Empathy**



Ability to imagine self in another person's situation, results ;



Lessens judgement



Less anxiety



Happier



More satisfied



# Genuineness



Ability to be real, self without masks. This leads to:



Enhanced self acceptance



Confidence



Control



Less anxious



Embodiment

# Unconditional Positive Regard

Acceptance of  
others without  
judgement

Leads to:

High self  
esteem

Freedom

Hope

# The Role of the Counselor



Main goal is creating a safe space for the group to discuss their feelings.



Setting ground rules for how conversations will flow, using confidentiality agreements, and establishing expectations for behavior.



Once the space has been established, the counselor will introduce topics for discussion that are relevant to the group's needs.

# Cont....

Person centred counselors are catalyst of change without force.

He/she uses core conditions that enhance a working relationship with the members of the group.

He/she knows the value of feelings for individual members and among the participants as a group

Safety and freedom to be very critical in person centred therapy.

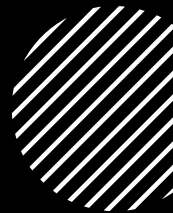
# Topics

- Managing stress,
- Coping with change,
- Building healthy relationships,
- Mental health issues,
- Social problems,
- Performance problems,

- Addictions,
- Skills capacity building,
- Chronic Illness,
- Divorce, separation, betrayal, trauma,
- Loss, and grief among others



# Expected Therapy Outcomes.



The following are the expected PC therapy outcomes:



Enhanced self-awareness



Enhanced interpersonal skills.



Enhanced assertiveness



Purpose driven future.

# Key Benefits of Person-Centered Group Counseling



## INCREASED SELF-AWARENESS

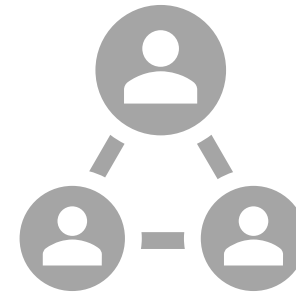


THROUGH ACTIVE LISTENING, COMPASSIONATE QUESTIONING, AND POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM OTHERS IN THE GROUP, INDIVIDUALS CAN GAIN GREATER INSIGHT INTO THEIR OWN THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND BEHAVIORS BY LISTENING TO OTHERS SHARING.

# Mutual Understanding



Person-centered group counseling aims to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding between all members of the group.



This allows members to feel comfortable expressing themselves openly and honestly. Thus, promoting genuineness and realness. This is a very fertile ground for trust building.

# Supportive Environment



Person-centered group counseling provides a safe space where members are encouraged to share experiences with each other without fear of judgment or criticism.



Free expression of personal views, emotions is evident thus building self-confidence.

# Goal-Oriented Growth

Members can work together towards common goals that help them grow as individuals as well as strengthen their relationships with one another. There is focus on all undertakings.

Less stress and clarity of goals and future.

# Self-Esteem Building and Meaningful Relationships



Awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, they can learn how to use these traits to build self-esteem and confidence.



Effective tool for helping people develop meaningful relationships with others while growing in self-awareness.



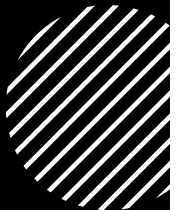
It also offers a supportive space where members can share experiences without fear of criticism or judgment.



Unearthing potential and self actualization



# Person-Centered Group Counseling Challenges



These include :

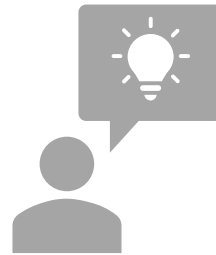
- Managing multiple personalities,
- Creating trust and safety,
- Dealing with resistance

NB: Some cases will need some pushing not let be own guides

# Managing Multiple Personalities



Each person has their own background and set of experiences that inform their opinions and behaviors.



As the counselor, it can be difficult to manage these multiple personalities to create an environment conducive to open dialogue and growth.



To do this successfully, counselors must be able to recognize how people interact with each other and provide guidance when necessary.



# Creating Trust & Safety

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- To achieve this goal, counselors must foster an environment where members feel comfortable sharing their thoughts without fear of judgment or criticism from others.
- This includes providing clear boundaries for acceptable behavior and allowing everyone a chance to speak without interruption or ridicule.

# Dealing With Resistance

- This could be anything from refusal to participate in activities or discussions or unwillingness to take responsibility for one's actions or feelings.
- As the counselor, it is your job to identify these issues early on and work with everyone on overcoming these obstacles for them to get the most out of therapy sessions.
- This could mean providing additional support outside of sessions or helping them find ways they can better express themselves within the group setting.

# Establishing a Secure Environment for Group Counseling

## *Secure and safe environment*

- Group counseling requires a secure and safe environment for individuals to share their feelings, thoughts, and experiences..
- The *physical* safety of the group is paramount and can be established by providing a comfortable space with good lighting, appropriate seating arrangements, and access to necessary amenities such as tissue boxes or water bottles.



# *Psychological Safety*

- Active listening and understanding without judgment.
- Developing ground rules for *confidentiality* and respect
- Allowing people to express themselves freely without fear of criticism or ridicule from other participants.

# Structuring Sessions

Provide *structure* during group sessions.

Setting time frames for each discussion topic or activity,

Assigning roles to different participants,

*Outlining expectations*

Clear instructions and communication

# Others.....



Practice non-directive techniques, such as *open-ended questions* or *reflective statements*.



Track how individuals are feeling throughout the process by regularly checking in with them and monitoring their level of engagement in activities or discussions.



Once clients are safe and secure this gives them an opportunity to learn from one another through meaningful dialogue.

# Conclusion

In this lecture we have discussed the person centred group counseling theory, facilitator's roles and therapy benefits

In our follow up lecture 10, we shall discuss group integrative group counseling.

# References

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THANK YOU

