

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 459 390

CG 031 434

AUTHOR Caffaro, John
TITLE Group Therapy Training in a Doctoral Program.
PUB DATE 2001-08-00
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Psychological Association (109th, San Francisco, CA, August 24-28, 2001).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Students; *Counselor Training; *Experiential Learning; *Group Therapy; Higher Education; Peer Relationship; Supervision; Theory Practice Relationship
IDENTIFIERS California (Los Angeles)

ABSTRACT

This document describes a program at the California School of Professional Psychology-Los Angeles that provides a three-semester sequence of group therapy courses to counseling students. In the students' final year, they are required to take an advanced clinical course titled Advanced Group Process. The course synthesizes didactic methods for teaching theory, experiential methods for developing applied clinical and interpersonal skills, and offers opportunities for self-awareness. Instructional methods include assigned readings; class discussion; weekly reaction papers; and self-evaluation of co-leadership class activities. Each component of the course makes use of reflecting teams and peer learning in-groups. The first 9 weeks consist of instruction and simulated learning group experiences. The following 9 weeks are devoted to student co-leaders conducting an in-class process learning group. During the final course period outside, students participate in a learning group. The experience gives students the opportunity to see and hear their peers conduct supervision and allows instructors to hear how the students are incorporating material presented in the class readings, lectures, and discussions on group psychotherapy. (JDM)

- **Group Therapy Training in a Doctoral Program**

John Caffaro, Ph.D.
Professor, California School of
Professional Psychology – Los Angeles, CA.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

J. CAFFARO

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

INTRODUCTION

- Students at the California School of Professional Psychology – Los Angeles have the opportunity to enroll in a 3-semester sequence of Group Therapy courses. The first course is offered in the G3 year and is a one semester Group Therapy elective.
 - In their final G4 year, students are required to take an advanced clinical course titled, the P900. I have taught a P900 titled Advanced Group Process for the past 7 years. The course allows students who have completed the G3 Group therapy elective to advance their skills and knowledge base in group therapy by participating in a year and one half of group therapy training prior to obtaining their doctorate degree.
- I. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS
- The course is divided up into three major components. Each component is designed to provide a developmental framework for subsequent learning:
 - P900 course synthesizes didactic methods for teaching theory, experiential methods for developing applied clinical and interpersonal skills, as well as providing opportunities for increased self-awareness (Feiner, 1998).
 - Instructional methods utilized in the course include assigned readings, class discussion, written summaries of in-class group process experiences, peer, instructor and self -evaluation of co-leader activity in class, and weekly reaction papers.
 - Students are told at the onset of class that participation with regard to self-disclosure and self-awareness is not part of their written semester evaluation for this class.
 - Students receive the instructor's e-mail address on the first day of class and make frequent use of this form of communication throughout the year to address logistic, ethical, and clinical questions which arise between classes or meetings during office hours on campus.

- Each component of the course makes use of “reflecting team” (Anderson, 1987).
- Each component's focus is on peer learning in group (Grunebaum & Solomon, 1980).

II. Segment I: COHESION BUILDING & DIDACTIC INSTRUCTION

Mini-lecture and Skill building

- The initial 9 weeks of class consist of didactic instruction and a simulated “learning group” experience designed to build group cohesion and facilitate the development of group therapy micro-skill acquisition.
- The instructor in preparation for applied activities introduces didactic material. The premise being that cognitive abilities facilitate student ability to contextualize applied experiences more thoroughly. Material is sequentially organized to maximize the accomplishment of learning objectives for each student.
- Rules, norms, and expectations for group behavior are also explicitly discussed until a consensus is reached (Yalom, 1995). Group dynamics emerge in the process of negotiating the group contract and continue to emerge throughout the course. Ground rules for safety, confidentiality, and accountability are also discussed so that a “holding environment” is created where students can learn the relational skills necessary to conduct group therapy in developmental stages.
- I also lead the class in a simulated “learning group” experience for the second half (90 min) of class each week. This portion of the class meeting time may include structured role playing, as well as spontaneous group interactions linked to the didactic material presented previously.
- A good deal of attention is devoted to developing a class environment where safety and trust allow for the respectful expression of differences and clinical challenges, as well as support, for new and emerging group therapy skills (Salvendy, 1999). We work to create a group environment where the “safe emergency” is possible. Have

everyone make an appearance, make contact between members wherever possible (Polster & Polster, 1973).

III. Segment II: CO-LEADERSHIP & REFLECTING TEAM ENVIRONMENT

- Peer supervision of group process: The next 9-week segment of class time is devoted to student co-leaders conducting an in-class process "learning group" experience with the instructor serving as a "live" consultant.
- All groups take place in a reflecting team environment and are supervised by classmates as well as the instructor.
- Large group debriefing: after a brief 15 minute break, this class segment is immediately followed by a debriefing session in which co-leaders receive multiple levels of feedback from group members, reflecting team observers, and the instructor on their co-leadership performance. The instructor facilitates a respectful discussion of clinical choices and observations.
 - Student observers are instructed in the use of a written peer evaluation form covering co-leader, group process and individual and group content issues. The form is used to convey immediate feedback to co-leaders and returned to the instructor for evaluation.
 - Student co-leaders are also required to complete a written self-assessment of their performance which is turned in to the instructor for evaluation.

IV. Segment III: CO-LEADERSHIP, PEER SUPERVISION, & MULTI-LEVEL REFLECTING TEAM

- In-class learning group: The final course period consists of inviting 5-8 outside G1 or G2 students to serve as an ongoing "learning group" for this 9-week segment.
- Student co-leaders once again rotate facilitating the group and receiving feedback and supervision from peers, and the instructor.
- Process learning group members are also invited to remain in the room during the debriefing portion of class time providing another level of reflecting team.
- As an alternative, students may elect an optional in-class group experience led by the instructor. This is followed by instructor and peer debriefing and

supervision of the group process. Typically, process and theoretical issues raised in the experiential “learning group” portion of class will provide topics and examples for didactic instruction and training. Practical application of theories and skill building of techniques are stressed throughout this segment of the course. Students are expected to observe “learning group” dynamics based on specific lessons from the class. Throughout the course, the instructor invites and encourages class members to observe their interactive process in terms of a self-reflective loop and developmental group stages.

- The course also makes use of multiple learning modalities for teaching students about group therapy supervision including lecture and discussion, extensive use of role play, instructor demonstration, and ultimately extensive in-class review of segments of actual peer supervision experiences. This provides an *in vivo* opportunity for students to see and hear their peers conducting supervision, and for the instructor to hear first hand how the student is incorporating material presented in class readings, lecture and discussion related to group psychotherapy.

REFERENCES

Anderson, T. (1987). The reflecting team: Dialogue and meta-dialogue in clinical work. Family Process, 26, 415-428.

Caffaro, J. & Conn-Caffaro, A. (in press). Sibling dynamics and group psychotherapy. International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, NY: Guilford Press.

Feiner, S. (1998). Course Design: An integration of didactic and experiential approaches to graduate training of group therapy. International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 48, 439-460.

Grunebaum, H. & Solomon, L. (1980). Toward a peer theory of group psychotherapy, I: On the developmental significance of peers and play. International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 30, 23-49.

Polster, E. & Polster, M. (1973). Gestalt therapy integrated. NY: Vintage Books.

Salvendy, J. (1999). Ethnocultural considerations in group psychotherapy. International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 49, 429-464.

Yalom, I. (1995). The theory and practice of group psychotherapy. 4th Edition, NY: Basic Books.



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Group Therapy Training in a Doctoral Program'	
Author(s): John Caffaro, Ph.D.	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date: 8/2001

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to each document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified documents, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate these documents as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature: 	Printed Name/Position/Title: John Caffaro, Ph.D.	
Organization/Address: Professor, California School of Professional Psychology - Los Angeles	Telephone: 858/481.1320	FAX: 858/481.6807
	E-Mail Address: jcaffaro@alliant.edu	Date: 12/01

APA '01

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of these documents from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of these documents. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:

Address:

Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:

Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse: **ERIC Counseling & Student Services**
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
201 Ferguson Building
PO Box 26171
Greensboro, NC 27402-6171