Developing a Thriving Group Therapy Program at a College Counseling Center

Randal W. Boldt, Psy.D.,
Baylor University
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Why Group?
Build a Process!
Identify and Respond to challenges of developing a group program
Address institutionally relevant topics
Changing the Culture:
what do we all really want?
Building a Group Program
Getting everyone on board!
Features of an Effective Group Program
Enthusiasm is Contagious
Start Strong and Flashy
Invest in Changing the Culture
Selling Group in Triage
Every Therapist Running a Group
Diversity of Group Offerings:

- Mindfulness
- Social Confidence
- Men’s Issues
- Coping Clinic
- Recovery Issues
- Finding Your Voice
- Creative Arts X 2
- Family Exploration
- Surviving Dating
- Addiction/Recovery
- Women’s Empowerment
- Alcoholics Anon.
- Body Image/Eating Issues
- Interpersonal Process
Survival of the Fittest
The Screening Session: Finding a Place to Belong
The Screening Session:

What do Students want and need in their lives?
The Screening Session:

Screening Students IN not OUT
The Screening Session:

Building Positive Expectancies
The Screening Session:

Community Language
The Screening Session:

The Therapeutic Alliance
The Screening Session:

Corrective Emotional Experience
The Screening Session:

A Personal Caring Invitation
Investing in Success
Training Staff
Resources
Marketing
Seeding the Next Group
Lessons Learned
Why Not Join a Group?
This program is supported by the following works


Corazzini, J., (1994) Staff beliefs which hinder the use of group treatment. - Electronic Reading


Oakley, D. R., (2010) **How to Talk to Clients About Group**. Electronic Reading

Oakley, D. R., (2010) **Preparing a Client for an Interpersonal Process Group**. Electronic Reading


Association for Specialists in Group Work
Professional Standards for the Training of Group Workers
(Revision Approved by the Executive Board, January 22, 2000
Prepared by F. Robert Wilson and Lynn S. Rapin, Co-Chairs, and Lynn Haley-Banez, Member, ASGW Standards Committee
Consultants: Robert K. Conyne and Donald E. Ward)
Ideas List from other presentations

• Tips for creating a vibrant group program:
• “Think group first.”
• Be enthusiastic. Enthusiasm is contagious.
• Train staff to increase group facilitation skills.
• Train staff to teach about how to refer.
• Train staff to teach how to more effectively screen.
• Provide ongoing training to staff.
• Create brochures to give to students.
• Believe in what you’re selling.
• Provide resources for staff (e.g., have an intranet with resources available)
• Provide multiple days/times for the same group in order to accommodate student schedules.
• The key to beginning is getting everyone on board. It needs buy-in from the top.
• Groups should be integrated into the service model.
• Co-leadership generates collaboration and more enthusiasm.
• All staff should be involved.
Ideas -- continued

- Include groups in case consultation times.
- Talk about groups ALL the time.
- Always talk about groups in triage (seeding the idea).
- Offer a diversity of options (but also consider if that will work in your institution).
- A thoughtful screening session (aka, group interview or pre-group meeting) is essential: you are co-creating community, and clinician attitude and use of language is vital to creating a commitment.
- At the end of the semester, survey students to see what other groups they might like; this will seed the next group.
- Establish exclusionary criteria that all staff can agree to.
- Make groups part of clinician core practice.
- Encourage offering groups that clinicians are excited about.
- Consider having students complete a pre-group questionnaire.
- Give staff research on group efficacy.
- Provide group supervision.
- Join the American Group Psychotherapy Association.