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GROUP COUNSELING: A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH¹

Group counseling has become the preferred term to describe "counseling with more than one individual simultaneously (Gazda, Duncan, & Meadows, 1967)." There is still some confusion between group guidance, group counseling, and group psychotherapy but it appears to be abating. (My distinctions will be given later on in this paper.) There is no clear cut evolution of group counseling; however, it was used in print by Dr. R. D. Allen as early as 1931. In this journal article, Dr. Allen (1931) used the term interchangeably with group guidance and case-conference. The context in which Allen used the term suggests that he was describing what we now call group guidance.

A study of the various movements or disciplines which have contributed to the development and evolution of group counseling reveals the following: group psychotherapy, child guidance, vocational guidance, social casework, and group work (Gazda, 1968b). Late arrivals on the scene which hold great promise for positively affecting group counseling are group dynamics and social psychology. The current popularity of the entire "group movement" suggests that group counseling is here to stay. In fact, the group psychotherapy movement, in conjunction with sociometry, sociatry, and psychopharmacology has been referred to by Moreno as the "Third Psychiatric Revolution (Moreno & Kipper, 1968)."

The purpose of this presentation is to set forth a series of basic propositions for the understanding and application of group counseling. The position to be outlined here is both *developmental*, in the Havighurst (1952) sense of "developmental task," and *developing*, in the sense that changes have been made and will continue to be made as new research and clinical application suggest modifications.

Until this attempt, to my knowledge, no one has described a systematic approach to *group counseling* which recognized the differential needs of the different age groups. This paper, therefore, attempts to outline a *complete* approach to *group counseling*—an approach which describes group counseling for the young child, the preadolescent, the adolescent, and the adult.

The broad interpretation of developmental tasks as described by Zaccaria (1965) includes the "bio-socio-psychological" task of Havighurst (1952, p. 3), the "vocational developmental tasks" of Super, et al., (1957, 1963), and the "psychosocial crises" of Erikson (1960, 1959). This broad approach gives the counselor a more complete guideline for evaluating an individual's progress along his developmental pathways. Difficulty with the

¹Portions of this paper will be reproduced in a book by the author with the same title. It will be published by Allyn and Bacon in 1970.

mastery of a developmental stage signals to the parent, teacher, counselor and significant others that assistance or corrective action is necessary. *Prevention of personal disorganization should be the goal of counselors and those in the helping professions.* Group guidance is described as the chief group method aimed at prevention of personal difficulties. Group guidance, as it relates to group counseling in its preventive role, is outlined in this paper for each age level.

The age groups for which this approach to group counseling has been directed include: preschool and early school (ages 5-9); preadolescent (ages 9-13); adolescent (ages 13-20); and adult. For each group the treatment conditions are set forth including preferred size of the group, group composition, setting and media utilized, and the nature of counselor intervention. The basic contention of the developmental approach to group counseling is that different age groups require significantly different treatment conditions. For example, the size of a counseling group of five- or six-year-olds would be about 3 or 4; nine- and ten-year-olds 5 or 6; fifteen- and sixteen-year-olds, 6 to 8; and adults, 8 to 10. The treatment setting for those five to nine years of age would be a playroom; for those approximately nine to thirteen years of age, an "activity" or game room, outdoor play areas, and a conference room; for adolescents and adults, a conference room would be preferred in most instances. The media would vary with the age level of the counselee with greater emphasis on toys and play materials for the young child, games and crafts for the preadolescent, and counselee talk for adolescents and adults.

My position is that most behavior is learned through the addition of a new repertoire of behaviors or through the unlearning of old maladaptive forms and the relearning of more adaptive forms; and also, that learning of interpersonal behaviors is best accomplished in small groups. To maximize the potential for behavioral change through group counseling, certain *learning principles* seem more apropos for implementing at certain age levels than at others. For example, the emphasis on non-verbal behavior, physical touching, and symbolization through play of the young child, suggest the use of more modeling and discriminative social learning procedures in the treatment; whereas, for the adolescent more use of verbal reinforcement and operant conditioning techniques seem appropriate. In conjunction with the calculated use of learning principles, the understanding of group dynamics principles and/or alertness to group processes will provide the group counselor greater control over the therapeutic climate of the group.

Finally, in order for any relationship to be facilitative, the counselor must possess certain healthy qualities and be capable of communicating these to the counsees. These qualities have become known as the core conditions of a helping relationship and their importance and implementation will be discussed in this paper.

It becomes readily apparent that my position is an eclectic one. I am suggesting a reconciliation between learning theory or behaviorism, and relationship therapy and the amalgamation of the best from both. And, because my primary interest is in the general area of group work, I believe that we must also utilize the best information available to us from the fields of group dynamics and social psychology. C. H. Patterson recently

expressed my views on one of these issues quite well when, in defense of his own position, he stressed the importance of finding consistency among different theoretical positions regarding counseling and behavior change: ". . . The problem is to find the consistency. The same is true of the current controversy between behaviorism and relationship therapy. These are both facts; both work. If there is truth in both, there must be some way to reconcile them (1968 p. 98)." Patterson's remark was made at a seminar held through the auspices of the University of Minnesota's Counselor Education Program in which the purpose and emphasis was an attempt to build, from existing theories and models, a better theory and model for counseling and counselor education. Clyde Parker, the Seminar Coordinator and editor of the proceedings titled *Counseling Theories and Counselor Education* (1968), identified five common or similar conclusions reached through three recent comprehensive reviews of the counseling research literature by individuals representing divergent positions. The *conclusion* and *inferences* which he made from these conclusions are summarized as follows:

CONCLUSIONS

1. Nonprofessional persons can function as helpers.
 - b. Some clients get better better from counseling and some get worse.
2. Identifiable and operationally definable counselor characteristics exist and seem to have wide applicability in all counseling situations. (These are the "core conditions" of Truax, Carkhuff and Rogers.)
3. Although the core conditions seem *necessary*, there is evidence that they are *not sufficient* and that counseling must become "goal specific," including the knowledge of how to achieve the goals.
4. "There is clear agreement among all three reviewers that the most fruitful source of information for counselors is the learning laboratory. . . . The point is that counseling is learning—people can be helped to learn (can be taught?). The source of more effective counseling is probably going to be adaptation of existing and discoverable principles of learning to individual

INFERENCES

1. Counselor behavior is crucial to client change.
2. ". . . Apparently all counselors must possess the capacity for the development of behaviors which bring about these conditions [core] in the counseling relationship (Parker, 1968 p. 10)."
3. Counselors must develop the ability to define clearly a client's goal and the required competences to achieve them or decline the client's request for help. (Not all counselors are able to help with all kinds of problems.)
4. "The evidence is clear that the relationship variables are facilitators of client growth. However, the introduction of specific content (such as vocational or marital information) is not precluded. Neither is the application of particular learning principles (such as reciprocal inhibition or positive reinforcement) to the counseling relationship in order to achieve specific concrete goals

development (Parker, 1968, p. 11)."

5. The possibility exists that client change is more the result of expectancy states, faith, and susceptibility to persuasion and counselor charisma than it is the result of current explanations of client growth. Counselors need to search for relevant constructs to explain client growth and better means for increasing the power to use those that are relevant.

agreed upon by the client and the counselor (Parker, 1968, p. 11)."

5. "The major argument for firmly tying counselor education to graduate education is the need for careful scrutiny of the constructs and methodology of counseling and *not* the need to teach a fixed system of counseling. It is incumbent upon a counselor . . . continually to assess the impact of his behavior and to formulate adequate explanations of the observed phenomena (Parker, 1968, pp. 12-13)."

For the most part, the position which I refer to as "A Developmental Approach to Group Counseling," takes into consideration the most recent comprehensive research findings which I have just summarized above from Parker's (1968) work.

DEFINITIONS: GROUP GUIDANCE, GROUP COUNSELING, AND GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

Group counseling lies on a continuum between group guidance and group psychotherapy. *Group guidance* is organized to prevent the development of problems. The content includes educational—vocational—personal—social information which is not otherwise systematically taught in academic courses. The typical setting is the classroom which ranges in size from approximately twenty to thirty-five. Providing accurate information for use in improved understanding of self and others, is the direct emphasis in group guidance, whereas attitude change frequently is an indirect outcome or goal. The leadership is provided by a classroom teacher or a counselor who utilizes a variety of instructional media and group dynamics concepts in motivating students and in obtaining group interaction. Instructional media include unfinished stories, puppet plays, movies, films, filmstrips, guest speakers, audio- and video -taped interviews, student reports, and the like. Group dynamics concepts refer to the process employed in group guidance, such as sociodramas, buzz groups, panels, and other related techniques. (A more complete description of group guidance can be found in Gazda and Folds (1968).

Whereas the goal of group guidance is to provide students with accurate information which will help them make more appropriate plans and life decisions and, in this sense is prevention-oriented, group counseling is both prevention and remediation oriented. Group counseling is prevention oriented in the sense that the counselee or client is capable of functioning in society, but may be experiencing some 'rough spots' in his life. If counseling is successful, the rough spots may be resolved successfully with no serious personality defects incurred.

Group counseling is remedial for those individuals who have entered into a spiral of self-defeating behavior but who are, nevertheless, capable of reversing the spiral without counseling intervention. However with counseling intervention, the counselee is likely to recover more quickly and with fewer emotional scars.

Group counseling is defined as follows.

Group counseling is a dynamic interpersonal process focusing on conscious thought and behavior and involving the therapy functions of permissiveness, orientation to reality, catharsis, and mutual trust, caring, understanding, acceptance, and support. The therapy functions are created and nurtured in a small group through the sharing of personal concerns with one's peers and the counsellor(s). The group counselees are basically normal individuals with various concerns which are not debilitating to the extent requiring extensive personality change. The group counselees may utilize the group interaction to increase understanding and acceptance of values and goals and to learn and/or unlearn certain attitudes and behaviors (Gazda, Duncan, & Meadows, 1967, p. 305).

Although the content of group counseling is very similar to group guidance—including educational, vocational, personal, and social concerns—a number of other factors are quite different. First, *group guidance* is recommended for *all* school students on a regularly scheduled basis: *group counseling* is recommended only for those who are experiencing continuing or temporary problems that information alone will not resolve. Secondly, group guidance makes an *indirect* attempt to change attitudes and behaviors through accurate information or an emphasis on cognitive or intellectual functioning: group counseling make a *direct* attempt to modify attitudes and behaviors by emphasizing affective involvement. Finally, group guidance is applicable to classroom-size groups, whereas group counseling is dependent upon the development of strong group cohesiveness and the sharing of personal concerns which is most applicable to small, intimate groups.

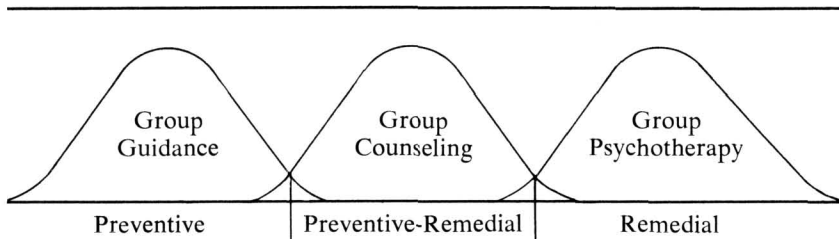
One might use an analogy based on learning principles to show a certain difference in the emphasis or approach to group guidance (which is more prevention oriented) as contrasted with group counseling (which is more remediation oriented). According to Bandura (1967), “. . . modeling procedures are more efficacious in transmitting new response patterns, whereas operant conditioning methods as applied to human behavior are typically concerned with the management and control of previously learned responses (p. 319).” In a sense, then, the informative-instructional (preventive) emphasis in group guidance can be compared with the concept of modeling (an efficacious way of introducing *new* responses for one's repertoire) and the remedial emphasis in group counseling can be related to unlearning and re-learning or, in Bandura's words, “management and control of previously learned responses”—operant conditioning.

Group psychotherapy, the third part of the guidance, counseling, therapy continuum, was coined by J. L. Moreno in 1936 (Corsini, 1957). Moreno's definition is a general definition: “Group psychotherapy means simply to treat people in groups (1962, p. 263).” It is generally accepted that there is a difference in group counseling and group psychotherapy although there is overlap between them. Brammer and Shostrom (1960) have characterized these differences by the following series of adjectives in which

counseling is described as "educational, supportive, situational, problem-solving, conscious awareness, emphasis on 'normals', and short term. Psychotherapy is characterized by supportive (in a more particular sense), reconstructive, depth analysis, analytical, focus on the unconscious, emphasis on 'neurotics' or other severe emotional problems, and long-term (1960, p. 6)." Although these differentiations were applied to individual counseling and psychotherapy, they are equally applicable to group counseling and group psychotherapy.

Figure 1 shows the relationship among group guidance, group counseling, and group therapy.

FIGURE 1



A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Heretofore no systematic attempt has been made to provide an approach to *group counseling* which was applicable to all age levels. Previous attempts have 'singled out' methods of group counseling with children, with adolescents, or with adults. Slavson (1945), however, long ago recognized the need for differential treatment for different age groups in *group therapy*. "Group therapy," he said, "is practiced on different levels, and in discussing its functions in therapy, it is necessary that these levels be kept in mind (p. 201)."

My experience also has demonstrated the need for a position which allows for and accommodates different emphases with different age groups in *groups counseling*. The developmental approach to group counseling, therefore, utilizes the concept of developmental task (Havighurst, 1952) with subsequent coping behaviors, to serve as broad guidelines for the group counselor. Havighurst defines developmental task as follows:

A development task is a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by society, and difficulty with later tasks (1952, p. 2).

Havighurst (1952) cites two reasons why the concept of developmental task is useful to educators. His reasons seem equally applicable to counselors and counseling: "First, it helps in discovering and stating the purpose of education (counseling) in the schools The second use of the concept is in the timing of educational (counseling) efforts (p. 5)." He describes timing to mean *teachable moment* (1952, p. 5). Likewise, readiness for counseling will be determined by the dissonance between the developmental task and its subsequent coping behavior.

Our society and much of western culture is organized on the basis of an expected progressive development in the biological, social, and psychological realms of its citizens and, as such, the concept of developmental task has general applicability. For example, our schools are organized on a pre-school and kindergarten, early elementary school, middle school, and high school basis. State laws govern marriageable ages of its citizens. Federal laws govern legal retirement age, and so forth.

Although there are wide ranges in the biological, social, and psychological development of individuals, there are classifiable periods between and within age groups. Several individuals (Blocher, 1966; Brammer & Shostrom, 1960; Erickson, 1950; Havighurst, 1952; Super, et al., 1957, 1963) have developed classification schemes for the developmental phases. For group counseling purposes, the phases can be divided into (1) early childhood or preschool and early school, age 5-9; (2) preadolescent, ages 9-13; (3) adolescent, ages 13-20; and (4) adult. That there is sometimes considerable overlap between age groups, is well documented. There is also a special discrepancy between the sexes at the end of the latency period and beginning of pubescence — beginning between ages 8-13 for girls and 10-15 for boys. The group counselor, therefore, must be alert to individual differences and organize his groups to accommodate them. Since "Little is known as to what the values of a group to a child of 3 or 4 may be (Slavson, 1945, p. 203)," the emphasis of my approach begins with the kindergarten child of age five.

CORE CONDITIONS OF PERSONAL GROWTH

Since Carl Rogers' (1957) classic paper: "The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change," over a hundred studies have been performed in an attempt to confirm or discredit his hypotheses. Two individuals in particular, in addition to Rogers, have taken the leadership in this research. Charles Truax and Robert Carkhuff (1967) have reported a number of studies and a rationale for therapy in *Toward Effective Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Carkhuff and Berenson (1967) have also reported several studies and a rationale for therapy in *Beyond Counseling and Therapy* as have Berenson and Carkhuff (1967) in *Sources of Gain in Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Rogers (1967), himself, initiated extensive investigations into the core conditions which are reported in *The Therapeutic Relationship and its Impact*.

The essence of numerous studies of the core conditions is that the counselor (facilitator, or helper) must possess and be able to communicate *empathic understanding, positive regard, and concreteness of specificity of expression*. These dimensions are related to the degree to which the counselee or helpee can explore and experience himself in the relationship. Additional dimensions involving the levels of appropriate self-disclosure, spontaneity, confidence, intensity, openness, flexibility, and commitment of the counselor have been hypothesized, but empirical evidence is still sparse (Carkhuff & Berenson, 1967). In the group setting, Truax (1961) found *intrapersonal* exploration (equated, more or less, with therapeutic effectiveness) to be positively related to *concreteness of the group discussion, a cooperative group spirit, group cohesion, empathy among the clients, and*

ego involvement of the clients. He also found the condition of client concreteness or specificity to be an “. . . extremely potent therapeutic variable . . . (Truax, 1961, pp. 14-15).” And, “the greater the *genuineness* of the group members in the psychotherapy relationship, the greater the amount and depth of intrapersonal exploration, the development of insight, and the rate of personal references (Truax, 1961, p. 16).”

To illustrate the general applicability of the core conditions to all age levels and types of clients, I would like to close this section with a quotation from Truax:

A massive amount of evidence, involving well over a hundred research studies, now indicates that the interpersonal qualities or skills . . . defined under the general terms “accurate empathic understanding,” “nonpossessive warmth,” and “genuineness” are central to a wide variety of therapeutically induced behavior changes in clients—whether these clients are hospitalized psychotics, juvenile delinquents, college underachievers, fourth-grade students in arithmetic or reading, out-patient neurotics, physically and emotionally handicapped vocational rehabilitation clients, or general run-of-the-mill counseling center clients . . . (1968, p. 147).

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CORE CONDITIONS IN A COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP

Before a counselee can be helped, the core conditions must be made operational. Recently, Carkhuff (1969a) has outlined an operational model for implementing the core conditions in a group setting. The model consists of three phases: (1) counselee exploration and experiencing, (2) counselee understanding, and (3) counselee action.

The counselor and other group members or helpers assist the counselee(s) in self-exploration by conveying empathic understanding, warmth, respect, and assisting the counselee(s) to be concrete or specific about his/their feelings and experiences. In the second phase, the counselor and/or group helpers help the counselee(s) assemble the various aspects of his/their problems in such a way as to provide a deeper *understanding*. The third or *action* phase is generated through the counselor and other helpers in the group assisting the counselee(s) to *act* on his/their new understandings. The *action* conditions are based on counselor or helper's increased levels of *empathy, respect, self-disclosure, genuineness, therapeutic confrontation* or “telling it like it is,” and his ability to communicate what is going on between himself and the counselee (s) (immediacy).

The three phases can be subsumed under a *facilitative* (early) phase and an *action* phase. During the *facilitative* phase, the counselor must build an *experiential base of mutual trust and caring* before he and the counselee can move toward counselee action. To build the experiential base, the counselor or helper must respond to the counselee's statements with *interchangeable* responses. That is, he must, at first, or early in the relationship or encounter, communicate content and affect to the counselee that is the same (interchangeable) as that which the counselee is expressing.

As the counselee moves toward greater exploration and understanding of his concerns, and as he comes to trust the counselor or helper, the counselor or helper uses more leading, interpretive, or confronting responses. He begins to use higher level or more *facilitative* responses through his own expressions of *empathy, warmth, and caring* for the counselee, his own

pertinent self-disclosures, and his conveying of a greater degree of counselee respect and genuineness.

This process may be summarized by Carkhuff's own description of it. The helper offers him (helpee or counselee) understanding that is interchangeable in terms of the feeling and meaning that the helpee is expressing so that the helpee will explore his problem more fully. As the helpee explores his problem more fully, the helper offers higher levels of understanding. As the helper offers higher levels of understanding the helpee comes to understand his problem more fully. As the helpee comes to understand his problem more fully the helper senses the helpee's need to do something about it. Together they develop courses of action that give the helpee the best chance of dealing with his problem.

Helping does not end here. The helpee learns from acting and the cycle of exploration-understanding-action is repeated in many different ways and in many different problem areas. At all points the helper works in such a way as to give the helpee the best chance of succeeding. At all points the helping process tries to get the helpee to act on his understanding. When he acts, he learns new things and opens up new areas. When he explores these new areas he comes to new understanding and then acts again in a new and more effective way (1969b, p. 15).

Carkhuff (1969b) takes this relationship one step further: "In order to accomplish this (helping relationship) the helper must himself be understanding and acting in effective ways. The helper must be able to demonstrate that if he were in the helpee's shoes he could have found a way to handle the helpee's problems. If he cannot demonstrate this then there is no reason for the helpee to seek his help (p. 15)."

It becomes at once evident that the therapeutic encounter described above contains elements for gain or growth and potential for deterioration. Indeed, Truax and Carkhuff (1964) have found that close relationships contain the elements for growth or deterioration. In this regard Carkhuff and Berenson (1967) stated,

. . . Thus, in significant counseling and psychotherapy, teacher-student, or parent-child relationships, the consequences may be constructive or deteriorative on intellectual as well as psychological indexes. In addition, there is extensive evidence to indicate that to a large degree, the facilitative or retarding effects can be accounted for by a core of dimensions which are shared by all interactive human processes, independent of theoretical orientation, that is, patients, clients, students, and children of persons functioning at high levels of these dimensions improve on a variety of improvement criteria, while those of persons offering low levels of these dimensions deteriorate on indexes of change or gain (p. 4).

APPLICATION OF A DEVELOPMENT APPROACH TO EARLY CHILDHOOD

The following example illustrates how the concept of developmental task can be utilized in group guidance and group counseling during the period of early childhood. The task is "Developing an Appropriate Symbol System and Conceptual Abilities (Lilienthal & Tryon, 1950)." During this period the coping behavior that the child needs to establish includes rules of conduct and the exploration of reality. Lacking experience, the young child has no definite concepts of space, time, cause and effect, and his understanding of reality is also vague. He is trying to establish relationships between different things that he has seen and heard (Lilienthal & Tryon, 1950).

GROUP GUIDANCE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

Group guidance-wise, the program developed by Ojemann (1959): *Developing a Program for Education in Human Relations*, is apropos for teaching causal relationships with emphasis on human behavior. In fact, this program is an excellent group guidance program for children through the period of early and middle childhood. It begins with kindergarten and carries through grade six. This program utilizes unfinished problem stories, role-playing and sociodrama, student workbooks, and pertinent activities that are designed for use in language arts, social studies, science, the home environment, the playground, and so forth. There is also ample material to provide good imitative (modeling) behavior for the young child. (For additional stories to serve modeling purposes, see Peters, Shelley, & McCormick, 1966) The emphasis of the Ojemann program is on imparting of information and concepts which will enable the young child to better understand himself, others, and himself and others in relationship to their environment. It is preventive in nature.

One example of a causal relationship developed for the second grade deals with the story of a boy who did not finish his workbook because he had been ill with the flu. The class became involved when it was discovered that he marked his book arbitrarily just to finish in order for him to be eligible to attend the annual class party. (This story actually developed from the showing of two still life pictures around which the class created the incident, see Ojemann, Hughes, & Chowning, 1962). This means of involving the class enabled them to deal with problems that were current and meaningful to them. The teacher then was able to help the class develop an understanding of this kind of problem behavior (casual relationship) and a wholesome resolution of the problem. Similar stories and pictures for the spontaneous evocation of conflict situations are included in this approach to group guidance which utilizes student answers in workbooks, student demonstrations of problem resolution through role-playing, etc. The emphasis is on the timely *involvement* of students in the problem for increasing understanding. Many of the methods utilized are *action-oriented* which appeals to this age group because of their natural receptiveness to play and activities. This activity and this program involved an entire second grade class and the emphasis was on cognitive or intellective understandings and prevention of maladaptive behavior — hence group guidance — according to my definition.

GROUP COUNSELING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

For group counseling children would be selected on the basis of a demonstrated tendency toward difficulty understanding the cause-effect relationship of their behavior. In the age group of 5-6-7, only three or four children would be selected for a counseling group and these would be selected after careful appraisal of the possible therapeutic effects of one on the other. For example, no more than one aggressive child would be included in the group and to offset his aggressiveness a child who is neither passive nor aggressive would be included.

The playroom would include toys that would bring the children into contact with each other and require a certain degree of cooperative behavior. For example, puppets could be available for puppet plays and drama-

tizations requiring more than one character. Housekeeping equipment such as miniature dishes, stoves, refrigerators, etc., for "playing house" could be made available to encourage mutual and cooperative relationships. The counselor can read or make up stories in which good models are rewarded for preferred behavior, whereas poor models are not rewarded. The counselor would help each child understand the cause-effect relationship of both his cooperative and uncooperative behavior trying to emphasize the positive effects of cooperative behavior to encourage the learning of this behavior versus focusing on uncooperative behavior with the possibility of inadvertently reinforcing uncooperative behavior.

LEARNING PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO GROUP GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING WITH CHILDREN OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AGE

GROUP GUIDANCE

In the group guidance example, a number of learning principles are involved. First, the teacher must select pictures which are suggestive of a current class problem. Thus *readiness* for involvement is assured. Secondly, the teacher allows for and encourages student involvement. Participation in problem solving maintains the students' interest and motivation. (This could include presentation of a sociodrama which is a kind of 'play acting' for young children and for which they have a natural proclivity.) If a sociodrama is presented, several learning principles can be utilized. For example, a kind of *disensitization* is a part of the worm up of a sociodrama. The sociodrama itself contains opportunities for rewarding (*conditioning*) positive attempts at problem resolution and not responding to poor attempts. It also allows for the application of *shaping* behavior by repeated replays of the sociodrama with subsequent verbal and nonverbal rewards for desired behavior and non-reinforcement of undesirable behavior. There are also excellent opportunities for *modeling* in combination with conditioning methods, e.g., Jack (1934) and Page's (1936) combined use of modeling and social reinforcement procedures to increase the assertiveness of relatively inhibited children. Modeling alone could be instituted through stories — vicarious modeling (Bandura, 1967) or symbolic modeling (Chittenden, 1942). In addition, the existence of the classroom group maximizes the possibilities for stimulus and response generalizations so that the learnings in the classroom can be generalized beyond to similar settings.

GROUP COUNSELING

In the careful selection of children for the counseling group, one would take cognizance of and provide structure for appropriate *models* to be present in the group since young children learn much of their behavior through imitation. Thus a child would have the opportunity to learn by imitating a "less aggressive" or "less passive" model (Bandura, 1967). The inclusion of play materials requiring cooperative behavior would provide the counselor with an opportunity to use rewards (*conditioning*) for cooperative attempts on the part of different children.

The free play and security-evoking atmosphere of the playroom itself would be motivating for most children to venture into relationships. The selection of toys which would insure interpersonal contact among the group members gives the counselor a certain control over the evocation of certain

kinds of behaviors and thus the opportunity to *shape* appropriate behavior (operant conditioning) once it occurs. These learning principles represent only a few which are possible within the playroom for group counseling with young children. However, for the young child, modeling (imitating) behavior is one form of learning which does not depend heavily on word symbols and therefore should be emphasized for this age group where a high level of language facility is not present. The use of puppets and stories to teach new and appropriate responses also seems highly appropriate because of the limited response repertoire of the young child (Bandura, 1967; Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961, 1963).

APPLICATION OF A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH TO PREADOLESCENCE

Let us continue our illustrations of the application of the developmental approach to group procedures with an illustration of how the task "Relating to Changing Social Groups, (Lilienthal & Tryon, 1950)" can be applied to group guidance and group counseling with the preadolescent. During this age level a significant coping behavior to be developed is the establishment of peer groupness and learning to belong (Lilienthal & Tryon, 1950). This is the age during which boys prefer to be with boys of the same age and girls of their own age — variously referred to as the latency period, homosexual age, and "gang" age.

GROUP GUIDANCE FOR THE PREADOLESCENT

In keeping with the emphasis of preventing problems through providing accurate and timely or relevant information, the guidance group would be utilized to assist the preadolescent in understanding the need to move from an adult-dominated relationship to one of peer involvement and acceptance. During this stage the child will no longer be able to depend solely on the coping behaviors that were successful for him in relating to adults or mixed-sex groups of children his own age. He will need information about changing interests of his new age-group, the importance of developing the concepts of identity and trust (in gangs or cliques), fair play in games, etc. To achieve the goal of group guidance for this age group, a variety of stimuli or media may be utilized to motivate and teach or provide knowledge pertinent to the "task" needs of the children. For example, a story from *Reading Ladders for Human Relations* (Crosby, 1963) could be selected to illustrate good and poor ways of achieving peer group acceptance and identity — good models for imitating (Bandura, 1967). Films and filmstrips also could be used to provide for modeling (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963). Illustrations could be secured from examples or incidents of good and poor sportsmanship in intramural sports activities that focus on competition *within* the sex groups.

GROUP COUNSELING FOR THE PREADOLESCENT

Group counseling for the preadolescent requires making a break with traditional methods of group work wherein there is emphasis on play in a playroom setting for the young child and interview groups for adolescents and adults. For the preadolescent or "pre-pubertal" children, Slavson (1952, p. 280) offers four different types of therapy groups: (1) 'activity group psychotherapy,' (2) 'transitional groups,' (3) 'play group psychotherapy,' and (4) 'activity-interview group psychotherapy.'

The four variations offered by Slavson represent variations of play, activity, and interview group therapies; however, the real contribution of these approaches to *group counseling* is the fact that they point up the need for media different from the playroom and the interview setting. The pre-adolescent is interested in members of his own sex, is oriented toward small, close groups, and is also activity- or game-oriented. Activity group counseling, therefore, capitalizes on the natural bent of the preadolescent and consists of small groups of the same-sex wherein game activities are prime media for expression and interaction.

Blakeman and Day (1969) have described a variety of games through which they based their program of activity group counseling. Their work was with "problem" boys only. They used swimming, touch football, target shooting, chess, card games, and the like to build rapport with the boys. Most of their discussion and evaluation of behavior was done following the activity, although when the occasion warranted, the activity group counselor responded to individual, dyadic, triadic, etc., behavior within the group or to the group behavior as a whole.

Ginott (1968) has described another type of activity group approach wherein he uses a large room which includes a variety of penny-arcade machines, e.g., rifle galleries, table bowling, and boxing machines. He also utilizes modern communications devices such as the tape recorder, walkie-talkie, and typewriter.

Slavson (1943) provided preadolescents with woodworking materials, painting, leather work, simple food preparation and similar activities as media for self-expression and relationship building. Girls' activity groups were provided with materials for sewing, knitting, etc., materials for beadwork, leatherwork and similar crafts.

The variety of games and activities available for activity group counseling provides the preadolescent with numerous opportunities for practicing coping behaviors of relating to age mates of the same sex.

LEARNING PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO GROUP GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING WITH PREADOLESCENTS

GROUP GUIDANCE

Within the preadolescent age groups, group acceptance serves as a very strong stimulus and response. (Blackman and Secord, 1962, indicate that peer group opinions are important social reinforcers in determining patterns of acceptable behavior.) The learning principles which could be maximized at this age level would depend more on verbal reinforcement by age mates of the same sex, than for example would be true for the young child who is more dependent upon adults for his rewards. Modeling, as a learning principle, could also be maximized through stories of "hero worship" and "good example" to promote task resolution and development of appropriate coping behavior. Bandura (1967) recommends that operant conditioning and modeling should be used as *complimentary* procedures for shaping, maintaining, or disinhibiting social response patterns and that they not be considered on an either-or basis.

Resource materials for an organized group guidance program can be obtained for certain grade levels from the following sources: Ojemann

(1959) *Developing a Program for Education in Human Relations*; Bessell and Palomares (1967) *Methods in Human Relations*; Peters (1967) *Home-room Guidance Activities*; and Gazda and Folds (1968) *Group Guidance: A Critical Incidents Approach*.

GROUP COUNSELING

The learning principles applicable to activity group counseling are numerous; however, the emphasis on spontaneous activity and the close associations among the preadolescents in the small groups seem to provide excellent opportunities for learning relationship skills through shaping and reinforcement techniques and modeling. Since many opportunities occur spontaneously for developing peer groupness and learning to belong, the different activity settings provide a variety of outside-the-office settings. Goldstein, Heller, and Sechrest (1966) have hypothesized that "transfer of learning from psychotherapy to extratherapy situations will be greater if therapy is conducted outside an office in a variety of situations in which the patient will ultimately have to respond (p. 277)."

Short, post-activity periods are arranged in activity group counseling to permit the group members and the counselor the opportunity to discuss behavior elicited during the game or activity itself. These discussion periods provide opportunities for the application of the learning principle of verbal reinforcement conditioning. Johnson (1964), for example, was able to use verbal reinforcement in a counselor-led group of fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade subjects to increase classroom participation of low participators. And Hansen, Niland, and Zani (1969) used model-reinforcement counseling to increase the social acceptance of low sociometric students in sixth-grade.

APPLICATION OF A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH TO ADOLESCENTS

Once again the selection of one developmental task, among the several possible, to illustrate the application of a developmental approach to group guidance and counseling, will be utilized. One of the more difficult developmental tasks to achieve mastery of is "Achieving an Appropriate Dependence-Independence Pattern (Lilienthal & Tryon, 1950);" or for the early adolescent, "establishing one's independence from adults in all areas of behavior (Lilienthal & Tryon, 1950, p. 93)." Some examples of approaching this task through group guidance and group counseling will be outlined below.

GROUP GUIDANCE FOR THE ADOLESCENT

This period in the stage of life development requires the utmost understanding from adults. Therefore, it is not only appropriate but mandatory for the school to provide group guidance opportunities for focusing on this life stage. Gazda and Folds (1968) have outlined a group guidance program for Personal Development which includes seven topics, six of which are pertinent for this area: Parent-child Relations, Student-teacher Relations, Peer Group Relations, Mental Hygiene, Social Events, and Marriage and Family Living. (For additional sources of a group guidance program for high school students, see Wrenn, Hein, & Schwartzrock, 1961; Belka, 1966).

Many different means can be utilized to introduce these topics appro-

priate to this developmental task. Films, filmstrips, reports from experts, role playing, panels, and sociodrama are some of the media through which topics on this phase of development can be introduced. The group guidance leader serves as the resource person to the students and assists them in locating accurate information relative to this group guidance unit or "critical incident" (area) of the adolescent's development.

One means recommended for presenting information in a guidance class is the use of panels. An example of a panel for discussing this task might be a student-parent panel wherein open dialogue between the generations can be held. The dialogue will enable the students to obtain information in the form of how parents feel toward their adolescents, their problems, their fears, their hopes, and the like.

GROUP COUNSELING FOR THE ADOLESCENT

As with group counseling for young children and preadolescents, group counseling with adolescents must utilize the best information available for selection of group members, structuring the group setting, and providing the kind of climate for change that is most likely to promote growth. If these conditions are considered in conjunction with good learning conditions and principles, the stage will be set for counselee growth.

Let us consider the selection of counselees first of all. The group members would be chosen for the group based on their interest in adolescent-adult problems of dependence-independence. (Motivation should be high if the group is a volunteer group.) To provide some good models, the counselor should strive to select at least one male and one female who has achieved *some* success in establishing wholesome independence. Age levels should not vary more than a year or two, to avoid grouping mature with immature students. Sex composition should be balanced to avoid threat from one group or the other. (The same precaution holds for racial, and ethnic mixing.) Similarity in problem areas should be present though identical problem areas should be few since mutual reinforcement of problem behavior is more likely in such instances.

Assuming that we have made careful tentative selections for a counseling group, our next step is to interview each prospective member to determine his possible commitment, to structure the group for him, and to get a statement of his goals to be achieved from the group experiences. Describing what the student can expect from the group and what he is expected to give to the group has the advantage of reducing threat and making the counselee receptive to the group experience. Also, Schachter, Ellertson, McBride, and Gregory (1960) have demonstrated that group cohesiveness can be increased by telling group members that they are likely to be liked and will like other group members. Festinger, Schachter, and Back (1950) found that by telling group members their group was formed from persons who shared some of their same opinions and values, the group members actually expressed a greater liking for their groups than did control groups. Therefore, counselor expressions of enthusiasm and confidence, and encouragement of prospective group members can serve to raise their expectancy levels and perhaps, as Parker (1968) suggests from his analysis of counseling research reviews, actually be responsible for increasing the counselor's power to help the counselee.

Finally, the behavior of the group counselor will set the tone or climate and will also provide an example of a good model for counselee imitation. To set this desired tone, the counselor's awareness or ability to discriminate and communicate at high levels and to activate the core conditions for personality growth described earlier, will determine whether or not an *experimental base of mutual trust and caring* can be developed and, in turn, whether or not behavioral change can occur.

The primary media for facilitating behavioral change or problem resolution with adolescents is counselee talk—interview group counseling. With emphasis on verbalization in the group setting the use of verbal reinforcement becomes a primary counseling tool. In this regard, the Carkhuff model of exploration-understanding-action is a good sequence to follow to insure the development of a strong facilitative base of mutual trust and caring. From this kind of base the counselor can be therapeutically confronting by "telling it like it is"; he can make interpretations, suggestions and, in general, use his interpersonal skills of empathy, warmth, and genuineness as reinforcers in the selective shaping of behavior (Truax, 1968).

LEARNING PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO GROUP GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING WITH ADOLESCENTS

The learning principles inherent in this approach would pertain to the motivating or interest-arousing subject matter and means of imparting it. Students will more likely learn the information if it is *timely* and meets their needs. The group guidance leader must be alert to the students' needs and introduce "critical incidents" or topics when interest is high and need is present.

The panel consisting of parents and students will provide *primary sources of information* and appeal to the students. Students on the panel have the opportunity to practice talking to parents about difficult topics and those in the audience can learn vicariously through observing good models function in dialogue. The group guidance leader also has the opportunity to reinforce verbally those interactions which are good examples and not reinforce poor examples. For example, the group guidance leader can reinforce a student's approach to confronting and relating to a parent that is non-threatening and accepting, shows respect and genuineness, and is illustrative of a good problem-solving approach.

Different means for introducing a problem topic will, of course, provide opportunities for other learning principles to become operative. The choice of media, timing of subject matter or topic introduction, etc., should be carefully considered by the group guidance leader to maximize stimulus and response generalization.

GROUP COUNSELING

The approach to group counseling for adolescents described above is probably most easily applied to the public school setting (where most *group counseling* with adolescents is done); however, Dreikurs and Sonstegard (1968) and Fullmer (1969) have described composing groups of parents, children and "significant others" for the purpose of counseling. If threat can be kept to a minimum in these family group counseling approaches, several additional learning principles could be maximized. For example, the

opportunity for on-the-spot problem solving and hence the concurrent opportunity for stimulus and response generalizations would be increased.

Interview group counseling is most often the method of choice for adolescents by most group counselors. Where counselee talk is the chief means of interacting and the chief medium for problem solving, verbal reinforcement techniques such as operant conditioning and shaping are especially relevant. Research by Krumboltz and Thoresen (1964), for example, suggests that verbal reinforcement and model-reinforcement group counseling increased the vocational exploration of eleventh-graders. The possibility for behavior change through these techniques is maximized if the counselor has been able to build a strong base of mutual trust and caring. As cited earlier, Truax (1968) suggests that there is evidence of reinforcing properties from this kind of base which can be used selectively in shaping behavior.

A counter conditioning model for explaining behavioral change through psychotherapy is described by Shaffer and Shoben (1956), which, in effect, is dependent upon counselor warmth, trust, and understanding. In the presence of this kind of relationship the counselee response becomes one of hopefulness, security, and confidence which is dependent upon the concept of generalization to be elicited outside the counseling or therapy relationship. For a discussion of the application of this model to group counseling elsewhere see Gazda (1968a).

Paul and Shannon (1966) have demonstrated that systematic desensitization can be effectively combined with more traditional methods of group therapy (with emphasis on clarification and discussion) without any loss of therapeutic effectiveness. They also emphasized that group desensitization need not be limited to the treatment of specific phobias but is also effective in treating more generalized "social-evaluative anxiety."

Time does not permit additional examples of learning principles or models which can be utilized within the group setting to promote behavioral change; however, one should cite the work of Lazarus (1968), since he was the first to use group desensitization procedures. Lazarus has used successfully reciprocal inhibition in conjunction with desensitization. He has also been the first to describe the systematic application of assertive training in groups.

GROUP COUNSELING WITH ADULTS

Time does not permit a discussion of group guidance and counseling as it might be utilized with adults; however, the same principles and essentially the same learning emphasis (verbal reinforcement) would be applied as with adolescents. The developmental tasks as outlined by Havinghurst (1952) and eight stages or crises of man's development described by Erikson (1950) can serve as guideposts of potential problems in the developmental life stages of the adult.

COUNSELOR CONDITIONS: CORE CONDITIONS OF A HELPING RELATIONSHIP

The core conditions of empathic understanding, positive regard, genuineness, and concreteness and specificity of expression (Carkhuff & Berenson, 1967) or accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth, and genuineness (Truax & Carkhuff, 1967) offered by the group counselor provide the key to estab-

lishing the experiential base of mutual trust and caring that seems essential in counseling or helping relationships at all age levels. These core conditions cut across all theoretical positions or orientations (Carkhuff & Berenson, 1967; Truax & Carkhuff, 1967) and appear to be necessary ingredients in effective group counseling. Regardless of the age level of the counselees, media, setting, developmental problem area, and principle of learning utilized to promote behavioral change, the experiential base of mutual trust and caring must be present if the group guidance leader or group counselor is to be the facilitator of positive growth or gain. Parker (1968) contends from his review of the research evidence, that the core conditions are *necessary but not sufficient* conditions for behavioral change. The other conditions which his analysis of research reviews revealed, have been shown, in most, if not all instances, to be a part of a Developmental Approach to Group Counseling.

GROUP DYNAMICS PRINCIPLES AND A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH TO GROUP COUNSELING

Time does not permit more than a mere overture in the direction of relating group dynamics concepts to group counseling. However, for my purposes, the principles and research findings are especially helpful in selecting group members (role-balancing) to promote group cohesiveness. Goldstein, Heller and Sechrest (1966) point to the importance of constructing a group balanced to provide benefit for all. I have used the concept of trial or preliminary grouping to isolate the best combination of members (Gazda, 1968a).

Structuring (as explained earlier) with a positive, confident tone is utilized to build positive feelings or expectancies toward the group members and counselor. Goal setting is utilized to give the group a sense of purpose and direction. Norm setting (Bonney, 1969) is utilized to orient the group toward a different way of talking about oneself. The concept of dissonance, as applied to group counseling by Mayer, Rohen, and Whitley (1969) is utilized to maintain motivation for change. The understanding of stages of group development (Bonney, 1969; Gendlin & Beebe, 1968; Mahler, 1969) alert me to potential trouble spots in group behavior and morale. These are only a few of the several group phenomena, principles, and concepts which, if understood, can mean the difference between a helpful or hurtful group counselor.

SUMMARY

The essence of this position may be summarized as follows: First, for a complete theory of group counseling, some type of developmental approach is essential. Different age levels of counselees require different treatment conditions including size and composition of groups, setting and media utilized, and counselor intervention.

Secondly, the bio-socio-psychological development task concepts of Havighurst (1952), Erikson's (1950) psychosocial crises, and Super, et al's (1957, 1963) vocational development as summarized and 'hybridized' by Zaccaria (1965), serve as rough guideposts in locating potential problem areas for purpose of preventing problems through group guidance and pre-

vention and remediation of problems of inadequate coping behaviors for certain developmental stages through group counseling.

Thirdly, the necessity of building an experiential base of mutual trust and caring by the group counselor through implementing the core conditions for personality change, was emphasized.

Finally, the value of knowing and applying group dynamics principles and learning principles to maximize behavioral change and its subsequent generalization beyond the group guidance and counseling setting was indicated. Also, illustrations of different learning principles as applied to guidance and counseling groups at different age levels were given to suggest that certain learning principles are more relevant to certain age groups than to others.

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