

A STUDY TO DETERMINE HOW THE INTERPERSONAL CLIMATE OF A SCHOOL
CAN BE IMPROVED THROUGH GROUP COUNSELING

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the schools of the United States there should be no barriers to personalized communication. A lack of personalized, meaningful communication has, however, been a major factor in the creation of a state of bewilderment, resentment, and violence on the part of students. There is a need to talk, so there will no longer exist a barrier to personalized communication. Therefore, group counseling, a relatively new and effective process in guidance, holds great promise for improving the amount and quality of personalized communication that can be used effectively and conveniently in improving the interpersonal climate of a school.

Statement of the Problem

An effective guidance program serves all of the students. New conditions demand more group counseling in the schools than ever before. A high percentage of students who remain in school - and all of the dropouts - have experienced some problem on which no help was ever offered. This study grows out of a frank recognition of the needs of today's youth which may be met by personalizing communication through group counseling.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to identify how group counseling can improve the interpersonal climate of a school.

Delimitation of the Study

Sources of information for this study are limited to selected counselors and to young adults. As a rule, with respect

to the period of time and the goals and techniques of group counseling, the study does not go beyond the stimulus questions.

Methodology

Data collecting instruments consisted of three survey questionnaires based on the purpose of this study. The instruments were designed so that the subjects' self-perception and general information about the merits of group counseling would be determined. Each statement on the tri-purpose questionnaire attempted to get at specific points of information, the subject's attitude, and point up the desired goals of group counseling.

Procedure

A questionnaire of three parts, Self-Esteem, Self-Motivation, and Follow-Through Action, was given to one hundred randomly selected students at Grambling College during the month of May, 1972. Eighty-seven students returned the survey questionnaires. The Follow-Through Action questionnaire was also given to ten randomly selected school counselors during the same month. All counselors returned the questionnaires.

Questionnaires on Self-Esteem and Self-Motivation were not given to school counselors because responses on these questionnaires, although relevant to the purpose of the study, were irrelevant to the purpose of helping counselors accept the group counseling procedure. Differences in attitudes about group counseling procedure are revealed in the interpretation from responses of both groups.

Definition of Terms Used

Follow-Through Action Program - This term simply refers to any type of resulting activity or activities from the group counseling process, on the part of group members, that are continued as a result of the group counseling process in which a person has participated.

Group Counseling - This term refers to a dynamic, interpersonal process through which individuals within the normal range of adjustment, work within a peer group and with a professionally trained counselor, exploring problems and feelings in an attempt to modify their attitudes so that they are better able to deal with their problems.

Intake Interview - This is a method of communicating with a prospective client in order to determine his readiness for group counseling.

Psychodrama - In counseling, this term has reference to the client relating a situation as it actually is, but not being aware of the fact that he is doing so.

Role Playing - This term refers to any kind of action in which a person attempts to portray the character, attitudes, feelings, or actions of another person.

Self-Esteem - A belief in oneself, or personal independence, or exhibition of self-fulfillment, or self-identification on a scale of personal effectiveness.

Self-Motivation - A reference to one's own incentive and/or reasons, or lack of reasons for getting action started toward a desired goal.

Structuring - A counselor giving full attention to the client; to listen and hear what the client is really saying so that the process of facilitating the client's efforts to explore and understand himself is obvious.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A search of professional publications related to this inquiry revealed several pertinent studies.

Literature on Self-Esteem Through Group Counseling

A major goal of group counseling in schools is to develop student-counselor relationships which will enable the counselor to meet the important developmental needs of students and to help them with the identity seeking process. Group counseling provides an opportunity for students to examine their feelings and attitudes as well as the ideas they have about themselves and the world. Through group counseling, an individual is able to develop self-esteem through learning what it means to be a person, integrating one's feeling and thinking, learning to be more responsible for one's own behavior, and examining one's present values and new values.

Clarence A Mahler states that identity seeking and teaching for self-understanding have long been neglected in our schools.¹ With this in mind, more attention should be given to guiding young people toward a better understanding of themselves and their interpersonal relationships. Self-esteem needs are basic to personality and group counseling is a means of assisting the members of a group to face and resolve personal and emotional problems.

¹Clarence A Mahler, Group Counseling in the Schools (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969), p. 36.

In his book, Group Counseling in the Schools, Mahler cited many examples of studies of identity seeking and self-concept. Following are three typical examples.

The Cupertino, California school district experimented with a program called Self-Enhancing Education in which the teachers helped their students grow in self-esteem through practical methods. Discussions of self and individual performance were conducted in class-size groups. A full-time counselor was assigned to each elementary school to lead the development of the self-enhancing part of the school program. The program focused not only on what a child could do, but on what he would try to do when freed from self doubt. Self-understanding exercises were incorporated into the curriculum from the time the child entered school, whereby the children and teachers became involved in determining the purposes, and to some degree, the organization of the learning task. Each child was then encouraged to feel that the purposes of learning were personal and that there were many different and acceptable ways to learn. Teachers, parents, and children all received training in how the self may be enhanced, and how self-enhancement can be facilitated in others.²

Another example is the notable success of Dr. Samuel Shepard's work with Negro youth in St. Louis. Dr. Shepard's work is important not so much as an example of effective group counseling, but because his program made self-enhancement the focus for an

²Ibid., pp. 39-40.

all-school effort. Weekly radio and TV presentations were made to all schools in Dr. Shepard's district about outstanding and successful Negroes. Assemblies and special meetings were held to introduce outstanding Negro leaders and to thus provide adequate role models.³ Programs such as the foregoing which provide self-enhancing opportunities for children create very valuable climates for utilizing group counseling skills.

A further example is the experience Mahler had with a group of college seniors which included a young husband in his first year of marriage and the girl he had gone with before meeting his wife. Through group counseling, they were both amazed to find that they got to know each other much better than they had when they had dated seriously.⁴

Group counseling sessions which include high school junior, seniors, and college students, enable participates through group discussions, to compare ideas with members of the opposite sex and to clear up many of their misconceptions. They are also able to learn how other members of their own sex feel about dating, sex, and marriage. Students can learn to base their estimates of each other on what a person is, what he stands for, what he believes in, and what he hopes to become, rather than on popularity and physical attractiveness.

³Opinion expressed by Dr. Samuel Shepard in an address at South Carolina State College, Summer, 1966.

⁴Mahler, p. 42.

Gazda and Ohlsen (1966) found that two or three groups of parents who participated in short-term group counseling sessions significantly increased in their acceptance of self and others.⁵

Clear evidence of the value of group counseling in aiding individuals obtain a more meaningful self-understanding has been presented by Caplan (1957). He established experimental and control groups of twelve-to fifteen-year-old junior high school pupils who were drawn from a reservoir of "unruly, inconsiderate, and antisocial", persons in the school. Ten 50-minute periods of group counseling were provided for the experimental groups. He reported that there was significant shift in self-concepts as measured by Q-sort technique within the experimental group; and that there was no comparable or significant change in the control groups. The growth in grade achievement was slight, but favored the experimental groups.⁶

Literature on Self-Motivation Through Group Counseling

Another goal of group counseling in schools is to develop students self-motivation. Each member of a group is encouraged to think for himself and to learn how to share his own perceptions. Gradually students learn to accept responsibility for their own behavior. Group members are encouraged to deepen their understanding of behavior and to learn not to be satisfied with a surface

⁵G. M. Gazda and M. M. Ohlsen, "Group Counseling: A Means of Parent Education", Adult Leadership, 14, (November, 1966), p. 231.

⁶S. W. Caplan, "The Effect of Group Counseling on Junior High School Boys' Concept of Themselves", Journal of Counseling Psychology, 4, (November, 1957), pp. 124-128.

view of their own or other people's actions. Participating in a group project of the foregoing type enables members to become more confident about their own abilities and skills. Through group counseling students are able to develop self-motivation by developing greater confidence in their own perceptions, by learning to better understand other people, and by learning to really listen to others.

David Rappoport conducted a study in Small Group Counseling in October 1963. In his study nine, ninth grade boys were selected for participation in a group guidance counseling project. The boys were selected in cooperation with the boys' vice-principal. Essentially, the program strived to (1) achieve better pupil adjustment to the school program; (2) secure positive pupil identification with the school; and (3) stimulate group thinking as to future educational and occupational opportunities after high school. It was found that all graduating group members said they would not have graduated without the help of the group counseling program, and seven of the nine pupils predicted they would graduate from senior high school.⁷

Another study of small group counseling was the experiment with a group of seven eleventh grade girls selected by a school physician as having no endocrine involvement in an overweight condition. Membership in the group was voluntary and meetings were held once a week for a semester. The program included:

⁷David Rappoport, "Small Group Counseling", The School Counselor, 14, (November, 1966), pp. 119-121.

informal talks by the physician and the psychologist; individual weight charts; safe and nutritious reducing diets; and group reinforcement discussions.

The group discussions were nondirective and during the course of the semester brought into the open many emotional problems of members. Two problems that appeared to be common to all students were; feelings of rejection or discrimination in the home; and uncertainty as to how they might play their roles in boy-girl relationships if they achieved physiques which would attract boys and enable them to date.

A TOPS club (Take Off Pounds Safely) was formed and at the end of the semester each girl reported some loss of weight. One girl was chosen queen for the club. Three of the girls began to date boys, their first experiences with boy friends. A fourth married during the summer and in the fall reported a happy marital adjustment. A fifth girl, with an extreme obese problem, had surgery recommended by her physician. All of the foregoing came about as a result of the girls' struggles in controlling food intake as reinforced by their informal group sessions.⁸

Woal wanted to find out whether group counseling could help selected students, (1) reduce subject matter failures, (2) improve work habits, or (3) improve behavior. The group consisted of six students who were retarded up to three years, were generally in a poor environment, had negative experiences

⁸Margaret E. Bennett, Guidance and Counseling in Groups (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963), pp. 154-155.

with teachers, and came from unstable homes. The words "counseling" and "guidance" were avoided, and the group was called a club, which met once each week for forty-five minutes for twenty-eight weeks. Subject failures were reduced from thirteen to three and failing marks from sixteen to four. There was some reduction in behavior difficulties.⁹

Lodata and his associates sought to determine whether or not group counseling could provide changes in attitudes toward school, the learning situation, and self-concepts, in individuals classified as "slow-learning" students. Groups met from three to five times a week and engaged in activities such as role playing and psychodrama. The results of the study indicated that students, (1) acquired positive attitudes toward learning and authority figures (teacher judgments), (2) improved their positive self-concepts, (3) improved their school attendance and integration, and (4) increased their teachers tolerance, insight, and understanding of themselves.¹⁰

Gazda and Bonney found that a group of practicing counselors who participated in seven weeks of group counseling, consistently increased in their assumption of the roles of Information Giver, Aggressor, Interpreter, and Non-participant. Generally

⁹S. Theodore Woal, "A Project in Group Counseling in A Junior High School", Personnel and Guidance Journal, 43, (February, 1964), pp. 611-613.

¹⁰Francis J. Lodata, Martin A. Sokoloff, and Lester J. Schwartz, "Group Counseling As A Method of Modifying Attitudes in Slow Learners", The School Counselor, 12, (October, 1964), pp. 127-129.

speaking, there was a positive indication of increased self-confidence and feeling of worth, coupled with a more positive acceptance of their fellowman.¹¹

Recently Rogge, in his article, "Building Professional Behavior", demonstrated how a counselor can train a teacher to use group methods to motivate learning. The counselor visited a classroom several times and gave the pupils a chance to ask any questions they wished. Rather than answering their questions, he helped them explore where or from whom they could expect to obtain the information they sought. Sometimes several children cooperated in finding the information. The counselor's primary purpose was to demonstrate to the teacher how he could use this technique to develop intellectual curiosity.¹²

Rogge's selection is only one example of group techniques a teacher or counselor can use to provide children with information about themselves, their environment, and their future opportunities. The foregoing technique can be used for group counseling, as it can be used to help children obtain answers to questions that they wanted to ask, but felt there was no one to whom they could turn for answers.¹³

¹¹George M. Gazda and W. C. Bonney, "Effects of Group Counseling on Role Behavior of Counselors in Training", Counselor Education and Supervision, 4, (January, 1965).

¹²W. Rogge, "Building Professional Behavior", Elementary School Guidance in Illinois (Springfield: Office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1965).

¹³Ibid.

Literature on Follow-Through Action Programs

Participation in group counseling can help people learn to be more natural, less defensive, and with an increased capacity to enjoy living and experiencing.

Students who have completed a group counseling experience appear to be able to transfer their learning to subsequent group interactions. In class they are more likely to speak up and to express their own ideas and beliefs. Moreover, with increased confidence in their own perceptions, they tend to meet the unexpected with a great deal more zest and less fear. Young people who have experienced group counseling and have gained a deeper understanding of behavior, also develop greater skills in looking for possible alternatives in solving problems.

Follow-through action programs provide a safe climate for healthy exploration of feeling, control of them, and for exploring one's relationships with other people. For example authority figures, parents, teachers, siblings, and peers.¹⁴

The following is an example of both self-motivation and follow-through action through group counseling as perceived by Dinkmeyer.

Johnny, age twelve, had been a member of his group for eight sessions. He had not participated verbally, but he appeared to follow the discussions and often smiled at certain comments. In the ninth session Johnny said, "You guys seem to have problems

¹⁴Clarence A. Mahler, Group Counseling in the Schools (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969), pp. 15-16.

like me in getting along with teachers, but you are doing something about it. I like Ted's idea of trying to understand how Mrs. Smith must feel when we won't try. I'm going to try it!"¹⁵

Driver used small discussion groups to test the usefulness of such groups in aiding students to gain self-understanding, understanding of other's and interpersonal skills. The study involved eight separate experimental groups, each consisting of eight to ten persons, with each group holding six sessions over a period of three weeks. Several months after the conclusion of the study, retention and carry over of learning was measured by follow-up questionnaires. The returns indicated that the students learned new facts, appreciations, and/or skills in interpersonal relations. Driver concluded that "small group discussions carried on in a permissive atmosphere are an excellent learning medium for personality growth of high school, college, and adult students."¹⁶

Ohlsen and Gazda (1965) found that when fifth-grade underachievers were counseled in groups, parents, and teachers agreed that the children's attitudes and behavior improved, and in certain instances, psychosomatic illnesses such as stomach cramps and severe headaches were reduced or disappeared.¹⁷

¹⁵Don Dinkmeyer, "Group Counseling Theory and Techniques", The School Counselor, 17, (November, 1969), p. 149.

¹⁶Helen I. Driver, "Small Group Discussion", Personnel and Guidance Journal, 30, (March, 1952), pp. 173-175.

¹⁷M. M. Ohlsen, and G. M. Gazda, "Counseling Under-achieving Bright Pupils", Education, 86, (February, 1964), p. 78.

Another example is the experience Sonia Anderson encountered during the school year 1968-69, at a junior high school in Berkeley, California. It appeared that about half of the students at the school were using drugs. The dean of boys compiled a list of suspected drug users and submitted the list to the counselors. About fifteen out of the twenty-five names on the list were Andersons counselees. Students heard about the list through the school grapevine and started to discuss their habits with her quite freely. As a result, Anderson and the students met weekly in forty minute meetings discussing their personal use of drugs.

In the meetings, a no-preach and no-praise approach was used in discussing drugs with the students setting up their own rules with these two exceptions: (a) There must be no violence during the groupmeetings, and (b) everything discussed must be kept highly confidential.

The students picked the topic for discussion each day they met. At the sixteenth meeting the group decided that they wanted a specific topic or a speaker for each session as opposed to just leaving the discussions open.

As a result of these meetings and discussions, when the school year ended in June 1969, three of the ten group members had stopped using drugs. As a whole, their school attendance improved as did their test scores.

During the following summer Anderson had calls from several of the boys requesting that they continue to meet in the

fall, which was arranged. During the second series of sessions, the group saw films, listened to speakers, and went on field trips to various drug units. In addition the group conducted weekly discussions. As a result of their discussions, some of the group members decided that they wanted to go on with the meetings the following year and start a program where they could teach sixth graders in their district about drug use and abuse. The students planned to compose their own course of study during weekly or daily group meetings.

Because of the increased interest in drug awareness, various administrative policies related to the overuse of drugs and suspected drug users were established. Interest in the project was also expressed by the faculty and community.

Anderson indicated plans to expand the program to include several groups. In addition, she applied for a Title III B grant that would provide eight days of consultant time to be used for four days for mandated in-service training for all the counselors in the district.¹⁸

¹⁸Sonia Anderson, "Group Counseling in Drug Awareness", The School Counselor, 19, (November, 1971), pp. 123-126.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected on three Survey-Questionnaire forms. The analysis begins by presenting the way eighty-seven randomly selected students reacted to three statements concerning counseling sessions (See Table I), followed by fifteen statements designed to test their feelings about themselves. (See Table II). The second questionnaire offers six pairs of parallel statements to which the same students reacted to specific inquiries about the sources and resources for self-motivation. (See Table III). Part IV of the data is a fifteen item questionnaire to which both school counselors and students reacted. (See Tables IV and V). A brief summary of data analysis will be found at the end of each table.

The analysis of the data was conducted by a systematic and comprehensive examination of the tables. The table analysis included the application of percentage as a statistical measure in determining the findings.

Counseling Sessions

Three statements designed to determine what type of counseling sessions students had engaged in revealed that only thirty-three percent, (item 1) admitted that they had never been in counseling sessions before. Sixty-seven percent gave the impression that they understood the role and function of counseling in their development. However, only nineteen percent, (item 2).of those who had experienced counseling admitted that the type of

sessions in which they had been involved were individual sessions. The subjects seemed undecided in their reaction to the questions of preference related to individual or group counseling. Fifty-four percent, (item 3) expressed a preference for group counseling while forty-six percent left the impression that they were not certain.

Self-Esteem

The survey on self-esteem included fifteen statements. More than half of these statements received affirmation from the subjects. For example, the range of percentage of affirmation is from sixty percent to one-hundred percent, (items 1., 2., 6., 7., 8., 12., 14., and 15). More than ninety percent of the eighty-seven subjects experienced the feeling of failure, (item 1) because of poor grades, felt fearful in new situations, (item 8), and worried about the lack of adequate money for meeting basic needs, (item 15). On the other hand, the reaction to the other seven statements ranged from zero percent to ninety-one percent. Examples of the students' feelings about self-esteem are as follows: lack of self-confidence, (item 3), lack of a feeling of success, (item 4), unpopularity, (item 5), lack of experience with empathic feelings, (item 9), dissatisfied with looks, personal grooming, and appearance, (items 10 and 11), and uncertainty about life goals (item 13).

The statements which seem to have been of least concern to the respondents had reference to the family, (items 2 and 7), and feelings of guilt about beliefs and values, (item 12).

TABLE I

STUDY SAMPLE OF RANDOMLY SELECTED STUDENTS
 CLASSIFIED BY COUNSELING SESSIONS ENGAGED IN
 GRAMBLING COLLEGE, GRAMBLING, LOUISIANA
 MAY, 1972

Counseling Sessions	Percentages	
	Does Not Apply	Does Apply
Never been in a counseling session before	67	33
Worked with school counselor alone on a problem that bothered them	81	19
Preferred to engage in group counseling sessions when they have a personal problem to solve rather than work alone with their counselor on the problem	46	54

TABLE II

STUDY SAMPLE OF RANDOMLY SELECTED STUDENTS CLASSIFIED
 BY ATTITUDES EXPRESSED CONCERNING SELF-ESTEEM
 GRAMBLING COLLEGE, GRAMBLING, LOUISIANA
 MAY, 1972

Self-Esteem	Percentages	
	Does Not Apply	Does Apply
Experienced a feeling of failure because of poor grades	9	91
Experienced a feeling of failure where family is concerned	27	73
Felt confident about most situations in which they found themselves	79	21
Felt successful	69	31
Felt considered popular by peer group	86	14
Believed they were loved by family and accepted by friends	16	84
Thought that family background was very important to them	16	84
Felt fearful in new situations	2	98
Empathic in feelings	91	9
Satisfied with looks, personal grooming, and appearance	97	3
Thought to be considered attractive and well-groomed	58	42
Felt guilt about some of the beliefs and values they had in reference to personal behavior (conduct) with the opposite sex	23	77
Pleased with the goals set where life is concerned	77	63
Definite plans made concerning future career	40	60
Lack of adequate money for basic needs a worry	0	100

Self-Motivation

The one hundred subjects were asked to reply to six pairs of parallel statements, checking the one statement in each pair which best described their feelings about themselves concerning the sources and resources for self-motivation.

According to the eighty-seven responses to the statements, ninety-three percent of the subjects preferred easy tasks to the seven percent who liked difficult jobs, (item 1). Fifty-nine percent stated, (item 2) that when they were alone, they slept most of the time as compared to forty-one percent who felt lonely most of the time even when they were in a group. The majority, eighty-eight percent of the subjects disliked competition as compared to the twelve percent who stated that they did like competition, (item 3). Forty-three percent of the subjects expressed a preference for liking to watch problems emerge within a group for discussion as compared to fifty-seven percent who expressed a preference for liking to be alone while doing a job, (item 4).

Approximately ninety percent of the subjects stated that the barrier to communication about their personal problems was greater when parents, teachers, and their peers were all involved in group discussion sessions. In contrast eleven percent felt they could discuss their personal problems no matter who listened, (item 5).

It was also found that sixty-seven percent of the subjects preferred group discussions where both sexes were involved as compared to the thirty-three percent who preferred group discussions in which all members were of the same sex, (item 6).

TABLE III

STUDY SAMPLE OF RANDOMLY SELECTED STUDENTS CLASSIFIED
 BY ATTITUDES EXPRESSED CONCERNING SELF-MOTIVATION
 GRAMBLING COLLEGE, GRAMBLIN, LOUISIANA
 MAY, 1972

Self-Motivation	Percentages
Liked easy task	93
Liked spending time on jobs which are difficult	77
When alone, slept most of the time	59
Felt lonely most of the time, even in a group	41
Liked competition	12
Disliked competition	88
Peak experience comes when alone doing a job they liked to do	57
Liked to watch problems emerge within a group for discussion such as drug abuse, sex, use of money, religion, etc.	43
Barriers to communicate personal problems greater when parents, teachers, and peers are all in group discussion sessions	89
Can discuss personal problems no matter who listens	11
Motivated in group discussions where both sexes are present	67
Preferred a group in which all of the members were of the same sex	33

Follow-Through Action Programs

The survey on follow-through action programs included fifteen statements. Statements one through eight were related to goals of group counseling, and statements nine through fifteen referred to techniques of group counseling. Both students and counselors reacted to the items on the survey-questionnaire for purposes of comparison and contrast.

Careful scrutiny of the data collected from eighty-seven students and ten counselors showed more similarity in their preferences than anticipated. For example, twenty percent of those responding in each group rejected crisis group counseling when the problem is a common problem such as drug abuse, pregnancies, and failure. Thirty percent felt that sometimes crisis group counseling might be considered effective, and fifty percent indicated that they thought it might be considered effective frequently, (item 1).

Nine percent of the counselors indicated that a lack of challenge in the teaching-learning situation resulted in student failure while students felt that this was always the case. About seventy percent of the students thought lack of challenge to be the case most of the time. Thirteen percent thought this to be the case frequently. Six percent checked this item sometimes, and only two percent felt that failure is never due to the lack of challenge, (item 2).

According to both groups, group counseling is very effective in a good school guidance program, (item 3).

Sixty percent of the students tended to think of support from a peer group as being of greater value to a student than support from an interested adult. This was in contrast to what the counselors felt. Only forty-five percent rated this item as most of the time, forty-seven percent rated it frequently, and eight percent said sometimes, (item 4).

Both students and counselors felt, according to percentage rating, that sexual behavior, particularly of a deviate nature, is more effectively discussed in a group where the problem is common. Ninety percent said always and ten percent said most of the time, (item 5).

The responses to group counseling leading to a deeper understanding of human behavior revealed that counselors felt that group counseling does lead to a deeper understanding of human behavior. Fifty-one percent checked frequently as their response to this item as compared to thirty-five percent of students who checked frequently for this item, (item 6).

It was also found that counselors viewed group counseling as a technique for increasing self-confidence and trust in one's own perceptions of self. However, students did not rate this item as highly as did the counselors, (item 7).

Both students and counselors thought group counseling was effective if the fear of talking in a group was obvious, (item 8).

The counselor's responses to (item 9) differed from the students' responses on the acceptance of persons for counseling in groups. While every counselor, except one, approved freedom

in selecting the members for group counseling, only eighty-three percent of the students seemed to be bothered about the selective process; perhaps because of the unpredictability of success in group counseling situations.

Students thought role playing could be effective in getting youth to talk openly about their problems, (item 10).

The response to the intake interview as a means for obtaining information needed in choosing students for group counseling, ranged from two percent, never, to seventy percent, most of the time, for counselors', and from nine percent, never, to seventy percent, most of the time, for students, (item 11).

Counselors viewed structuring the group counseling sessions for today's youth as being important. Eighty-three percent rated this item always and seventeen percent as most of the time. The two groups compared favorably. Neither group checked this item as sometimes or never, (item 12).

The counselors felt that a school counselor may accomplish the goal of understanding the unique needs of youth in counseling groups by working with parents and teacher groups, (item 13). The responses from the students on this item were similar.

Counselor felt that volunteers profited more from group counseling than those who were coerced into accepting it. Fifty-three percent checked frequently and forty-seven percent checked sometimes. Students thought this to be true to a somewhat greater degree, (item 14).

It was determined that both counselors and students responses were similar regarding follow-up studies in group counseling. Both

felt this was of great importance and gave it a rating of ninety-seven percent and ninety-one percent respectively, (item 15).

TABLE IV

STUDY SAMPLE OF RANDOMLY SELECTED STUDENTS CLASSIFIED
BY ATTITUDES EXPRESSED CONCERNING FOLLOW-THROUGH ACTION PROGRAMS
GRAMBLING COLLEGE, GRAMBLING, LOUISIANA
MAY, 1972

Goals	Percentages				
	Always	Most of the time	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
Crisis counseling is more effective in groups when there is a common problem such as drug abuse, pregnancies, failures			49	32	19
Failure in school work may be traced to a lack of challenge in the teaching learning situation	8	73	14	3	2
Group counseling can be very effective in a good school guidance program		76	22	2	
Support from a group of peers is often of greater value to a student than support from an interested adult		60	34	6	
Sexual behavior, particularly of a deviate nature, is more effectively discussed in a group where there is a common problem	90	10			
Group counseling leads to a deeper understanding of human behavior		49	35	16	
Group counseling leads to increasing one's self-confidence and trust in one's own perceptions		43	33	24	

TABLE IV (continued)

Goals	Percentages				
	Always	Most of the time	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
Group counseling is effective if the fear of talking in a group is obvious and the person does not seem to be able to get started		84	16		
Techniques	Percentages				
	Always	Most of the time	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
A counselor should be free to accept for group counseling only those whom he is reasonably certain he can help in groups	83	10	7		
Role playing is effective in getting youth to talk openly about their problems, to change their behavior and attitudes, and to help others change		20	30	20	30
Information needed for choosing the best possible combination of students for successful group counseling can be obtained in the intake interview		70	13	8	
Structuring the group counseling sessions for today's youth involves taking into consideration the fact adolescents are very sensitive to adults' criticism; they must not feel that they are in the group because they have done something wrong	75	15	10		

TABLE IV (continued)

Techniques	Percentages				
	Always	Most of the time	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
School counselors may accomplish the goal of understanding the unique needs of youth in counseling groups by working with parents and teacher groups	90	10			
Volunteers seem to profit more from group counseling than do youth who are encouraged or coerced to accept it		60	30	10	
Failure to conduct adequate follow-up studies of group counseling is a weakness; if clients are really helped, this new way of personalizing communication about social, recreational, health, or ethical problems should improve behavior of clients	91	9			

TABLE V

STUDY SAMPLE OF RANDOMLY SELECTED COUNSELORS CLASSIFIED
BY ATTITUDES EXPRESSED CONCERNING FOLLOW-THROUGH ACTION PROGRAMS
GRAMBLING COLLEGE, GRAMBLING, LOUISIANA
MAY, 1972

Goals	Percentages				
	Always	Most of the time	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
Crisis counseling is more effective in groups when there is a common problem such as drug abuse, pregnancies, failures			53	27	20
Failure in school work may be traced to a lack of challenge in the teaching learning situation	9	64	13	10	4
Group counseling can be very effective in a good school guidance program		79	21		
Support from a group of peers is often of greater value to a student than support from an interested adult		45	47	8	
Sexual behavior, particularly of a deviate nature, is more effectively discussed in a group where there is a common problem	94	6			
Group counseling leads to a deeper understanding of human behavior			51	49	
Group counseling leads to increasing one's self-confidence and trust in one's own perception			53	47	
Group counseling is effective if the fear of talking in a group is obvious and the person does not seem to be able to get started		88	12		

TABLE V (continued)

Techniques	Percentages				
	Always	Most of the time	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
A counselor should be free to accept for group counseling only those whom he is reasonably certain he can help in groups	99	1			
Role playing is effective in getting youth to talk openly about their problems, to change their behavior and attitudes, and to help others change			40	20	40
Information needed for choosing the best possible combination of students for successful group counseling can be obtained in the intake interview		73	15	10	2
Structuring the group counseling sessions for today's youth involves taking into consideration the fact adolescents are very sensitive to adults' criticism; they must not feel that they are in the group because they have done something wrong	83	17			
School counselors may accomplish the goal of understanding the unique needs of youth in counseling groups by working with parents and teacher groups	100				
Volunteers seem to profit more from group counseling than do youth who are encouraged or coerced to accept it			53	47	
Failure to conduct adequate follow-up studies of group counseling is a weakness; if clients are really helped, this new way of personalizing communication about social, recreational, health or ethical problems should improve behavior of clients		97	3		

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

The primary objective for the detailed analysis of questionnaire data determined the nature of the support this study provides about group counseling as a way of improving the interpersonal climate of a school.

The data from the study was summarized concerning the general characteristics of the population studied. Since most of the subjects had never been in a counseling session before, many were indecisive about engaging in group counseling sessions.

Specific information about self-esteem with a group of subjects was verified. For example, feelings of failure, fear, and worry should be readily perceived by a counselor, teacher, or a parent if he wishes to improve the interpersonal climate in the school, home, and community. On the other hand, the reactions to feeling of confidence, success, empathy, and satisfaction are usually positive and represent the elements of good interpersonal relationships.

Most of the eighty-seven subjects in this study revealed to the writer their primary sources of motivation, such as, mild competition and freedom to communicate with others about personal problems. Emphasis was placed upon sessions where both sexes participated in the discussion.

Conclusion

From the analysis of the total study, several conclusions were drawn. Group counseling can effectively improve the inter-

personal climate of a school. The responses received from students and counselors are very similar to illustrative materials found in the related literature. Group counseling is a means of personalizing communication. Group counseling may be established to improve one's Self-Esteem and to increase Self-Motivation in desirable ways.

Because this study included a check and balance system through its proposed Follow-Through Action Programs, in which both counselors and students were involved, the accepted goals and techniques of group counseling appear to represent the preference of the subjects.

A P P E N D I X

QUESTIONNAIRE

A. COUNSELING SESSIONS

Directions: Please indicate with an X the statement which best describes your experience with counseling sessions.

1. I have never been in a counseling session before.

Does not apply Does apply

2. I have worked with my school counselor alone on a problem that bothered me.

Does not apply Does apply

3. I prefer to engage in group counseling sessions when I have a personal problem to solve rather than work alone with my counselor on the problem.

Does not apply Does apply

B. SELF-ESTEEM

Directions: Please indicate with an X the statement which best describes your feelings about yourself.

1. I have experienced a feeling of failure because of poor grades.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

2. I have experienced a feeling of failure where my family is concerned.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

3. I feel confident about most situations in which I find myself.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

4. I feel successful.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

5. I feel that I am considered popular by my peer group.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

6. I believe that I am loved by my family and accepted by my friends.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

7. My family background is very important to me.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

8. I am fearful in new situations.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

9. I am empathic; I feel what others feel.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

10. I am satisfied with my looks, personal grooming, and appearance.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

11. Others consider me attractive and well-groomed.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

12. I feel guilty about some of the beliefs and values I have in reference to my personal behavior (conduct) with the opposite sex.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

13. I am pleased with the goals I have set for myself where my life is concerned.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

14. I have made definite plans concerning my future career.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

15. The lack of adequate money for meeting basic needs worries me.

Does not apply Does apply

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

PART IISELF-MOTIVATION

Directions: Please indicate with an X the statements which best describe your feelings about yourself. Check only one statement in each set.

- _____ I like easy tasks.
- _____ I like spending my time on jobs which are difficult.
- _____ When I am alone, I sleep most of the time.
- _____ I feel lonely most of the time even though I am in a group.
- _____ I like competition.
- _____ I dislike competition.
- _____ My peak experience comes when I am alone doing a job I like to do.
- _____ I like to watch problems emerge within a group for discussions such as drug abuse, sex, religion, use of money, etc.
- _____ When parents, teachers, and my peers are all in group discussion sessions, the barriers for me to communicate my personal problems are greater.
- _____ I can discuss my personal problems no matter who listens.
- _____ I am motivated in group discussions where both sexes are present.
- _____ I would prefer a group in which only (females, males) participate

PART III

FOLLOW-THROUGH ACTION PROGRAM
(For Students and Counselors)

Directions: If you had your preference concerning individual and group counseling, react to the items in the questionnaire in a way that the reader knows why you prefer the one and reject the other.

- Goals -

1. Crisis counseling is more effective in groups when there is a common problem such as drug abuse, pregnancies, failure.

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

2. Failure in school work may be traced to a lack of challenge in the teaching - learning situation.

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

3. Group counseling can be very effective in a good school guidance program.

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

4. Finding support from a group of peers is often of greater value to a student than support from an interested adult.

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

5. Sexual behavior, particularly of a deviate nature, is more effectively discussed in a group, where there is a common problem.

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

6. Group counseling leads to a deeper understanding of human behavior.

Always Most of the time Frequently Sometimes Never

7. Group counseling leads to increasing one's self confidence and trust in one's own perceptions.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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8. Group counseling is effective if the fear of talking in a group is obvious and the person does not seem to be able to get started.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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- Techniques -

9. A counselor should be free to accept for group counseling only those whom he is reasonably certain he can help in groups.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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10. Role playing is effective in getting youth to talk openly about their problems, to change their behavior and attitudes, to help others change.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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11. Information needed for choosing the best possible combination of students for successful group counseling can be obtained in the intake interview.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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12. Structuring the group counseling sessions for today's youth involves taking into consideration the fact adolescents are very sensitive to adults' criticism; they must not feel that they are in the group because they have done something wrong.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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13. School counselors may accomplish the goal of understanding the unique needs of youth in counseling groups by working with parent and teacher groups.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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14. Volunteers seem to profit more from group counseling than do youth who are encouraged or coerced to accept it.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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15. Failure to conduct adequate follow-up studies of group counseling is a weakness; if clients are really helped, this new way of personalizing communication about social, recreational, health, or ethical problems should improve behavior of clients.

<u>Always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
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A STUDY TO DETERMINE HOW THE INTERPERSONAL CLIMATE OF A SCHOOL
CAN BE IMPROVED THROUGH GROUP COUNSELING

by

NELDA DEAN WILLIAMS

B. S., Grambling College, 1966

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1972

ABSTRACT

It was the purpose of this study (1) to identify how group counseling can improve the interpersonal climate of schools; and (2) to present the goals and techniques of group counseling.

Questionnaires were used to collect data for the study and were given to 100 randomly selected students at Grambling College in Grambling, Louisiana during the month of May, 1972. Eighty-seven students returned the survey-questionnaires. The Follow-Through Action Program questionnaire was also given to 10 randomly selected school counselors during the same month. All of the counselors returned the questionnaire.

A detailed analysis of questionnaire data determined the nature of the information this study provides about group counseling as a way of improving the interpersonal climate of a school.

The data from the study was summarized concerning the general characteristics of the population studied. Since most of the subjects had never been in a counseling session, many were indecisive about engaging in group counseling sessions.

From the analysis of the total study, several conclusions were drawn. Group counseling can effectively improve the interpersonal climate of a school. The responses received from students and counselors are very similar to illustrative materials found in the related literature. Group counseling is one of the preferred means for personalizing communication. Group counseling is a means for improving one's Self-Esteem and increasing Self-Motivation in desirable ways.

Because this study included a check and balance system through its proposed Follow-Through Action Programs in which both counselors and students were involved, the writer concludes that the accepted goals and techniques of group counseling represent the preference of the subjects.