Standards of Training for Group Workers

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Abstract

This article compares and contrasts group counseling standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA), the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), and the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Educational Related Programs (CACREP). Consistent standards are important to establish in the training of competent and effective group leaders as counseling is a relatively new discipline that is complex and necessitates awareness of cultural diversity and ethical issues. To clarify the complexity, the standards will be compared through the lens of four learning methods: experiential, academic, observation, and supervision. Supervision is the broadest and encompasses the other modalities. Three models of supervision will be presented. Supervision and multicultural competence will be discussed, and an additional CACREP core curriculum area on spirituality and religion, as an aspect of multicultural competence, is suggested and explored. It is hoped that through a rigorous evaluation, these standards can be practically applied and future recommendations for group worker training can be made.

Keywords: ACA, ASGW, CACREP, counselor education, group standards, supervision, diversity, spirituality, religion, competency

Standards of Training for Group Workers

Group counseling and psychotherapy has its origins dating back decades. The growth and study of group counseling has sparked increasing interest in the helping professions as its benefits and treatment outcomes are realized (Stockton, Morran, & Krieger, 2004). It is important to be aware that group work differs from individual therapy and counseling in a variety of ways. The amount of variables within group counseling increases exponentially with the amount of individuals and unforeseen factors within a group. A group counseling leader must be aware of these variables as well as the ethics involved in order to conduct group work with the positive impact that can be facilitated. Thus, the task ahead is to answer the question as to how to best train leaders in group counseling to handle these complicated and multilayered aspects of group counseling. Barlow (2004) addresses this topic in four distinct areas: experiential, supervision, observation, and academic. It is within these categories that a picture can begin to form of the standards of training needed for group workers. This picture will then be evaluated in light of the existing standards within the major governing bodies of the American Counseling Association (ACA), the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), and the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Educational Related Programs (CACREP).

Need for Standards

The need for understanding and setting standards for group work can be summed up in the following quote: “Group leaders are not born, they are trained” (Barlow, 2004, p. 113). As with most disciplines, work that is excellent is not born out of simple talent or inherent qualities. These factors only go so far in facilitating change within individuals during the group process. Specific training must be in place in order to achieve desired outcomes.

Counseling as a discipline is relatively new compared to other disciplines such as psychology (Gladding, 1994). This can facilitate confusion among those outside the discipline regarding things such as services being offered. An example is found in the literature for group counseling. Terms for the same topic range from group counseling, group psychotherapy, group therapy, and even "12-step programs" (Stockton, Morran, & Krieger, 2004, p. 66). This confusion can lead to not only frustration on the part of clients choosing the right services for themselves, but also potential harm to the client.

Beyond confusion, harm to a client can occur where there is a lack of knowledge and even clarity of proper ethics within group counseling. As will be shown, the ethics codes are vague at best when it comes to guiding group leaders on how to conduct groups ethically. Issues such as confidentiality, screening, and avoiding harm all take on new meaning within the context of group counseling. These factors lead Barlow (2004) to call for group leaders to "unlearn" the ways they have done individual counseling in order to conduct successful groups (p. 116). Thus, several governing bodies have established some ground rules to working with groups.

Governing Bodies

Three main governing bodies will be discussed in their establishment of standards for group workers. While each has its own levels of expertise and detail regarding these standards, there are applicable areas that all group workers need to be informed. These governing bodies include the American Counseling Association, the Association for Specialist in Group Work, and the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Educational Related Programs.

American Counseling Association

The first and most established governing body is the American Counseling Association. It maintains and publishes the code of ethics that governs the work of all counselors within the field. However, in viewing the most recent publication in 2014, there are only three sections that can be applied to group workers within these ethics. Sections A.9.a, A.9.b, and B.4.a all have some reference to group work in counseling (ACA, 2014). The first two sections deal with screening clients and protecting clients while the latter deals with the issue of confidentiality. However, while these guidelines deal with ethics on a broad, general scale, they are severely lacking in the best practice to actually perform group work.

The code states that group workers should screen clients based on their "needs and goals" being "compatible with the goals of the group" (ACA, 2014, A.9.a). The ambiguity of this statement leaves the door open for many interpretations. A group worker could attempt to make sure all clients come from the same background and worldview. Additionally, the group worker could also seek to have a diverse group in order to challenge and work to "push people's buttons" as Barlow (2004, p. 117) recommends. There is little clarity in the ethics standard as to how group work should practically be applied in a best practice mentality. There could be a way to adhere to this standard in one setting that would differ in another. The code also applies to the ethics of protecting clients. The question arises as to what is a "reasonable" precaution taken to protect clients. With the amount of variables in group work, how a group worker navigates this dilemma is important. The group worker could decide to challenge clients by placing them in uncomfortable situations. However, that could be triggering if the client has some sort of trauma

or abuse in the past. As will be seen, screening can account for much of this, but such variables are not able to be completely understood.

The final ethics standard deals with explaining and setting the parameters for confidentiality in group work. As stated before, the question arises as to how this is done practically. Confidentiality cannot be completely guaranteed in group work (Yalom, & Leszcz, 2005). The stance could be taken that group workers can discuss what happens in group with others without referencing specific individuals. Alternatively, the group worker could establish rules that prohibit any discussion outside of group. There is no clarity in practice for how group workers can adhere to the ethics standard.

Consider how the following case study: A therapy group has formed at a local Christian counseling agency. The stated goal of the group is to help individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. During one session, a group member states that all those who commit suicide will "go to hell," which begins to spark debate among the group members. Feeling singled out, the initial member states that he will discuss what transpired in group with his pastor in order to gain more information.

As can be seen, there are many difficult situations within this scenario. Upon more review, proper pre-planning would greatly aid in knowing how to screen clients, as well as how to deal with the issue of confidentiality. Yet, novice or untrained group workers, at times, do not have the skills necessary to think through these issues (Ohrt, Ener, Porter, & Young, 2014). The need for more detailed and structured standards is clear; these standards are beginning to be developed practically through other governing bodies.

Association for Specialists in Group Work

The ASGW is a division of the ACA and has published several documents that establish training standards and best practices for group workers. The ASGW was born out of a need to fill in the gaps where the ACA Code of Ethics falls short in relation to group work (Thomas & Pender, 2008). The first document published was the Professional Standards for the Training of Group Workers in 1983. It was revised in 1990, and again in 2000 (Wilson, Rapin, & Haley-Banez, 2000). The first publication of the document established nine competencies, 17 skill competencies, and clock-based experience requirements. It also differentiated between core competencies for all counselors and specialization training necessary for those wanting to conduct group work on a regular basis (Wilson et al., 2000). Among the requirements for specialization training are four areas of competency, which include task and work group facilitation, group psychoeducation, group counseling, and group psychotherapy. While these areas of specialization have added clarity to the practicality of conducting group work well, they were not without their criticisms. Some argued that these areas of specialization were too idealistic and lacked real world implementation within a group setting (Zimpfer, Waltman, Williamson, & Huhn, 1985). However, subsequent revisions of this document have allowed more clarity as well as better integration with the CACREP standards.

In response to some of the criticism, the ASGW published another document to provide even more clarity in the real world practice of group work. The Best Practices Guidelines was originally published in 1998 with another revision in 2007 (Thomas & Pender, 2008). While the Professional Standards document is focused on the training environment, the Best Practices is focused on the many problems with practically running an effective group. The Best Practices

Guidelines is broken up into three sections: planning, performing, and processing. Within the planning section, aspects of screening, preparation, ethics, and even technology use are addressed. The performing section deals with aspects such as adaptation, how to create meaning for group members, and diversity. Finally, the processing section focuses on the self-evaluation of the group members and group leader, proper evaluation and follow-up, and consultation (Thomas & Pender, 2008). It can be argued that these guidelines are a more relevant resource for those seeking to engage in group work than the ACA Code of Ethics. However, even many of the specifics have variables within them. Many of these documents are pointing toward a more experientially based training for group workers.

It would be difficult to move on from the ASGW without acknowledging that multicultural and social justice issues have driven much of the discussion even within ASGW's own journal (Bemak, & Chung, 2004; Singh, Merchant, Skudrzyk, & Ingene, 2012). The ASGW published the Multicultural and Social Justice Competence Principles for Group Workers in 2012, which was designed to facilitate the empowerment of individuals within a society, provide definitions for common social justice terms, and develop group workers' competency in these areas. Within the Principles it specifies that multicultural and social justice competency encompasses three domains: awareness of self and group members, strategies and skills, and social justice advocacy (Singh et al., 2012). One of the many positives about this document is the practical outlining of what group workers should do if privilege and oppression are found in their work. The group worker should embrace their role as a change agent, develop the skills to make changes, develop the ability to take actions, and to actively identify issues of privilege and oppression.

All of the above criteria are important in the practice of group work. However, the difficulty remains on the best way to train future group workers with these necessary skills. The final governing body deals specifically with how to train future group counselors with as many of these skills as necessary.

Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Educational Related Programs

The Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Educational Related Programs was established to develop counseling training standards, to recognize a complex society, and to strengthen program improvement and best practices, among other goals (CACREP, 2019). CACREP specifically accredits graduate counseling programs in order to produce graduates who demonstrate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.

There are six sections to the organization of the 2016 CACREP standards: learning environment, professional counseling identity, professional practice, evaluation in the program, entry-level specialty areas, and doctoral standards for counselor education and supervision (CACREP, 2015). Group counseling and group work is addressed within the professional counseling identity section (CACREP, 2015). Areas of focus under this section include theoretical foundations, group process and development, therapeutic factors and group effectiveness, and functions and characteristics of effective group leaders (CACREP, 2015). Each of the criteria found under group counseling and group work provides guidance for group workers and also requires some experience with group work (10 hours minimum per academic term). Additionally, while CACREP standards are more expansive than the short criteria in the ACA Code of Ethics, there is more work that can be done to further train and develop effective group workers.

Group Worker Standard Comparison

Armed with an understanding of the standards that have been set in place by the main governing bodies, the standards can be evaluated based on Barlow's (2004) four categories: experiential, academic, observation, and supervision. This model of evaluating learning has a strong pedagogical foundation (Dies, 1994; Fuhriman & Burlingame, 2001).

Experiential

In looking at the requirements for group workers in the ACA Code of Ethics, it became clear that there were numerous ways in which the codes could be interpreted. Experience can help guide a student or group worker where simply reading a standard cannot. Due to the nature of group work, it is important that the group leader does not become detached from the group so that he or she can discern the group dynamics and stages (Barlow, 2004). These reasons are the factors behind the ASGW and CACREP maintaining some standards for building group experiences into the training of group workers. The ASGW sets the standard for core training experience at a minimum of 10 hours (20 hours are recommended) of observation and participation in group work (Wilson et al., 2000). However, the experience requirement grows significantly for the four specialization areas. The ASGW states the group experience requirements as: Task/Work Group Facilitation (30 hours; 45 hours are recommended), Group Psychoeducation (30 hours; 45 hours are recommended), Group Counseling (45 hours; 60 hours are recommended), and Group Psychotherapy (45 hours; 60 recommended) (Wilson et al, 2000). It is also suggested that the experience within these four areas stay centered to the age and clientele of the student's area of specialty. CACREP additionally set guidelines for experience requirements with groups at 10 hours minimum per academic term (CACREP, 2015).

All of these requirements point to the fact that experience truly brings understanding in conducting group work. It can be argued that individuals who embark on facilitating a group without proper prior experience can fall into many of the traps that befall a group that is not run well. How a student can gain this experience is another area for discussion. There are many issues such as dual relationship with an instructor, confidentiality, and receiving feedback. These will be discussed more. However, the challenge remains that there are no clear guidelines of how to facilitate this experience practically. Still, the need for experiencing group remains a paramount aspect to standards of training for group workers.

Academic

The area of academic training is perhaps the largest form of all the standards across the governing bodies. The ASGW spends considerable time detailing the skills that must be learned and acquired in the academic setting of training. CACREP's entire existence is based on setting academic standards in this area. While the standards are not as fleshed out as the ASGW, they are still beneficial and required for all graduate programs. Issues such as preparation, theory, screening, interventions, group stages, evaluation, and ethics are all covered in the ASGW standard practices document (Thomas & Pender, 2008).

Since not every institution has been evaluated, a brief look at established programs show not only a good cross section of core training, but also a complete lack of specialized training (Ohrt et al., 2014). This lack of specialized training could be due in part to the time constraints of programs to cover such a large swath of information and skills. Perhaps it would be beneficial to create a separate certification for specialization apart from the academic setting. This certification could be similar to group certification that is offered through the American Group

Psychotherapy Association, the American Psychological Association's (APA) branch (Gladding, 1994). Adding a certification would reduce the pressure on the schools and programs to provide the necessary academic teaching and shift focus back on the industry and its setting of standardization among group counselors.

Observation

While observation can fall into the experience category, there are some differences. Observation is mentioned in the ASGW standards as well as the CACREP general standards for counselors. The advantage that observation has over experience is the ability to decouple personal identity from skill acquisition. A student may be able to critique a video or observe a group they are not a part of more easily than if they are actually a group participant. As Barlow (2004) states, the goal is to invite mastery rather than expect students to be masters. In this way, modeling can take place and students are better able to compare and contrast group worker skills and styles.

Supervision

The final aspect of training cannot be separated from experience and observation. It is only through supervision, that the feedback loop to the student is complete. All of the experience requirements for the ASGW and CACREP entail supervision in order to allow students to learn by gaining invaluable experience. Barlow (2004) recommends focusing on four areas of group supervision to include: what is needed; at which level; who should do it; and what resulted. By answering each of these four questions students get the necessary feedback from their professors and learn to be their own sources of critique once supervision is no longer required. All of these

aspects aid in developing the group leader into an effective catalyst for change that is the hallmark of all good groups.

Supervision and Multicultural Competence

As stated previously, there is a major emphasis on training in competencies in advocacy and diversity by the CACREP, ACA, and ASGW (Chang, Barrio Minton, Dixon, Meyers, & Sweeney, 2012). Furthermore, CACREP expects counselor educators to exhibit leadership ability when confronting social inequity (Chang et al., 2012). CACREP is the foremost accrediting agency for counselor education whose purpose is to further educational standards and to facilitate professional counselor competence (Bohecker, Schellenberg, & Silvey, 2017; CACREP, 2015). The intent of the CACREP standards is to promote clarity and simplification within the requirements and to help unify the profession of counseling (CACREP, 2015). The core curriculum standards for *Group Counseling and Group Work* include criteria addressing theories, development and process of groups, curative factors, group leadership, forming groups, group typology, cultural issues and ethics, and direct group experience (CACREP, 2015). While programs are required to meet all core content areas, there is flexibility when choosing what areas to emphasize (CACREP, 2015). Programs are encouraged to utilize creativity and innovation in fulfilling the spirit and purpose of the standards (CACREP, 2015).

Yalom and Lesczc (2005) emphasized the importance of supervision in group counseling. How supervisors treat their supervisees should reflect professional ethics and values because trainees will treat others in a similar way (Yalom & Lesczc, 2005). Thus, conveying compassion, respect, and dignity are essential in the training process. (Yalom & Lesczc, 2005). Yalom and Lesczc (2005) indicated that supervision gives counselor educators the opportunity to observe

and gain information about counselor behavior that impacts group interaction. Trainees will become dispirited when supervision is unnecessarily critical, demeaning, or neglects the main concerns of trainees (Yalom & Lesczc, 2005). Supervision in group work is a way that counseling leaders can empower others in developing multicultural competencies and advocate for the oppressed (Chang et al., 2012). Supervision helps group leaders to recognize and correct errors and to avoid becoming fixated on interventions that are ineffective (Capuzzi & Stauffer, 2019).

A model of supervision that addresses one's perception of self and how one subsequently engages others in a group context is the Heuristic Model of Nonoppressive Interpersonal Development (HMNID) (Ancis & Ladany, 2001; Chang et al., 2012). This model utilizes an assessment of multiple dimensions and identity variables where counselor educators learn and discover sequences of behaviors, thoughts, and feelings about clients, supervisees, and themselves (Ancis & Ladany, 2001; Chang et al., 2012). For each variable, individuals are identified as belonging to either a socially privileged group (SPG) or to a socially oppressed group (SOG). (Ancis & Ladany, 2001; Chang et al., 2012). Development of interpersonal functioning is measured according to four phases: "adaptation, incongruence, exploration, and integration" (Ancis & Ladany, 2001; Chang et al., 2012, p. 191). Adaptation is characterized by conformity, apathy, and complacency with the dominant culture (Ancis & Ladany, 2001; Chang et al., 2012). Incongruence occurs when new experiences contradict previous beliefs (Ancis & Ladany, 2001; Chang et al., 2012). Exploration begins when one recognizes and evaluates one's belonging to the SPG or SOP (Ancis & Ladany, 2001; Chang et al., 2012). Awareness of

oppressive interaction, diversity, and commitment to advocacy and change marks the final phase of integration (Anis & Ladany, 2001; Chang et al., 2012).

Another model of group supervision is Chang, Hays, and Milliken's (2009) social constructivist approach (Chang et al., 2012). According to this theory, the purpose of supervision is to expand counselor educator awareness of contextual issues impacting the group counseling process and to encourage an understanding of the multiple meanings that can influence awareness of self, client difficulties, and collaboration within the community (Chang et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2012). Cognitions and reality are considered malleable and are influenced by interaction with others (Chang et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2012).

A model of supervision that blends multicultural counseling competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992), HMNID (Ancis & Ladany, 2001), and Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom, Engelhart., Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) is the Synergistic Model of Multicultural Supervision (Chang et al., 2012). Bloom's Taxonomy stimulates cognitive complexity and includes the following six instructional levels: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom et al., 1956; Chang et al., 2012). The other aspects of the model prepare trainees to attend to client diversity through the integration of affect, thought, and behavior (Chang et al., 2012). The content and process of supervision is attended to through skilled and well-timed interventions as supervisees engage in self-reflective exercises and cognitive growth increases (Chang et al., 2012).

Chang et al. (2012) recommend triadic and group supervision to facilitate counseling advocacy and leadership skills of counselor educators. Asking counselors-in-training to present cases in which they are required to apply their theoretical approaches and demonstrate leadership

and advocacy skills is a way to meet CACREP standards in *Professional Counseling Orientation and Practice, Social and Cultural Diversity, Human Growth and Development, Counseling and Helping Relationships, Group Counseling and Group Work*, and *Research and Program Evaluation* (CACREP, 2015; Chang et al., 2012). Furthermore, encouraging counselor educators to attend to salient identity factors of clients can assist them in understanding what they may be overlooking or assuming and how this influences the counseling process (Chang et al., 2012).

Spirituality and Religion

One area of concern embedded in the discussion of training for group workers is the need for religious and spiritual standards (Bohecker et al., 2017). Although spirituality and religion are recognized as salient factors by the ACA and its division of the Association for Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling (ASERVIC), a majority of counselors seem to be unaware of the ASERVIC competencies (Bohecker et al., 2017; Reiner & Dobmeier, 2014). Additionally, those who know of the competencies may not fully address them in counselor training nor use them in counseling settings (Bohecker et al., 2017). This may be because many individuals do not understand differences between spirituality and religion (Bohecker et al., 2017). Furthermore, spirituality is often interwoven with religion and is not viewed as a distinct concept (Bohecker et al., 2017). Bohecker et al. (2017) distinguish religion as an external practice that occurs within the context of culture; whereas, spirituality is an internal and subjective dimension of all humankind that transcends culture and religion.

The ACA considers spirituality an integral aspect of holistic wellness (Bohecker et al., 2017; Myers, 2009). However, there seems to be an inconsistency between standards of training in counselor education and the endorsed competencies (Bohecker et al., 2017). Bohecker et al.

(2017) point out that a de-emphasis on spirituality and religion occurred when the 2016 CACREP Standards no longer included a definition of spirituality and relocated spirituality and religion within the *Social and Cultural Diversity* curriculum area without adequately delineating these terms. Therefore, Bohecker et al. (2017) advocated for an additional CACREP core curriculum area addressing spirituality and religion.

Providing consistent standardized guidelines for counselor training in spirituality and religion will contribute to the mental and emotional well-being of clients (Bohecker et al., 2017). Clients prefer to have their spiritual and religious issues addressed in therapy as these beliefs impact worldview and behavior (Bohecker et al., 2017; Rose, Westefeld, & Ansley, 2001). Issues such as spiritual abuse, crises of faith, and countertransference can seriously impact the counseling process (ASERVIC, 2019; Casquarelli & Benoit, 2017; Matthews & Snow, 2018). However, many counselors feel that they are not adequately trained in addressing spiritual or religious concerns, and research has identified barriers when incorporating spirituality and religion in counselor training (Bohecker et al., 2017). Barriers can include inadequate understanding of the significance of spirituality and religion, misunderstanding about separation of church and state, lack of comfort with discussing a sensitive topic, and insufficient preparation (Bohecker et al., 2017). Thus, counselors often require further training to meet client needs (Bohecker et al., 2017).

Although certification programs in spirituality are available, there are no consistent standards or oversight of them (Bohecker et al., 2017; CACREP, 2015). Furthermore, these programs are often limited to a particular faith or denomination and access can be restricted in secular settings (Bohecker et al., 2017). Bohecker et al. (2017) assert that spiritual and religious

training should be standardized within the CACREP core curriculum rather than sought as postgraduate education. The proposed core standards are aimed at training students to assist clients in developing wellness and healthier coping strategies based on their individual religious and spiritual beliefs (Bohecker et al., 2017).

Infusing spirituality and religion into the CACREP core curriculum would promote the values of wellness, prevention, and development that are integral to the standards (Mellin, Hunt, & Nichols, 2011; Reilly, 2016). Spiritual values can be the most significantly held cultural values of clients (Bohecker et al., 2017; Burke, 1998-1999). Neglecting this aspect of wellness increases the likelihood of unethical client treatment (Bohecker et al., 2017). Standardization of spirituality and religion as a CACREP core curriculum requisite would help to provide consistent criteria in counselor education and would improve solidification of counselor identity, best practices, and holistic wellness (Bohecker et al., 2017). Furthermore, this would strengthen CACREP as an advocate for global wellness and would better prepare counselors to meet complex and diverse needs (Bohecker et al., 2017). The proposed core curriculum area of *Spirituality and Religion* includes criteria covering history and world religions; spiritual identity development and wellness; cultures that are faith-based; theories of religious and spiritual development; supervision; consultation and collaboration; clinical assessment and treatment plans; specific competencies; diversity considerations; individual, couples, and family therapy; values identification; grief, trauma, aging, violence/abuse, infidelity, health issues, sexuality, addictions; and referrals (Bohecker et al., 2017). The curriculum was formulated from suggestions and a review panel of 11 counseling professionals (Bohecker et al., 2017).

Future Research

There are many ways in which the *Spirituality and Religion* curriculum could be implemented within CACREP *Group Counseling and Group Work* standards (Bohecker et al., 2017). The suggested *Spirituality and Religion* core area could be blended within *Social and Cultural Diversity* or *Human Growth and Development* in a group context, or an individual course could be included in degree plans (Bohecker et al., 2017). For example, an elective course on Eastern-based mindfulness was offered to counseling students at Northwestern University to improve self-care and received positive reviews (Campbell & Christopher, 2012; Reilly, 2016). However, Reilly (2016) observed that an additional course may not be practical or desirable in addition to the 60-hour CACREP requirement. Also, some approaches, such as Eastern-based mindfulness, may not fit well into a didactic framework (Reilly, 2016). Thus, experiential groups were advocated for when implementing mindfulness or other similar approaches (Reilly, 2016). Similarly, Bohecker, Vereen, Wells, and Wathen (2016) implemented a mindfulness experience small group (MESG) with counselors-in-training that involved guided meditation, attention to the body and emotions, compassion to self, and development of interpersonal skills. Increased self-awareness and the ability to manage emotions resulted from the MESG, which helped to prevent countertransference and projecting onto others (Bohecker et al., 2016; Reilly, 2016). Navigating developmental anxiety in healthier ways and internalizing self-efficacy were identified as benefits of mindfulness in counselor education (Reilly, 2016). In light of the ASERVIC (2019) competencies of tailoring practices to fit spiritual and/ or religious views, offering Centering Prayer as an alternative to Eastern-based mindfulness small groups for those who would like instruction in a Western-based, Christian approach to guided meditation could be beneficial to counselor educators and is an area where more research is needed (Knabb, 2012).

Bohecker et al. (2017) suggested an infusion of a broad range of the history of religion and spirituality in counselor education that covers Western, Eastern, and nonreligious beliefs, such as: Native American spirituality, Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Sikhism, Taoism, Shintoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Confucianism, agnosticism, atheism, and humanism. ASERVIC Competencies addressing appropriate consultation and referral with leaders could also be included (Bohecker et al., 2017). Various models of wellness and the influence of religious and spiritual origin, upbringing and development would be explored in consideration of various factors, such as gender, age, ability, etc. (Bohecker et al., 2017). Exploration of counselor attitudes, values, and beliefs about spirituality and religion would be integrated into experiential group activities, process groups, and/ or blended internet classes with the aim of reflecting on one's spiritual development, increasing self-awareness, and developing self-confidence when addressing client spiritual and religious issues (Bohecker et al., 2017).

Conclusion

CACREP, ACA, and ASGW recognize that group counseling is complex and requires sensitivity to cultural diversity and ethical dilemmas (ACA, 2014; ASGW, 2012; CACREP, 2015). Therefore, creating flexible training standards that hold counseling leaders accountable can be challenging (Chang et al., 2012). Barlow (2004) suggested four group categories when comparing group work standards of the ACA, ASGW, and CACREP: experiential, academic, observation, and supervision. Supervision is the broadest as it encompasses the other three and is another area in need of research (Barlow, 2004; Chang et al, 2012; Yalom & Lesczc, 2005).

To address this complexity, three models of group counseling supervision were discussed: HMNID (Ancis & Ladany, 2001), Chang et al.'s (2009) Social Constructivist Model,

and the Synergistic Model of Multicultural Supervision (Bloom et al., 1956; Chang et al., 2012, & Sue et al., 1992). Each model addresses leadership and advocacy skills when confronting social justice issues in group counseling with the intention of promoting cognitive malleability (Chang et al., 2012). Identifying barriers that impede human growth and development and advocating for and with clients requires counselor educators to develop cognitive sophistication (Chang et al, 2012). Counselor educators increase their capacity to integrate and differentiate self-awareness, client information, and a multitude of influential factors that affect client development and wellness (Chang et al, 2012).

Salient factors, such as spirituality and religion, clearly impact counselor educators and their clients as is recognized by ACA's division of ASERVIC (ASERVIC, 2019; Bohecker et al., 2017). To neglect this critical holistic aspect of the person is unethical (Bohecker et al, 2017). Counseling leaders who overlook or are uncomfortable with addressing spiritual and religious issues risk propagating detrimental social patterns within the microcosm of group counseling (Capuzzi & Stauffer, 2019). Therefore, future research is suggested to support additional CACREP training standards that adequately address spirituality and religion to unify professional counseling standards (Bohecker et al., 2017). Advocating on behalf of the counseling profession, counselor educators, and clients is essential to the promotion of wellness and human dignity for all individuals (Chang et al., 2012).

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Appendix

Selected Journal:

Journal for Specialists in Group Work

Rationale for selection:

The rationale for selection of the Journal for Specialists in Group Work for article submission resides in the relevancy of the journal and the current discussion. The relevancy of this journal within group work is long standing and influential. It is the official journal for the ASGW who also published guidelines for training of group workers. The organization as well as the journal have been in existence for decades and have driven much of the discussion for training in group work. One of their stated goals for all published articles is to provide specific information on how to lead groups and train group leaders (The Journal for Specialists in Group Work, n.d.).

Additionally, the current discussion in this journal is ongoing regarding the best way to train group workers. They discuss such issues as theory for group work in school settings (Finnerty, Luke, & Duffy, 2019) and developing case conceptualizations (Sung & Skovholt, 2019). The above article would fall into potentially two categories that the journal considers for publication: commentary and training articles. Commentary articles focus on current topics and debates within the field while training articles focus on education, training, and delivery of group work (The Journal for Specialists in Group Work, n.d.). The journal also undergoes a rigorous screening process with a double-blind peer review. These factors build a robust rationale for the submission of the above article to this journal.

Instructions for Authors:

General Information
The Journal for Specialists in Group Work is directed toward group work practitioners with a focus on group work theory, interventions, training, current issues, and research. The group process is a powerful method for development and change in the individual, the organization, and the community.

The Journal for Specialists in Group Work expands our understanding of this dynamic field. In each issue of the journal you'll find peer-reviewed articles that:

• promote the practice of group work
• cover the continuum of types of group work - from task to therapy groups
• emphasize the processes that make groups effective
• integrate theory and practice
• provide specific information about how to lead groups and train group leaders.

Manuscript Preparation

Manuscripts are to be submitted to via *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*'s Manuscript Central site located at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/usgw. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact the Editorial Office jsgw@u.arizona.edu. A cover letter must be included indicating that the material is intended for publication and that it has not been nor is it under consideration for publication in another source.

Manuscripts should be well organized and concise so that the development of ideas is logical. The title of the article should appear on a separate page accompanying the manuscript. Include on this page the names and affiliations of the authors followed by a paragraph that repeats the names of the authors and gives their titles and institutional affiliations and another paragraph that provides complete contact information to the author who will respond to communication with complete mailing, phone, and email information. The editor will remove identifying information before the manuscript is sent out for blind review.

Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to reproduce copyrighted material from other sources and are required to sign an agreement for the transfer of copyright to the publisher before publication. All accepted manuscripts, artwork, and photographs become the property of the publisher. Upon acceptance, contributors are required to supply the final version of the material as an electronic file in PC-based format using MS Word attached to an E-mail message and as a hardcopy by regular mail. Contributors will also be expected to submit four, four-option multiple-choice questions and answers representative of the main content of their manuscript for use in the *Journal for Specialists in Group Work* CEU exam. The CEU questions and answers should be submitted as a separate file from the manuscript file itself. A PC-based format using MS Word is required for submission of all materials at all stages of the process. Manuscripts, including tables, figures, and references, should be prepared in accordance with the *American*

Psychological Association 5th Edition.

Include a 100-word abstract of the manuscript that conveys the main message to the reader. Also include four or five keywords that best represent the main content of your manuscript at the bottom of the Abstract page. Lengthy quotations (generally 300-500 cumulative words or more from one source) and adaptation of tables and figures require written reproduction approval from the copyrighted source. A copy of the publisher's written permission must be provided to the journal editor upon acceptance of the article for publication.

Adhere to guidelines to reduce bias in language against persons on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic group, disability or age by referring to the fifth edition of the APA publication manual. Also, use terms such as client, student, or participant rather than subject.

Illustrations

Illustrations submitted (line drawings, halftones, photos, photomicrographs, etc.) should be clean originals or digital files. Digital files are recommended for highest quality reproduction and should follow these guide-lines:

· 300 dpi or higher
· sized to fit on journal page
· EPS, TIFF, or PSD format only
· submitted as separate files, not embedded in text files

Color illustrations will be considered for publication; however, the author will be required to bear the full cost involved in their printing and publication. The charge for the first page with color is $900.00. The next three pages with color are $450.00 each. A custom quote will be provided for color art totaling more than 4 journal pages. Good-quality color prints or files should be provided in their final size. The publisher has the right to refuse publication of color prints deemed unacceptable.

Tables and Figures

Tables should be kept to a minimum. Include only essential data and combine tables wherever possible. Tables and figures should not be embedded in the text, but should be included as separate sheets or files. A short descriptive title should appear above each table with a clear legend and any footnotes suitably
identified below. All units must be included. Figures should be completely labeled, taking into account necessary size reduction. Captions should be typed, double-spaced, on a separate sheet. All original figures should be clearly marked in pencil on the reverse side with the number, author's name, and top edge indicated.

References

Should be listed on separate pages following the text and should be typed double-spaced. References should follow APA style. Check all references for completeness; adequate information should be given to allow the reader to retrieve the referenced material from the most available source. Direct quotations must have page numbers cited. References should be listed alphabetically. Be sure all references have been cited in the text.

Proofs

Electronic page proofs are sent to the designated author. Proofs should be checked and returned within 48 hours.

Offprints and Complimentary Copies

The corresponding author of each article will receive up to 6 complimentary issues. Offprints of the article and additional issues may be ordered from Taylor & Francis by using the order form included with the page proofs.

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