

**Chapter Key People**

**CHAPTER 5**

*The Efficacy of Group Work*

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## Chapter Key Terms

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#### *The Efficacy of Group Work*

Aggressive stimulator  
Beneficence  
Casualty  
Contraindication  
Control group  
Credibility  
Curative factors  
Dependent variable  
Efficacy  
Ethics  
Externalizing disorders  
Heterogeneous  
Homogeneous  
Independent variable  
Informed practice  
Internalizing disorders  
Leadership styles  
Managed care  
Mutual liking  
Multiple-family group therapy  
Nonmaleficence  
Nonspecific factors  
Outcome measurements  
Parent education  
Practical barriers  
Qualitative research  
Quantitative research  
Reliability  
Second step  
Sense of hope  
Specific factors  
Structure  
Thick description  
Validity  
Working alliance

## Chapter Summaries

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#### *The Efficacy of Group Work*

A common experience of nascent professionals in any field is an enthusiasm to apply their newly learned skills. These skills can be used to heal pain and promote peak performance; however, like any powerful tool, group counseling skills can cause harm as well as good. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to help beginning group counselors temper and focus their enthusiasm for their newly gained group counseling skills. To that end, the authors first defined efficacy and discussed how it was measured. Then the influence of specific and nonspecific factors on group counseling outcomes was discussed. Finally, the authors detailed the efficacy of group counseling with specific client populations.

The authors also aimed, in this chapter, to instill a sense of respect for the counseling research literature. All group counselors will face many situations during their careers in which they are unsure of what to do to help their clients. Time and human complexity inevitably outstrip even the best counselor preparation training. In confusing clinical circumstances, the counseling research literature can serve as an invaluable resource. In their article entitled "Building on an Empirical Foundation: Strategies to Enhance Good Practice," Nelson and Neufeldt (1996) presented a very readable guide for counselors on how to use research to improve their clinical practice. We recommend that all group counselors read and reread this article.

As we have noted throughout this chapter, the group counseling research literature contains a rich panoply of strategies and techniques available for the asking. Our question to all of our readers is: Will you ask, or instead curse in the darkness?

## Chapter URLs

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#### *The Efficacy of Group Work*

Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)

[www.asgw.org](http://www.asgw.org)

Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs  
(CACREP)

<http://www.cacrep.org/>

Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE)

<http://www.core-rehab.org/>

Managed Care

<http://www.managedcaremag.com/>

Association for Specialist in Group Work *Best Practices Guidelines*

[www.asgw.org/PDF/best\\_Practices.pdf](http://www.asgw.org/PDF/best_Practices.pdf)

American Psychological Association-Group Psychotherapy Division

<http://www.apa.org/about/division/div49.html>

American School Counselor Association

<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>

Committee for Children

<http://www.cfchildren.org/programs/ssp/research/>

## Test Your Knowledge

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#### *The Efficacy of Group Work*

1. T F In CACREP's accreditation manual, six curricular areas have been designated as core to the training of any counselor.
2. T F The term efficacy refers to the degree to which desired goals or projected outcomes are achieved.
3. T F Efficacy questions are primarily important to researchers and do not play a significant role in the area of ethics, professionalism, or economics.
4. T F An internalizing disorder is one where the client's aggression is directed against himself or herself, while an externalizing disorder is one where the client's aggression is directed against others.
5. T F Informed practice refers to the dictate that a clinician's work be guided by research and scientific knowledge.
6. T F Depression is the most common internalizing disorder suffered by older adults.
7. T F Correlational, casual-comparative, true experimental, quasi-experimental, and action research are all qualitative research methods.
8. T F Diversity is a critical factor in determining the outcomes for group counseling.
9. T F The term control refers to the researcher's efforts to eliminate the influence of factors other than the independent variable upon the dependent variable.
10. T F Thick description refers to the collection of interpretable data collected through narratives, surveys, interviews, and observations.
11. T F Validity concerns the issue of whether a measurement device produces consistent results across observations while reliability concerns the issue of whether an assessment tool measures what it is supposed to measure.
12. T F Any potent therapeutic tool that will benefit a client will also contain the potential to harm the client.

13. T F Credibility occurs when a match exists between the constructed realities of the participants and the constructed reality of the researcher.
14. T F The term specific factors refers to counselors' acts that are unique to a particular theory of counseling.
15. T F Structured groups developed as a result of the influence of behavioral counseling and skills training.
16. T F Undesired client phenomena associated with lack of structure in a counseling session include: cognitive distortion, interpersonal fear, subjective distress, and premature termination.
17. T F Nonspecific factors of counseling are those anti-change producing elements that are present in counseling regardless of theoretical orientation.
18. T F Working alliance is the best known predictor of counseling outcomes.
19. T F The term contraindication refers to those clients who would most benefit from group counseling.
20. T F Counselor actions are a primary source of group counseling casualties.

#### Chapter 5 Answers

1 F, 2 T, 3 F, 4 T, 5 T, 6 T, 7 F, 8 T, 9 T, 10 T, 11 F, 12 T, 13 T, 14 T, 15 T, 16 T, 17 F, 18 T, 19 F, 20 T