

Leadership

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How active, directive and structured should a group leader be?

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Jacobs, Harvill, and Masson state: "People don't mind being led when they are led well."

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Roles and Responsibilities of a group leader

- Knowing the subject, topic or focus of a group that will be led.
- Providing the optimal atmosphere for the group to do its work.
- Directing the focus of the group's work
- Maintaining awareness of individual members and balancing their needs with overall group needs
- Watching the clock related to activities, exercises and air time for members.

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Leader Directed versus Group Directed Approaches

- Important question: Who is responsible for the group?
- Amount of leading is dependent on the kind of group and composition of membership
- Amount of active leading also depends on the stage of group development

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Interpersonal versus intrapersonal leadership styles

- Is the focus on the interactions and how the interpersonal relationships develop over the course of the group or is the focus primarily on the needs and concerns of individual members?
- Different group approaches fall at different points in the continuum related to the above question.
- Differences among group experts in their opinion- Jacobs, Harvill and Masson lean slightly more towards intrapersonal leadership styles versus Yalom who leans more towards an interpersonal leadership style.

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Leadership Functions according to Yalom (2005)

- Emotional Stimulation
- Caring
- Providing some executive group functions

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Experiences or skills that Jacobs, Masson, and Harvill identify as needed by group leaders:

- Experiences with individuals
- Experiences with groups
- Planning and organizational skills
- Knowledge of topic
- Understanding of basic human conflicts and dilemmas
- Understanding of counseling theory

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Leadership attributes

- Self-confidence
- Responsibility
- Attending and listening

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Leadership Attributes continued

- Objectivity
- Genuineness
- Empathy
- Warmth and caring
 - Demonstrated through posture, facial expression, gestures, tone of voice, eye contact and mood
- Respect
- Flexibility

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Leadership attributes continued

- Creativity and spontaneity
- Enthusiasm
- Humor
- Clinical reasoning
- Therapeutic use of self
 - Appropriate sharing of self
 - Adjusting how self is presented in the interest of the group.

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Leadership techniques

- Active listening
 - Restatement
 - Reflection of feeling or content
 - Paraphrasing
 - Clarifying and questioning
 - summarizing
 - Support and encouraging

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Leadership techniques continued

- Linking
- Mini-lecturing and information giving
- Tone setting
- Modeling and self-disclosure
- Use of eyes to scan for non-verbal cues, getting members to look at other members, drawing members out, cutting members off
- Use of voice to set tone, energize group, pace group

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Leadership techniques continued

- Identifying allies
- Multicultural understanding
- Timing
- Content versus process
- Biting your tongue
- Feedback
- Confrontation
- Analysis and interpretation

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Ways that leaders and members may demonstrate a lack of listening or attending

- Lack of eye contact
- Interrupting
- Thinking of what to say next
- Talking too much
- Being off topic
- Hearing what you want to hear

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Five pitfalls to avoid in a group

- Getting over-stimulated or emotionally involved
- Preparing to answer questions before fully understanding them
- Tolerating or failing to adjust to distractions
- Allowing emotionally laden words to interfere with listening
- Permitting prejudices or deep-seated convictions to impair comprehension or understanding.

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It is important that a leader also understand the stages of change and the Transtheoretical Model (p. 321 of Jacobs et al (2009)

- Pre-contemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance

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How do group leaders apply the concepts of the stages of change outlined in the Trans-theoretical Approach to how they lead groups?

- By considering the stage of change that different group members may be in.
- By demystifying the stages of change through teaching members about the stages of change and how members might use the concepts to better understand themselves and each other.
- By adjusting interventions to be consistent with how the leader understands group members' readiness to change.

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Applying the PARS Processing Model for learning Group Process: Reflecting

- Activity
 - Reflecting on what the group did
- Relationships
 - Reflecting on how members interacted with each other, what was actually said
- Self
 - What did I do to participate? What was my role?

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PARS model: Understanding

- Activity:
 - What did the group's performance say about the group? What are their group's strengths and weakness relative to activity performance?
- Relationships
 - What can be said about members readiness or ability to work together? How well do members listen to each other?
- Self
 - What have I learned about myself upon reflecting upon my own participation?

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Applying the PARS Model: Applying

- Activity
 - What have I learned from participating in this activity/exercise that will help me understand the process of groups?
- Relationships
 - What have I learned about how people may interact in groups that will help me understand the process of groups?
- Self
 - What have I learned about myself and my role in this group that will help me consider how I can grow as a group member and as a future group leader?

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