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Predicting Conflict in Group Psychotherapy: A Model Integrating Interpersonal and Group-As-A-Whole Theories

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**PREDICTING CONFLICT IN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY: A MODEL
INTEGRATING INTERPERSONAL AND GROUP-AS-A-WHOLE THEORIES**

PROFESSIONAL DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

OF

**THE SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY**

BY

KYLE GALEN BARRY, PsyM

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF
DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY**

Dayton, Ohio

September, 2012

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SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

July 15, 2011

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE DISSERTATION PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY **KYLE GALEN BARRY** ENTITLED **PREDICTING CONFLICT IN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY: A MODEL INTEGRATING INTERPERSONAL AND GROUP-AS-A-WHOLE THEORIES** BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY.

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Abstract

Literature on group dynamics has typically focused on six content areas; (1) cohesion and group identification, (2) attributions and perceptions in group, (3) leadership and performance in groups, (4) power and relationships among group members, (5) knowledge and cognitive process in groups, (6) group psychotherapy (Kivlighan and Miles, 2007). While this literature base has built sophisticated theories, these theories tend to be disconnected and lack applicability to clinical practice. This dissertation will integrate interpersonal and group-as-a-whole theories in order to predict the probable dynamic interactions that theoretically occur as individuals move through conflict within group psychotherapy. Recommended interventions are included to increase the clinical utility of the model.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family for being an excellent support system, my rock, and to the love of my life, Kristen.

CHAPTER 1

The purpose of this dissertation partially arises from Burlingame, MacKenzie, & Strauss (2004) meta-analysis recommendations for future research in group work. The authors concluded that there is a need in the field of group psychotherapy for increased consistency between presentation of research theory and design. For example, multiple researchers have suggested interventions at the level of the individual (intrapsychic), at the level of the relationship (interpersonal), and at the level of the group (group-as-a-whole) (American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA), 2007). However, no theory of group dynamics currently guides intervention at all three levels, rather one level or another is chosen as a research variable. This single theory approach has led to the development of assessment tools that are theory based (e.g., the Group Climate Questionnaire (GCQ) is a group-as-a-whole measure). The failure to obtain consistency in the literature thus far is due to the theoretical and methodological divisions that have historically existed within small group and group psychotherapy research (Burlingame & Fuhrman, 1997; McGrath, 1997). These divisions have led the field to a crossroad: Continue using a seemingly disconnected and mutually exclusive set of theories or to theorize and study groups or reconceptualize groups as dynamic entities.

Recently, many researchers have concluded that the time has come to conceptually shift to a dynamic perspective (Burlingame & Fuhrman, 1997; Kivlighan & Lilly, 1997; Kivlighan, Coleman, & Anderson, 2000; Marmarosh, Holtz, & Schottenbauer, 2005; McGrath, 1997; McGrath, Arrow, & Berdahl, 2000; Wheelan,

Davidson, & Tiliu, 2003). Part of the complexity in studying groups is in the measurement of systems that are complex and dynamic, systems that operate via multivariate process that change over time. Interpersonal interactions that occur within group psychotherapy are an example of such multivariate and dynamic processes.

This dissertation will seek to bridge these gaps by presenting a model blending interpersonal and group-as-a-whole theories. This model has its roots in interpersonal schemas. Moreover it will suggest that it is critically important to obtain an accurate interpersonal assessment. Through this assessment, the therapist obtains an objective description of the person's interpersonal style. This is important information, as the AGPA (2007) advises therapist to create groups with heterogeneous interpersonal styles. Given of the importance of interpersonal schemas in the group and group-as-a-whole literature, the proposed model constructs its structural base with Kiesler's (1983), 1982 Interpersonal Circle.

The interpersonal circle, its derivative the interpersonal circumplex, and the assessment tools such as the Checklist of Interpersonal Transactions-Revised (CLOIT-R) (Society of Interpersonal Theory and Research (SITAR_A), 2011), Structural Analysis of Social Behavior (SASB) (Benjamin & Rorhweiler, 2006), Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP) (Horowitz, Alden, Wiggins, & Pincus, 2000), and the Impact Message Inventory (Kiesler, 2001) have received a great amount of attention in recent years. However, the majority of these tools' utilization has occurred in laboratory research settings rather than in clinical practice.

Typically, when the interpersonal circumplex has been applied clinically, it has been in the context of individual therapy (i.e., the therapist-patient dyad). Historically,

Leary and his Kaiser Foundation colleagues piloted applying the circumplex to group (Leary, 1957). Their study, the last chapter of his book, found the circumplex to be applicable to group treatment and encouraged further research. However, this research has not continued in a linear fashion. Since Leary's publication, few researchers have addressed the connection between interpersonal theory and group psychotherapy. Kivlighan and Angelone (1992) is one of the few examples of contemporary research in this area, exploring the connection between interpersonal problems and group members perceptions of group climate. Additionally, the clinical applicability to group has recently been re-suggested by Whittingham & Barry (2007) in their outline of the clinical utility of the circumplex to group psychotherapy and supervision.

While interpersonal theory is frequently used in group theory (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005), models to understand group dynamics are typically rooted in other theory bases (e.g. system centered, or group-as-a-whole). This is because interpersonal theory (e.g., Leary, Kiesler, Carson, and Horowitz) and interpersonal therapy (e.g., Teyber and Weissman, Markowitz, & Klerman) have become somewhat disconnected over time. For example, Yalom discusses problematic patients such as the help-rejecting complainer as personality problems without an overarching interpersonal theory to inform his discussion. In fact, it is only in the most recent edition of his book that Yalom has added a discussion of the interpersonal circumplex (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). Furthermore, recent best practice guidelines have suggested using interpersonal assessment to inform group formation (Burlingame, Strauss, Joyce, MacNair-Semands, MacKenzie, Ogrodniczuk, & Taylor, 2006; AGPA, 2007). As shall be discussed, such interpersonal assessment is an important component of pre-group preparation and intervention.

This dissertation will use the theoretical basis of interpersonal theory to create a model elucidating the dynamic relationship between interpersonal style and the storming stage of group development. This dissertation asks, “How can group leaders better intervene during conflict in group psychotherapy? Specifically, how can a person’s interpersonal style inform leader interventions at the intrapsychic, interpersonal, and group-as-a-whole level?” To fully explore this question many constructs must be integrated from theories existing in psychodynamically-oriented interpersonal theory and in the group psychotherapy literature.

The aim of this dissertation is threefold: (1) to provide an “interpersonal map” of the interactions theoretically and empirically expected for each interpersonal style, (2) to create a model explaining conflict from four interpersonal styles, and (3) to suggest possible interventions for each interpersonal style depending on the second individual’s style of interaction. It is hoped that such a model will contribute to the field by providing theory illuminating the dynamic process occurring between individuals as they manifest into group-as-a-whole phenomena (e.g., cohesion and conflict), and provide a structure to encourage greater consistency within the future research. Before the model is presented, the existing literature base and research must be discussed with relevant constructs defined.

CHAPTER 2

Theories of Group Dynamics

The study of how groups function and interact has become an interdisciplinary concern bridging the disciplines of psychology, sociology, education, communication, management, social work, political science, public policy, urban planning, and information science (Burlingame & Fuhriman, 1997; Poole, Hollingshead, McGrath, Moreland, and Rohrbaugh, 2005). The range and variety of disciplines that have studied groups highlights the importance of group psychotherapy, as patients must learn how to function in groups if they are to be successful at getting their needs met. Poole et al. (2005), provide a comprehensive summary and classification of the many theories of small group. They break down the different theories and approaches to studying group into nine perspectives. A brief review of these perspectives will be informative in framing the issues involved within group psychotherapy.

The functional perspective (Hollingshead et al., 2005) focuses on the effectiveness of a group's performance. The psychodynamic perspective (McLeod & Kettner-Polley, 2005) focuses on the emotional and cognitive processes that occur in interactions with others. The social identity perspective (Abrams, Hogg, Hinkle, & Otten, 2005) addresses intergroup relationships and the groups in which individuals hold membership. The conflict-power status perspective (Lovaglia, Mannix, Samuelson, Sell, & Wilson, 2005) explores the processes and structure of relationships in terms of power, status, and resources. The symbolic-interpretive perspective (Frey & Sunwolf, 2005)

examines the social construction of the social world and the meanings that groups prescribe for their members. The feminist perspective (Meyers, Berdahl, Brashers, Considine, Kelly, Moore, et al., 2005) is focused on gender discrepancies that are created through differing allocations of power and privilege. The social network perspective (Katz, Lazer, Arrow & Contractor, 2005) investigates relationship patterns and how they are entrenched in larger social networks. The temporal perspective (Arrow, Henry, Poole, Wheelan, & Moreland, 2005) examines how groups change and develop over time. Finally, the evolutionary perspective (Caporael, Wilson, Hemelrijk, & Sheldon, 2005) studies the types of groups and the norms that govern groups that have developed and evolved across great spans of time (thousands of years).

These perspectives can be integrated, and often are in clinical practice. Additionally, many theorists identified as an example of one perspective find pieces of their work are actually used as examples of multiple perspectives (Poole et al., 2005). These loose boundaries between perspectives are likely related to their reliance on group-as-a-whole constructs as their basis. For example, regardless of their perspective, studies of group development typically follow the AGPA (2007) best practice guidelines that suggest using Tuckman's group development theory. Tuckman's theory is derived from group-as-a-whole perspective.

Group-as-a-whole theory developed after World War II in an effort to study and clarify the entitative processes that groups appeared to possess. Researchers such as Bion, Foulkes, and Lewin set out to describe the group processes that were occurring in society. For example, researchers wondered as to how and why the German populace bought into Hitler's rhetoric, and how so many were able to commit horrible atrocities

under a unified “group think.” Tuckman’s (1965) theory postulated that groups move through four distinct stages of group development. First, in the Norming stage, groups assemble and develop the norms and rules that the group will follow. Next, in the Forming stage, group members operating within the confines of the group’s norms begin to develop relationships and to establish a power hierarchy. Next, the Storming stage occurs. In this stage conflict is present as either rule violations occur, relationships deepen, or as individuals vie for power in the group. As the group develops they finally reach the developmental stage of Performing. In this final stage of Tuckman’s (1965) theory, groups reach a point where they begin meeting the goals of the group, they are actively doing the work that the group has been designed to accomplish.

Group-as-a-Whole Theory

In 1928, T. Burrow became the first person to use the term “group-as-a-whole” in a clinical publication, advising the focus of therapy, interventions, and interpretations to be on the here-and-now of the group (Ettin, et al., 1997). Succeeding Burrow, Michael Foulkes, Wilfred Bion, and Kurt Lewin became the major proponents and figures researching group-as-a-whole phenomena.

Group-as-a-whole theory arises from the perception of groups as discrete beings created by the summation of members interpersonal and intrapersonal interactions. These interactions combine to create a “collective being” that; (a) follows norms, (b) has conscious and unconscious goals, and (c) develops unique patterns of communication and power, including feelings of “groupness,” “weness,” or “all of us” (Kellermann, 1996; Yalom & Leszcz, 2005, p. 55). When group therapists make interpretations and treat the

group as a collective being; able to think, emote, and behave independently, group-as-a-whole theory is being utilized (Kellermann, 1996).

Group-as-a-whole theory has been used to inform theoretical thinking regarding group psychotherapy. For example, Tuckman's (1965) group development stage theory is based on multiple group-as-a-whole phenomena (i.e., forming, norming, storming, performing, adjourning). Scapegoating, emotional contagion, role suction, subgroup formation, group pressure, addition of new members are additional examples of group-as-a-whole phenomena (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). Group-as-a-whole remains an important variable for discussion; however, group psychotherapy research and practice have allowed the field to reach a point where it is theoretically possible to explore the dynamics within these various group-as-a-whole phenomena. As such, group-as-a-whole theory holds a special place within the following proposed model.

Foulkes furthered group-as-a-whole theory by providing a description of the democratic "conductor" therapist, and viewed psychological disorders as "a disturbance in the network of social interrelations in which an individual's behavior is embedded" (Ettin et al. 1997). To Foulkes (1964), man was a social animal, not understandable when separated from groups, highlighting the importance of understanding the here-and-now of group processes. Foulkes further asserted that all interactions involve gestalt principles and proposed that individual and dyadic relationships always consist of interactions with a group. Foulkes pulled from the individual therapy technique of free association to create a parallel concept, a "communication matrix," for use in group psychotherapy, which was characterized by honest upfront communication (Hinshelwood, 2007). Within this Gestalt framework, all processes at an individual level

have a direct interaction with one or more groups within the individual's environment. This perspective implies individual differences in perception of the environment. The importance of the recognition that individual differences in perception are varied will become salient when discussing the proposed model.

Wilfred Bion, contributed to group-as-a-whole theory through the development of Tavistock training groups (T-groups), modeled in the psychoanalytic traditions of free association and transference (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005, p. 193). Bion described observing a collective "as if" quality during periods of uncertainty that enabled groups to comfortably preserve anxiety levels while accepting the quandary that each group member does not know how he or she "should" act (Ettin et al., 1997). Bion (1961) formulated three basic assumptions about the ways that individuals will consciously and unconsciously cope with the anxiety; dependency, fight-flight, and pairing (MacKenzie, 1994).

Dependency involves members feeling anxious and hoping for an omnipotent, magical leader to save them. However, once the group identifies such a leader, the group will act in ways that sabotage the leaders attempt(s) to lead (e.g., providing incorrect or incomplete information), and will move on to find a leader who will be able to "solve" the dilemma. As one can imagine, the group can spend a significant amount of time repeatedly playing out this dynamic and will require specific intervention to free them from this pattern.

Another way that Bion (1961) saw groups avoiding anxiety was by acting as if they were in a fight or flight situation. In this basic assumption, the group acts as if it has detected an enemy (real or imaginary), either within or outside the group. Individuals can

move to protect their individual self's membership in the group by pointing out other members' weaknesses, heavily critiquing and scapegoating others. Again, specific interventions will be more effective than others for addressing groups who avoid anxiety in this manner.

The third way that Bion (1961) suggested that a group avoids anxiety is through the process of pairing. During pairing, the group places all its hope on two members, whom the group expects to creatively solve the group's problem(s). However, as soon as they are able to think of a solution, the pair is sabotaged and then scapegoated. The pattern repeats as another two leaders are selected.

Bion's (1961) three basic assumptions allow groups to avoid the anxiety of doing therapeutic work by distracting the group from individual member's issues. This is a difficulty that therapists must confront, address, and navigate if they are to help the members in the group. Furthermore, as Eisold (1995) suggests, it is important for therapists' interpretations to be formulated to address two levels, group and individual, and to be delivered at a pace that maintains safety yet provides space for growth. Simply put, therapist must take into account both the individual and the context in designing their interventions.

The third force in the development of group-as-a-whole theory was Kurt Lewin and his "action research," which addressed both groups and individuals (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005, p. 527). Ettinger et al. (1997) credited the contributions of Lewin and his students as not only furthering the field of group dynamics, but also highlighted their "action" in the real world through group-as-a-whole processes illumination of issues such as prejudices, scapegoating, and out-group aggression. Lewin (1943) warned there would

be “no hope for creating a better world without a deeper scientific study into the function of leadership and culture, and of the other essentials of group life.” This action research was a significant step toward applying group theories to clinical work, making it useful for individuals and groups.

Group-as-a-whole theories and research have significantly influenced psychology’s understanding of the processes occurring within group psychotherapy. In clinical practice, Yalom and Leszcz (2005, p. 194) emphasized the importance and usefulness of group-as-a-whole interpretations in identifying, processing, and moving beyond obstacles arresting development (i.e., beyond dependency, fight or flight, and pairing). The group-as-a-whole phenomena in group development will be discussed in greater depth below. At this point it may be helpful to discuss another group-as-a-whole phenomena, group cohesion, which is intrinsically linked to conflict and is therefore an integral part of the following model.

Group cohesion has been equated to the “therapeutic alliance” or “rapport” between an individual patient and his or her therapist. Group cohesion multiplies the single one-on-one relationship, connecting each member of the group (therapists included) (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). Cohesion is a precondition of other therapeutic factors, and is considered to be the core group therapeutic factor (TF) (Dion, 2000; Fuhriman & Burlingame, 1994; Kivlighan & Miles, 2007). Cohesion serves dual functions (a) standing alone as a TF, and (b) enveloping other TFs increasing their functioning much like insulation facilitates electrical conductivity (Benard et al., 2008). Yalom and Leszcz (2005, p. 55) proclaimed group cohesion to be the spirit of togetherness, which motivates members of the group, the “esprit de corps.” A large

aspect of group cohesion is the creation of relationships between individual members over time and the development of those relationships into additional group-as-a-whole phenomena.

For example, two group members form an alliance that quickly grows into a sub-group, and this sub-group begins to scapegoat another member of the group creating dissonance, and likely conflict, in the group. While there has been a significant focus in the literature on the group-as-a-whole phenomena of cohesion, little research has been able to expand our understanding of the actual dynamics occurring which result in cohesion. This problem is paralleled in the field's research and understanding of other the group-as-a-whole phenomena such as conflict.

In sum, the essentials of group life begin with the individual members. Inherent in group-as-a-whole phenomena is the conflict between the needs of the self and the needs of others (Ettin, Cohen, & Fidler, 1997). The needs of the self, to be helped by the group, versus the empowerment received from altruistic behaviors of helping others (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005, p. 13). This conflict can be perceived and processed in differing patterns, arising at differing times across the lifespan of the group. As groups develop they are characterized by discrete phases or stages of development (AGPA, 2007). The stages of group development began from the general ideas of group-as-a-whole discussed above, especially the idea that groups are entitative, or are an entity in themselves (Campbell, 1958; Tuckman, 1965). Group development will be further discussed below. It should be noted that while there has been a significant focus in the literature on stages of development, the field has yet to focus on the dynamics playing out in those stages.

The presented model, to follow, aims to integrate current research and theory to explain the interpersonal dynamics playing out during conflict.

Group Development

Tuckman's (1965) group stage theory predicted four stages across the group's lifespan (a) forming, (b) storming, (c) norming, (d) performing. Each of these stages is characterized by differing themes, requiring the group to complete differing developmental "milestones" to successfully progress through all stages. Tuckman (1965) created his model of group stages through the review of 50 articles focused on groups developing over time in both the tasks and social realms. Task realms are those group processes focused on completion of a certain job, task, such as two groups racing to build 20 birdhouses. Social realm processes occur in interpersonal space, exemplified by the resolution of a conflict between two people who want to lead the team to birdhouse victory. Tuckman's original 1965 model presented a linear progression through four stages, and predicted the time spent in each stage was dependent on the situation, time period, and purpose of the group.

The AGPA (2007) Best Practice Guidelines, Wheelan et al. (2003), and Yalom and Leszcz (2005, p. 309) all support the use of Tuckman's model as the standard model of group stage development. However, since 1965 additional research has made the additions of a fifth stage, Termination/Adjourning (Garland, Jones, & Kolodny, 1973). Additionally, the field of group work has appropriated a dynamic developmental perspective, replacing the earlier linear models (Wheelan et al., 2003). Other group development models have been proposed with the number of stages ranging from four to

nine; however none of these models have been found to significantly expand or alter Tuckman's (1965) model (AGPA, 2007; Bernard et al., 2008).

In discussing groups dynamically, one views a group as adaptive and complex, characterized by dynamic, cyclical, unsystematic relationships that are inseparable from embedded contexts such as culture (McGrath et al., 2000). Instead of existing in a static unmoving pattern of relationships, groups change over time as the interactions of past experiences and expected future events arise in the here-and-now, co-creating reality and altering the social microcosm (McGrath et al., 2000; Wheelan, et al., 2003; Yalom, 2005). Agazarian & Gantt (2003) argued that the dynamics occurring in each developmental stage determine the amount of work the system can accomplish, reinforcing the importance of group-as-a-whole phenomena.

Dynamic group development perspectives propose that as development moves through periods of growth, the group will also go through periods of regression. These periods of regression could be framed as movement toward intersubjectivity. Intersubjectivity, or empathetic communication, occurs when two people share a conscious experience in which both are recognized as distinct beings (APA, 2007). During these periods of regression, failures of mutual recognition produce ruptures in the relationship, which necessitates renegotiation of the relationship. Such failures of empathetic attunement are expected to occur as individuals grow and experiment with new interpersonal behaviors (e.g., a submissive member experiments with dominant behaviors). However, when groups cycle back to an earlier stage of development, they take with them the preceding successes and failures in navigation, thus never repeating

stages in the exact same way (ASGW, 2007). This is how groups develop in a cyclical, dynamic manner.

More recently, MacKenzie (1994) proposed the integration of three perspectives within group development theory: (a) the repetitive cyclical, (b) the linear sequence, (c) the systemic interaction perspectives. The repetitive cyclical perspective proposes that groups repeatedly recycle through themes previously addressed, which has been viewed as the antithesis of the linear sequence perspective in accordance with an orderly progression from beginning to end. The systems perspective examines the patterns arising from the interpersonal interactions occurring over time. MacKenzie (1994) asserted that these three perspectives have historically guided separate approaches, and proposed a perspective that holds them in synchrony applying the appropriate perspectives to the correct dimensions.

Thematic continuums viewed progressively include; changes in power relationship (competition to cooperation), changes in perspectives (stereotypic to complex persons), changes in interpersonal constructs (detailed to specific), changes in the group's level of cohesion (low to high), and changes in the groups focus on issues (outside to inside the group). Progressive themes are dominated by interpersonal communication and the formation of relationships between members within group-as-a-whole phenomena.

Themes that MacKenzie (1994) proposed to be cyclical include the conflict between the desire for group inclusion versus autonomy, between agreeing and disagreeing with the group, between being emotionally guarded or too emotionally expressive. As one can imagine each patient will face these issues differently as they

would be expected to vary per topic(s) and the situation in which they are discussed. It is important to note that these cyclical themes focus on issues related to the conflict between the needs of the self and the needs of others, regardless of their overt presentation to the group. Consistent with the work of Benjamin (1988), the need to be recognized as an independent, autonomous being should not be underappreciated. It is here where the connection between group-as-a-whole and interpersonal theory begins to become clearer.

MacKenzie (1994) ends his discussion of group development emphasizing the importance addressing group-as-a-whole phenomena, interpersonal patterns, and individual perception together, or the systemic interaction of progressive and cyclical themes. The three aspects act in concert as if they were differing sections of an orchestra. Therefore, the job of the therapist-conductor is to maintain group equilibrium by altering the focus on interpersonal, intrapersonal, and group-as-a-whole factors by combining interventions (i.e. helping the group to move at a pace that encourages growth, but does not overwhelm members). A major threat to group equilibrium is conflict and the anxiety and uncertainty that conflict can inject into a group.

Conflict

For the purpose of this dissertation the storming stage has been selected to predict how individuals interact dynamically during periods of conflict. MacKenzie and Livesley (1983, p. 107) described the storming stage as anxiety provoking due to conflict(s) and disagreement(s) among members creating sense of dissatisfaction with the group. Conflict has long been understood to be a powerful group-as-a-whole, interpersonal phenomena that can move the group to do much work to great success, or

can lead to absolute failure and group disillusionment (Crouch, Bloch, & Wanlass, 1994; MacKenzie & Livesley, 1983, p. 107; Yalom & Leszcz, 2005, p. 138). Hall and Williams (1966) found decreased group performance in the absence of conflict in both established and ad hoc groups. Research suggests that conflict is needed in order for change to occur in patients (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). Much of the interdisciplinary literature on conflict to date has focused on negative and damaging aspects of conflict, and on conflict created in groups operating to perform a task (Lovaglia et al., 2005). While this literature is informative and provides substantial evidence regarding examination of “real world” conflict, it is not directly applicable to group psychotherapy, where conflict is a core component of the group’s developmental lifespan. A better understanding of the positive and negative impacts of conflict will be found as the field of psychology examines the dynamics of conflict.

Historically the storming stage has been characterized as involving increased emotional expression with a focus on interpersonal issues such as anxiety, safety, and conflict (Tuckman, 1965). More recently, the AGPA (2007) described the storming stage, as localized around the issues of power and control, with conflict occurring over issues such as group security, status hierarchy, and power hierarchy. The issues identified by the AGPA (2007) will also become important in our discussion of interpersonal theory to follow. Clearly, the group must feel safe to members before they will begin to participate and truly engage in the group process. As group engagement increases alliances form, and members determine who will dominate the group’s time (i.e. monopolists), and who will become the invisible through their silence (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005, p. 391, 397).

CHAPTER 3

Interpersonal Theory

A central theme throughout the group literature is “interpersonal” in nature. This interpersonal theme is present in interactions between group members, between members and therapists, and between co-therapists. The combinations of these individual interactions are entitative processes (i.e., group-as-a-whole phenomena) that are co-created in the space between two people. Examples of this interpersonal theme include interpersonal learning, interpersonal conflict, interpersonal styles, and interpersonal problems or difficulties (DeLucia-Waack, Gerrity, Lakodner, & Riva, 2004; Fuhriman & Burlingame, 1994; Kivlighan & Miles, 2007; Saiger, Rubenfeld, & Dluhy, 2008; Wheelan, 2003; Yalom & Leszcz, 2005).

Sullivan (1953) defined *personality* as the relatively stable integration of interpersonal life that each individual perceives and experiences. This perception is partially determined by the collection of historical interpersonal learning experiences (e.g., attachment history, encounters with conflict), interpersonal style, and problems related to interacting and emotionally self-regulating in the here-and-now. Expanding Sullivan’s definition, Timothy Leary (1957) appended three types interpersonal reactions: (a) overt, (b) conscious, and (c) private. The interpersonally conceptualized personality, functions to harmoniously nurture and preserve self-esteem, safeguarding against disapproval and ostracism via the minimization of anxiety (Leary, 1957).

Within interpersonal theory, anxiety is considered a keystone construct, mediating interpersonal interactions (i.e. the relationship between agency and communion) (Sullivan, 1953, p. 353; Horowitz, 2004, p. 18; Kiesler, 1996, p. 4). Sullivan's (1953) perspective on anxiety was a reconceptualization for psychology. He described anxiety as an external state present in the environment, and not an internal state. Prior to this conceptualization, anxiety was believed to arise internally. Sullivan stated that while fear arises internally, anxiety is obtained from other people. Mitchell and Black (1995, p. 21) succinctly describe this process by highlighting the relationship between anxiety and the formation of interpersonal style, "the child's personality is sharply etched by the acid of the parents' anxiety." And, each child in a family often has a different reaction to their parents' anxiety, increasing the importance of individual differences in perception in the development of maladaptive behavior patterns.

All interpersonal interactions are filtered through the individual's lens of perception. Sullivan (1953) described this worldview in his development of *parataxic distortions*. Parataxic distortions are the lens through which we view social world. These distortions in reality are an individuals' propensity to perceive, and transfer onto others, similar patterns of expectations and fantasy meant to symbolize past real-life figures, and to meet intrapersonal needs (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). Parataxic distortions consist of past experiences and the meanings constructed to explain those experiences. When therapists discuss transference, they are examining the parataxic distortions and defense mechanisms playing out in the relationship. As a result of the connection to past experience, parataxic distortions greatly impact covert and overt behaviors and vary from

person to person. Parataxic distortions separate the individual from reality, away from the intent of an incoming stimulus, focusing only on the impact.

Often the impacts of statements are distorted from their intent, whether by a misperception by the receiver of the communication or by a failure to effectively communicate on the part of the encoder. As a result, people engage in a defensive posture, protecting their psyche and sense of self from an ever hostile world. Regardless that the intent of a statement may have been supportive, it may be perceived as an attack or judgment, potentially leading to conflict. Each conflict holds the potential to threaten one's group membership. For example a religious group member may offer support by telling another group member they are going to pray for them. While the intent is to be positive and supportive, the other person may interpret the statement as judgmental. As a result of their perception of the situation, the non-religious person may engage in a conflict with the religious person, metaphorically pushing the person away and decreasing the probability, without intervention, that they will offer support in the future.

In sum, as people grow and mature, they build up many experiences with others through their everyday interpersonal interactions, and their parataxic distortions become a relatively stable pattern of perceiving and understanding the world. Therefore, an individual's personality constellation is determined by differing levels of rigidity, in the service of guarding the self from rejection, disapproval, disruptions in self-esteem, and ultimately to abate anxiety (Leary, 1957, p. 59; Kiesler, 1996, p. 4). Central to this discussion is how the individual in question relates to others, or what is their attachment history and what are their current attachment patterns?

Interpersonal Theory and Attachment Theory

Markin and Marmarosh (2010) noted, prior to the recognition of the importance of interpersonal constructs, “Bowlby espoused that human nature is essentially ‘interpersonal,’ and that psychological problems arise from early deficits in essential relational needs.” As previously mentioned, the self is in a constant struggle to get one’s own needs met and to meet the needs of others. There is a constant struggle between the needs of others and the needs of the self with continuous sacrifice and compromise. This struggle cannot be avoided as the needs for interaction with others are driven by the fact that human beings are social animals (De Waal, 2005). As such, attachment styles have come to be understood as having an “intrapsychic component (internal working models of self and other) and an interpersonal component (attachment behaviors)” (Markin & Marmarosh, 2010). “Attachment Theory helps us to understand why patients, based on their developmental experiences, might engage in maladaptive, depressogenic interpersonal patterns. Contemporary Interpersonal Theory helps us to identify the consequent ineffective interpersonal behaviors and interpersonal impacts that fail to recruit or extinguish the interest of supports in times of need” (Ravitz, Maunder & McBride, 2008). In short, attachment describes the internal processes that influence how people engage with others, while interpersonal styles refer to those overt and covert communication behaviors.

Rejection and disapproval are linked to group membership. Before an individual attempts to join a group he or she attempts to determine their “goodness of fit” for group membership, including an appraisal of the potential for acceptance or rejection. This assessment entails comparisons between the self and the group on the dimensions of

similarity and differences, strengths and weaknesses. Buunk, Cohen-Schotanus, & van Nek (2007) evidenced that during periods of low stress (arousal), individuals tend to make social comparisons from the individual standpoint, comparing their attribute to a person whom is better. Alternatively, under high stress, perceptions change, and people tend to focus on the contrast between themselves and the other. Therefore under conditions of low stress, an individual is more likely to look for ways to improve, but under high stress he or she will look for ways to save their group memberships by proving their worth over another member. When successfully accomplished, anxiety is abated and social acceptance is gained or retained.

When the attribute in question is personally salient, individuals are likely to point out their interpersonal positive individuality; what makes them a distinct positive group member (Van Dijke & Poppe, 2004). Perception is essential to understanding social comparisons, as they can be inaccurately distorted by wishes for social desirability, self-improvement, or self-enhancement (Buunk et al., 2007; Wood & Lockwood, 1999). Such perceptual distortion tends to lead to defensiveness and escalation of conflict. Differences in social comparisons during periods of stress indicate the presence of anxiety as a mediating variable in how an individual thinks about himself or herself in relation to others, which in turn affects self-esteem.

In sum, attachment histories and patterns develop into schemas about how the social world works. These schemas lead to the formation of patterns of overt and covert communication, which are labeled interpersonal styles. Each individual has a unique way of responding to his or her life experience. Regardless of the variety of ways this is

accomplished, individuals strive to minimize anxiety and to maximize self-esteem (Sullivan, 1953).

Anxiety and Interpersonal Interactions

Anxiety mediates social exchanges, signaling the individual when something in their environment, either with themselves or with the group, is out of homeostasis. Trower and Gilbert (1989) proposed that the function of social anxiety was to maintain the group's power hierarchy, and to maintain group cohesion through signals of submission and dominance (Plutchick, 1997). Therefore, consistent with the prior research and the Yerkes-Dodson Law, within groups there should be a moderate level of social anxiety for the group to perform at its best (Duke, 1994; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908). Anxiety will serve as the warning signal for the leader that unrest of the members is occurring, and among the members as they attempted to change their position in the power hierarchy. Following interpersonal theory, this process would occur in the space between members (i.e., intersubjectively), and would be mediated by the individual's personality. When a person is unable to effectively and efficiently manage his or her anxiety interpersonal theory predicts that they will develop maladaptive behavior patterns (i.e., psychopathology).

Interpersonal Theory and Psychopathology

Interpersonal behaviors become problematic when they are used in situations that are not appropriate. What other theories label as pathological, interpersonal theorists label as maladjusted (Kiesler, 1996). It follows that rigidity in interpersonal styles has been cited as the etiology of interpersonal psychopathology (Kiesler, 1996; Sullivan, 1953). Horowitz (2004, p. 61) described psychopathology as "distorted and exaggerated

attempts to maintain interpersonal connections,” and “distorted and exaggerated attempts to exercise control and present the self in an acceptable light.” These attempts when frustrated, initiate negative affect and activate schemas, which may develop into a rigid pattern over time. As a person learns about the world, what behaviors earn him or her acceptance and which rejection, individuals begin reenacting behaviors that meet his or her needs. This reenacting often turns into a specific behavior pattern, with a unique rigidity to those behaviors that “worked” at one time. Therefore, the reactions of others in the environment likely play a major role in the formation and maintenance of the self-system, as individuals should have some negative affective response to rejection.

Maladjusted interpersonal behavior is defined by seven characteristics in proposition 6.1 (Kiesler, 1996). First, the behavior must be extreme. Extreme behaviors are associated with rigid interpersonal styles and positively correlated to negative effects on interactants. Secondly, rigid behaviors are described as those behaviors that have become overgeneralized and are used inappropriately and indiscriminately across situations. Thirdly, for behavior to be maladjusted there must be a self-other perceptual discrepancy. This discrepancy occurs when the individual misperceives the intent of another and/or when they misperceive the impact of their own behavior. Next, the individual’s communications create a circular communication pattern, a cross-channel incongruity in which verbal and nonverbal actions create “discrepant, mixed, and inconsistent” reactions. The fifth characteristic is the maladaptive transaction cycle, which will be discussed further below. The sixth characteristic is that maladjusted individuals are (a) highly vulnerable to the stress and difficulties that arise in life, and (b) under stress will escalate the extremeness and rigidity of their behaviors (i.e.,

transactional escalation). Finally, maladjusted individuals report a higher level of interpersonal distress than normal subjects.

Maladaptive Transaction Cycle

As mentioned above, the maladaptive transaction cycle is an important characteristic of maladaptive interpersonal behavior. Interpersonal problems tend to repeat overtime and develop into rigid interpersonal patterns labeled maladaptive transaction cycles. This cycle impacts relationships as similar themes repeatedly arise and create ruptures in the relationship. The cycle develops as a result of the person's internal working models (attachment style) and previous interpersonal actions and the resulting reactions from others. The maladaptive transaction cycle has received a significant amount of focus within the literature due to the importance of the cycle within both personal and therapeutic relationships. Strupp and Binder labeled the maladaptive transaction cycle the cyclic maladaptive pattern (Schauenburg & Grande, 2011) and Kiesler (1996, p. 134) labeled this cycle as vicious self-defeating cycles. The maladaptive transaction cycle is also similar to Kiesler's (1996) self-fulfilling prophecy.

In sum, maladaptive interpersonal behavior patterns result from difficulties in regulating emotions that arise in interpersonal interactions, and follow a pattern of transactional escalation that is characterized by increased behavioral rigidity and extremeness under stress and anxiety. The generalizability of maladaptive behavior patterns results from a misperception of interpersonal situations where circular communication and cross channel incongruity are present and result in maladaptive transaction cycles. These cycles are repetitive and lead to higher reports of interpersonal distress.

CHAPTER 4

Interpersonal Style

Each individual's pattern of socially interacting, his or her *interpersonal style* is most simply illustrated with Leary's (1957) overt reactions module of personality, because others can see and hear this pattern of social expression. For example, thinking an individual is a friendly but assertive, or quiet and meek are ways to describe interpersonal style.

An individual's interpersonal style can be described by the constellation created between two dimensions: (1) Power and (2) Affiliation. While these terms have been used historically, the terms (1) Agency and (2) Communion have begun to replace power and affiliation, as they are more encompassing of the totality of interpersonal behaviors described by the interpersonal circumplex, and less pejorative (Whittingham, in press; Horowitz & Strack, 2011). Freedman, Leary, Ossorio, & Coffey (1951) created the *interpersonal circumplex*, a circular visual model developed from Sullivan's theories to describe a "total personality." Total personality is a term that describes personality as extending beyond the neurotic or psychotic, creating a range from normal to abnormal (pathological). Within the framework of the interpersonal literature, individuals exhibiting pathological behavior are termed "maladjusted." The interpersonal circumplex is a circular graphical representation of Agency and Communion, two orthogonal dimensions. Hostile and Friendly represent the poles of the Communion dimension,

while Dominant and Submissive represent the poles of the Agency dimension (Figure 1) (Freedman et al., 1951; Kiesler, 1996; Plutchik, 1997).

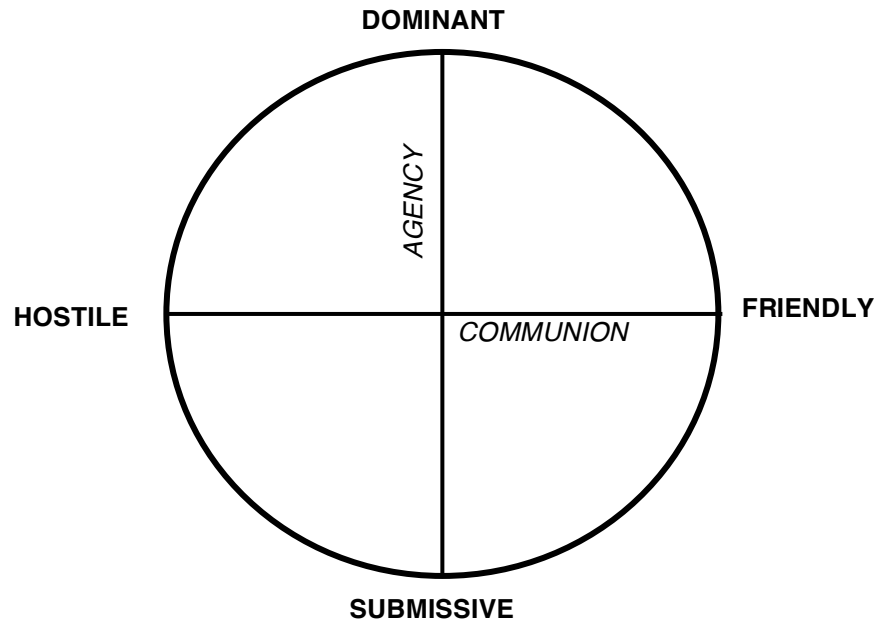


Figure 1. The Interpersonal Circumplex.

By administering an interpersonal measure that maps a patient’s interpersonal constellation on the circumplex, therapists can obtain vital information regarding the person’s maladaptive behavior(s). Specific measures will be reviewed in Chapter 7. These assessment measures are able to map the individual’s interpersonal style using an octant scale that combines the quadrants creating four interpersonal styles; Hostile-Dominant, Hostile-Submissive, Friendly-Dominant, and Friendly-Submissive. The individual’s interpersonal style provides information on the general “flavor” of their personality, while distance from the midpoint on the circumplex provides information regarding rigidity and extremeness of the style (e.g., the further from the circle midpoint

the more rigid the style and the more extreme the behaviors). Each style will be further described and characterized in Chapter 6.

While the above method of breaking interpersonal styles into four is a helpful conceptual aid it should be noted that interpersonal styles do exhibit variability. Interpersonal styles can be flexible and cut across multiple areas. For example, a short vector length can be just as problematic as a long vector length. Maladjusted individuals with short vector lengths would be unable to effectively utilize a specific quadrant of behavior and the maladjusted person with a long vector length would be over using a specific behavior pattern. Additionally a Friendly-Dominant person in the upper right quadrant could have a longer vector length toward either the Dominant dimension or the Friendly dimension. While he or she is predominately a “Friendly-Dominant” person if he or she has a larger predisposition toward the Friendly pole their issues may be more related to over-intrusiveness. Alternatively, if he or she has a larger predisposition toward the Dominant pole, their issues will be more related to power and control. Finally, perception of a style influences behavior, and the variety of cultural norms regarding communication may be a significant variable to be explored. For example the cultural norms and rules regarding personal distance, respect, and self-disclosure vary greatly between Latin, Western, and Eastern cultures.

Schemas and Interpersonal Theory

An individual’s interpersonal style is both conscious and unconscious, and at times most intimately private (Leary, 1957). Consciously, many individuals build mental “walls” to protect themselves from injury from others, and often create social personas, “masks” to gain group membership. These “walls” and “masks” function to protect those

private areas of the self. These “walls” and “masks” also serve an adaptive function, protecting the self. They protect the self by decreasing anxiety and increasing self-esteem. A person repeatedly uses defenses because at one point in time they were effective. However, just as a key does not fit every lock, utilizing only one defense will not be effective over time and across situations. Beginning in childhood and throughout the person’s life, this process of avoiding anxiety and maximizing self-esteem, individuals begin to build mental representations that consist of the structure and rules of social interaction.

These mental representations or “working models” are termed *schemas* (Solso, Maclin, & Maclin, 2008, p. 505; Yalom & Leszcz, 2005, p. 22). Schemas form unconsciously as the person perceives the incoming information from his or her environment, and integrates this information into a function model of the world. These “working models,” schemas, are intimately involved with interpersonal processes, as parataxic distortions create inaccurate representations of the social world, and schemas are based on those parataxic distortions. Additionally, individuals use their expectations about social interactions (attachment patterns) to make predictions about the intentions or behavior of others. Once these assumptions are made, the maladjusted individual begins to behave in a way that assures the reaction they fear.

Interpersonal schemas and self-fulfilling prophecy.

Interpersonal distortions in perception tend to be self-perpetuating, creating a *self-fulfilling prophecy* (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005, 22). Self-fulfilling prophecies may develop as an individual attempts to achieve interpersonal complementarity by reenacting interpersonal interactions with others with circularity and predictability (Kiesler, 1996).

For example, an individual may perceive others to be hostile; therefore they present themselves in an aggressive hostile manner, and usually receive hostile interpersonal responses. This person may also have a rigid style and think, “this is just the way I am, people need to accept me.” This meeting of a hostile presentation with a hostile reaction is what Kiesler (1996) described as *interpersonal complementarity*. Carson (1982) used the self-fulfilling prophecy and the relationships between (a) cognitions, (b) behavior, and (c) reactions that confirm or deny expectations from others to explain interpersonal complementarity.

Complementarity

Individuals send out social invitations, which are met with reciprocal reactions (Kiesler 1996, p., 87). Carson (1979) found that individuals would respond in complementary fashion along the agency dimension, but less so on the communion dimension. Individuals who are submissive produce the social invitation of dominance, and often have dominant people in their life. Conversely, dominant people send the invitation of submission and are happy with those that submit to their dominance. Orford (1986) found complementarity within the power dimension also, and support for noncomplementarity on the affiliation dimensions. Orford found that friendly-dominant individuals respond similarly to all other styles, except friendly-submission, based on the resources of the individual such as status, self-esteem, responsibility, or a nonconflictual stance to interpersonal interactions. Orford (1986) also found that friendly-submission is frequently met with friendly-submission. This may be a way for groups to maintain the status quo by “playing nice.”

Kiesler (1996) cited many variations of complementarity historically present within interpersonal theory, “theorem of reciprocal emotion” (Sullivan, 1953), “principle of reciprocal interpersonal relations” (Leary, 1957), and “interbehavioral contingency” (Carson, 1969). Broadly speaking, interpersonal complementarity is the reciprocal matching of social invitations between the self and others, allowing for social exchanges to perpetuate or terminate. However, this concept is crucial to our understanding of the predicted interactions between interpersonal styles and requires a more in depth discussion.

Kiesler (1996) summarized the findings on complementarity in Proposition 4-4. This proposition describes two categories of noncomplementarity in addition to the complementary condition. In the complementary condition, correspondence is present on the communion dimension and is reciprocal on the agency dimension. This means that dominance is met with submission (i.e., reciprocal), while on the affiliation axis; friendliness is met with friendliness and hostility with hostility (i.e., correspondence).

Acomplementarity is the first category of noncomplementarity, and arises when an individual responds in a complementary fashion on only one dimension of the circumplex. Acomplementary responses are reciprocal on the agency dimension or corresponding on the communion dimension. The second category of noncomplementarity is anticomplementary. Anticomplementary responses are those that are noncomplementary on either dimension. They are nonreciprocal on the agency axis and noncorresponding on the communion axis. In sum, complementarity occurs when dominance is met with submission, and friendliness is met with friendliness (hostility with hostility).

CHAPTER 5

Diversity Issues within Group and Interpersonal Theories

Previously the importance of recognizing individual perception was highlighted. In an ever increasingly connected global world therapists must be prepared to adjust empirically supported research to fit the needs of a large variety of clients. Therefore an important issue that should not be underappreciated is the multiple cultural identity constellations created through interactions between the multiplicities of cultures that are becoming increasingly connected. Hays (2001) suggests that culturally competent therapeutic work should utilize the ADDRESSING framework in working with clients. The principles of the framework are to be applied and taken into consideration during all stages of group development and during all interactions with group members. A brief discussion of the ADDRESSING framework as it relates to the storming stage will begin to focus our discussion on conflict while addressing diversity variables.

The ADDRESSING framework comprehensively represents the variety of diversity variables that biologically and socially influence the social construction of the individual's personality: “**A**ge and generational influences, **D**evelopmental and acquired **D**isabilities, **R**eligion and spiritual orientation, **E**thnicity, **S**ocioeconomic status, **S**exual orientation, **I**ndigenous heritage, **N**ational origin, and **G**ender” (Hays, 2001). These variables influence the development of attachment styles and interpersonal behavior patterns. Additionally, when taken into consideration, these variables can dramatically change the choice of which intervention will work best for specific clients.

The Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) (1998) published their principles for culturally competent treatment, which identified (1) attitudes and beliefs, (2) knowledge, and (3) skills as three areas in which clinicians must receive training in order to become competent therapists. Similarly, the National Council of Schools and Programs in Professional Psychology (NCSPP) (2007) developed their competency of Developmental Achievement Levels (DALs) in which they identified the same three domains (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) that characterize a clinician's progression from novice to master therapist. NCSPP (2007) explores the diversity variables in the ADDRESSING framework and how these variables apply to the issues of privilege, power, and oppression. Competency therefore, "requires an affirmation of the richness of human differences, ideas, and beliefs" within the domains of, "(1) multiple identities, (2) issues of power, oppression and privilege, (3) ICD (*individual and cultural difference*) specific knowledge base, (4) culturally competent service provision, and (5) ethics."

While Hays (2001), ASGW (1998), and NCSPP (2007) provide an excellent review of the literature and suggest sound theoretical constructs regarding variables to consider and pathways to competency in those areas, they do not speak to applying the multicultural literature to practice in group psychotherapy. A major way that conflicts begin is through a disagreement. It is easy to imagine a situation in a group where one aspect of a client's multiple identities will disagree with another person's equally valid cultural based perspective. In this situation it is essential that interventions be designed that are aware of and respectful of the powerful influence of culture on the shaping of our perspective. For a review of culturally sensitive group psychotherapy research and interventions see group counseling with Native Americans, Garrett (2004); groups with

African Americans, Pack-Brown & Fleming (2004); groups with Asians, Chung (2004); groups with Latinos, Rivera (2004); groups with Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered clients, Horne & Levitt (2004), groups for persons with disability, Seligman & Marshak (2004); and groups for international college students, Yau (2004).

While it is beneficial to increase one's knowledge of the groups above, it is important to remember that group leaders do not frequently run interpersonal process groups with homogeneity on any dimension. Therefore, it is important for therapists to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will aid them in facilitating the interaction between two culturally influenced people.

A key component in the development of interpersonal patterns of behavior (interpersonal styles) involves perception of the social world. Nisbett (2007) reviewed the literature regarding differences between East Asians and Westerners cognitive processes, "including categorization, casual attribution, and reliance on rules." He concluded that the majority of cognitive differences reported are due to differences in perception, with Westerners being more focused on focal objects while East Asians focused more on the field and the relationships between objects (Nisbett, 2007).

Anderson, Thorpe, & Kooij (2007) suggests that "the relational self accounts for shifts in the self across varying contexts in *if...then...* terms—if you are with someone who reminds you of a given significant other, *then* you will become the self that is typically experienced with the significant other...." These researchers are highlighting the social microcosm and how people are pulled to behave in the present due to reactions and experiences from the past (Yalom & Leszcz, 1995). For example, a member of the majority group prior to any verbal exchange will likely emotionally activate a member of

a minority group. Additionally, that minority member may react differently to men and women majority group members or to groups versus individuals (i.e., majority group vs. majority group member). Recognizing differences in perception will help group leaders more effectively address conflict, and the underlying issues of that conflict. Regardless of a persons cultural background their interpersonal behavior can be characterized by different patterns of interaction.

CHAPTER 6

Model of Interpersonal Conflict

By deepening our understanding of the individuals within groups, psychology, as a field, will be in a position to better explain and predict behaviors in groups and across stages of group development. As groups progress through dynamic developmental stages each individual is reciprocally impacted by each other individual member's interpersonal style, expectations, and the communication invitations and reactions that follow. Figure 2: Core Concepts of Interpersonal Transactions, outlines the progression that members move through in their relationships with others. This process is a constant renegotiation of the intersubjective relationship between the two beings.

As the personality's main function is to reduce anxiety and maintain self-esteem (Sullivan, 1953), it follows that under anxiety provoking situations, in an effort to maintain self-esteem, an individual's interpersonal style will become more pronounced (Kiesler, 1996). As the storming stage is characterized by conflict, and therefore anxiety, it was chosen for use within a model characterizing the interactions between differing types of interpersonal styles in a total personality framework.

The goal of this chapter is to present a model of theoretically predicted conflict interactions between maladaptive interpersonal styles. This model will predict interactions based on the concept that individuals coming to a therapist for help are maladjusted and therefore will exhibit rigid and extreme interpersonal behaviors.

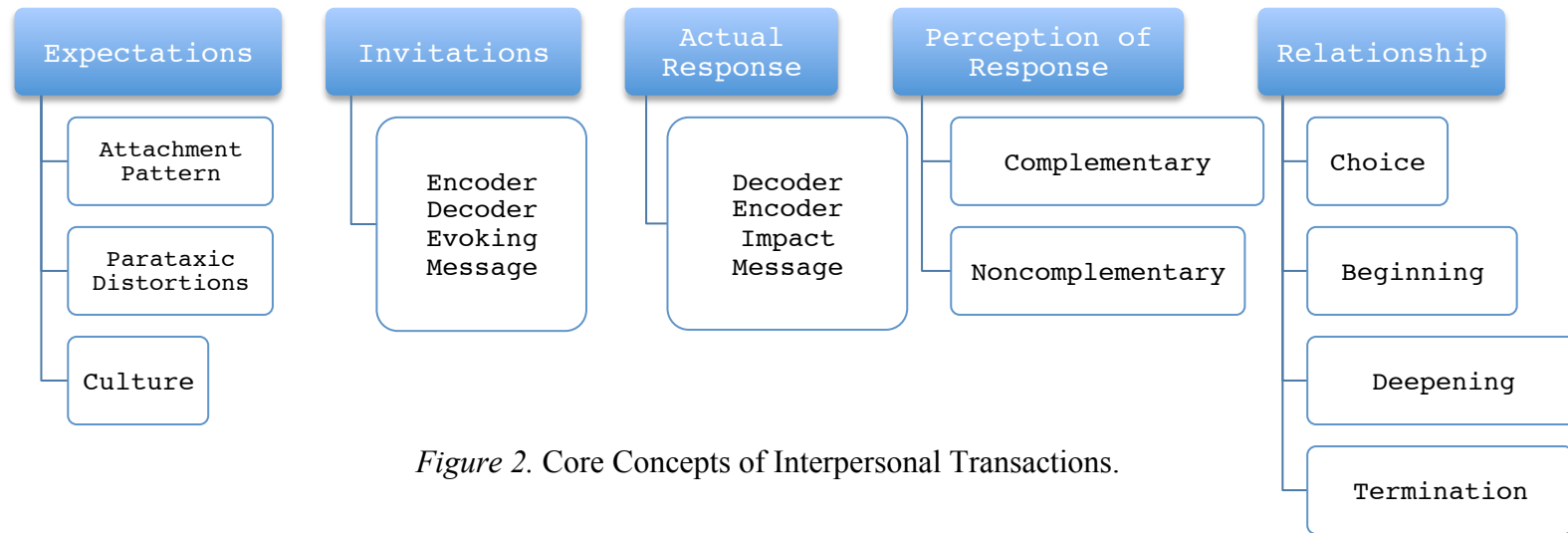


Figure 2. Core Concepts of Interpersonal Transactions.

First, specific characterizations of the four interpersonal styles; Hostile-Dominant, Hostile-Submissive, Friendly-Submissive, and Friendly-Dominant will follow. During this discussion it may be helpful to refer back to Figure 1 (page 31) to assist in visualizing where the four styles lie in two-dimensional space within the circumplex. Following this discussion will be a narrative explanation of the expected reactions accompanied by a visual representation of those exchanges.

Interpersonal Style Profiles

Hostile-Dominant.

Kiesler's 1982 Interpersonal Circle characterizes the Hostile-Dominant interpersonal style as cold, deceitful, and vindictive, and describes Hostile-Dominant individuals as callous, rebellious, and vulgar. The Hostile-Dominant person is more likely to have a rigid interpersonal constellation as compared with the other styles.

Hostile-Dominant individuals are often driven people, driven to confirm his or her self-view that he or she is a winner. For example, in the extreme they may become workaholics and may be overbearing or dictatorial in their interactions with others. Hostile-Dominant individuals may have attained great success in their careers, especially in high-pressure careers in which this type of attitude is acceptable such as law, politics, medicine, research, or construction. Alternatively, they may exhibit a more antisocial or sociopathic behavior pattern, failing to maintain employment (Kiesler, 1996). If he or she has managed to obtain a position of power, the negative aspects of his or her interpersonal style may become muted, and his or her subordinates may consider him or her to be a "tough" or "hard" boss. However, this behavior pattern frequently becomes problematic over time. If the individual is successful in his or her career, he or she may

have greater difficulty understanding why his or her personal life has been so problematic. For example, while people at work may be required submit to his or her position of power, while at home their intimate partner expects to be treated as an equal. Problem constellations will likely vary for Hostile-Dominant individuals depending on the situation (i.e., home vs. work), their level of rigidity, and role expectations.

As a result of their behavior pattern described above, Hostile-Dominant individuals will likely be experiencing problems with their family and intimate relationships, and problems at work with customers, co-workers, or supervisors. Furthermore, in the extreme, the Hostile-Dominant style has been correlated with sociopaths, and antisocial and paranoid personality disorders (Locke, 2011; Kiesler, 1996, p. 191). Consequently, these individuals are also more likely to have problems related to the legal system (i.e., assault, domestic violence, etc.).

Archetypal Hostile-Dominant individuals perceive the world as populated by “winners and losers” (Kiesler, 1996, p. 60; Carson, 1979). They act in a manner consistent with the self-belief or schema that they have to be a winner in order to be a good and therefore acceptable person. Additionally, Hostile-Dominant individuals have been shown to demonstrate unrealistic beliefs about how men express and satisfy the rejection need, and do not often operate under the basic assumptions of complementarity (Kiesler, 1996, p. 61, 103). Simply stated, Hostile-Dominant individuals, especially men, have difficulty identifying and self-regulating emotion states (O’Connor & Dyce, 1997), especially when he or she feels rejected. Orford (1984) found that the Hostile-Dominant style is most often met with Hostile-Dominance. This makes intuitive sense, as the initial reaction to someone saying, “Get me a glass of water, now!” is to at least think, “Buzz

off!!” One can also imagine a “tough guy” who refuses to “lose face” and confronts others first in order to maintain dominance.

While it is typically assumed that therapists are interpersonally savvy, therapists consistently demonstrate the least amount of complementarity with the Hostile-Dominant style (Kiesler, 1996). Hostile-Dominant individuals in general behave in a way that receives Hostile-Dominance, which is not expected by the interpersonal theory of complementarity (Kiesler, 1996). The atheoretical complementarity evidenced by the Hostile-Dominant style is likely related to the desire to manipulate others for personal gain, and the hostile-dominant individual’s focus on the power dimension of the interpersonal circumplex.

Hostile-Dominant individuals frequently misperceive the amount of hostility in their environment, acting in a rigidly hostile manner that invites hostility from others. Hostile-Dominant individuals are also more prone to focus on their status in the group, ignoring the affiliation dimension and, as a result, do not typically initiate reparative attempts (Kiesler, 1996, p. 60; Orford, 1984).

When individuals accept a Hostile-Dominant individual’s invitations to submit he or she is preventing transactional escalation from occurring. The implicit message from the Hostile-Dominant individual is “submit to me and we will get along.” This message is likely matched with aggressive body language including lots of eye contact, leaning forward, or standing up. Examples of dismissive body language include crossing arms, leaning or physically moving backward, avoiding and ignoring behaviors. In line with transactional escalation, when a Hostile-Dominant individual’s social invitations are not

met, his or her behaviors become more extreme and rigid. For example, increased negativity and increased volume and pitch are common.

Hostile-Submissive.

Kiesler's (1996) 1982 Interpersonal Circle describes the Hostile-Submissive style as consisting of self-punishing individuals who are rebellious, but constrained, disengaged, and, cowardly. This style is characterized by an attitude of helplessness and powerlessness, where one is ineffective in their environment. This external locus of control is a vulnerable position in which to live, because the self is continuously subject to the will of others. In this position the self is not recognized as a being but an object to be used in order to achieve the goals of a more dominant person (Benjamin, 1988).

Kiesler (1996) and Carson (1979) described the Hostile-Submissive individual as living in a jungle in which the self is a loser and the rest of the jungle is full of winners.

Sikes-Nova (1990) found that Hostile-Submissive individuals demonstrate the most negative attitudes towards being assertive and attuning to the needs of other. Therefore others in their lives could easily judge Hostile-Submissive individuals to be both selfish and avoidant of responsibility. This position may have initially been advantageous for the Hostile-Submissive person. He or she may have initially held a desire for dominance but was thwarted from obtaining the experience, or they may fear dominance in themselves. For example, if his or her parent(s) always demanded perfection it might have been easier not to try than to try and consistently be labeled a failure. Constant failure evokes less anxiety than a constant search for praise that never comes. However, when this attitude becomes a schema and is generalized to all aspects of life, the world quickly closes in and leads to an oppressive, problem-laden existence.

This attitude may develop through a process similar to learned helplessness and be a desperate attempt to be recognized as separate from a more powerful other (i.e. an over corrective and overbearing parent). An example of this behavior pattern is a rebellious teenager sneaking out after a parent goes to bed.

Kiesler (1996) reported that Hostile-Submissive individuals attribute the most hostility to neutral and friendly others and endorse the most interpersonal problems of any interpersonal style. It is likely that Hostile-Submissive individuals see the world through a depressive lens, perceiving friendliness or neutrality as “fake,” or an attempt to be morally superior. They react negatively to friendliness and neutrality, while perceiving hostility as “being real.” While this “realness” is psychologically damaging, continually placing them in the “loser” position, it is experienced as honesty and confirms their sense of self (O’Conner & Dyce, 1997). The reporting of more problems than others may be a way of asking for help (powerlessness and helplessness are significant symptoms of Depression). It could also be a way to differentiate themselves from powerful others, to be recognized as different, as if to say “See how broken I am! See what this person has done to me!”

Orford (1984) found that Hostile-Submissive behavior was frequently met with Friendly-Dominance instead of the complementary position of Hostile-Dominance. It is likely that others perceive Hostile-Submissive individuals as complainers, initially responding with friendliness and support. However, as the Hostile-Submissive person increases their negativity in the face of friendliness they will push others away from them. Rejecting statements such as “yes...but” or “I’ve tried that and it doesn’t work for me” will initially increase other’s attempts to help. However, the Hostile-Submissive

person's negativity and passive-aggressive rejection of support will eventually push friendly and neutral individuals to become exasperated and hostile. When this occurs, the Hostile-Submissive individual's problematic schemas are reinforced as they say, "Finally! I knew you didn't really care or want to help me!" Hostile-Submissive persons may be thought of as the patient whom Yalom & Leszcz (2005) identified as the help-rejecting complainer, a person who has more problems than others and problems that are intractable.

Friendly-Submissive.

Kiesler's (1996) 1982 Interpersonal Circle describes the Friendly-Submissive style as populated by selfless, all-loving individuals who are gullible, irresponsible, and spineless. Others frequently perceive the Friendly-Submissive individual's pleasant and open attitude as weakness. Their submissiveness creates an inability to stick up for themselves that creates a negative interpersonal environment in which they are left vulnerable to abuse. While this may serve the function of obtaining moral superiority over others, it places them in the position to be taken advantage of. This style may also develop out of a need to stay out of the way. For example, a quiet child avoids abuse from his or her alcoholic father by staying quiet and out of the way, or a child who feels pressure to please because of a divorce or other family circumstance that overwhelms him or her with anxiety. Friendly-Submissive individuals are more likely than others to ascribe the qualities of dominance and friendliness to others, which in their interactions with others places them in the role of a perpetual follower (Kiesler, 1996, p. 60). Friendly-Submissive individuals typically hold optimistic attitudes and see themselves as cheerleaders for a team of winners.

It is interesting to note that therapists often respond to and interact with patients in a Friendly-Dominant manner, which invites patients to be Friendly-Submissive (Kiesler, 1996, p. 264). As a result therapists must be aware of this tendency, so that he or she may make the appropriate adjustments to their style so that the Friendly-Submissive person is free to experiment with new behaviors. It should be expected that the Friendly-Submissive person would try to float below the awareness of the therapist, preventing him or her from obtaining their therapeutic goals. As Yalom & Leszcz (2005) stated “silence is never silent,” and therapists have their work cut out for them in getting the Friendly-Submissive patient to engage with the other group members. During this process of attempting to encourage engagement it is likely that Friendly-Submissive individuals will turn to the therapist for protection during periods in which they feel threatened (i.e., during conflict).

A major problem for Friendly-Submissive individuals is their apparent inability to be assertive. They are thus likely to lose out in almost every relationship they are enter whether a co-worker takes advantage of them or they stay in an abusive relationship. While their sense of self may be confirmed, this “safety” comes at a steep price to the self-concept. It is important for these individuals to learn how to make their needs a priority, instead of deferring and caring for everyone around them. They likely expend a significant amount of physical and emotional energy caring for others in their life, which while admirable, leaves them unable to appropriately care for themselves.

Friendly-Dominant.

Kiesler’s (1996) 1982 Interpersonal Circle describes the Friendly-Dominant style as consisting of unbridled, egotistical, dictatorial individuals who are always available

and selfless. Friendly-Dominant individuals are frequently self-contained and this style has been reported to be one of health. However, the extreme rigidity of any style can become problematic and pathological. Additionally, it is important to note that this view arose in a gendered patriarchal Western system, and is not consistent with other cultural worldviews of healthy personality functioning. For example, the Friendly-Dominant person may discover an aptitude to get others to do for them, thereby forming many relationships in which they manipulate others. This dynamic may persist until those individuals become wise to the manipulation and terminate the relationship. A popular pop-culture example would be the politician who is married with children, yet having affairs and engaging in other illegal behaviors. Another example would be the individual who is needy and intrusive. He or she would likely have problems due to (a) being too nosy, attempting to be a part of everyone's intimate business, or (b) too disclosing, divulging all their deepest problems within minutes of meeting.

The general stability of the Friendly-Dominant style produces, "an essentially unconstrained experience with others, and experience that should enable him or her to be relatively unbiased with assessing the behaviors of others" (Kiesler, 1996, p. 262). While they reportedly have the freedom and flexibility to engage appropriately with all other interpersonal styles, they may be perceived as intrusive and cocky. As they are generally successful in their interpersonal endeavors, the Friendly-Dominant individual may develop a sense of entitlement and have an especially hard time when faced with failures, or with situations that are outside of their control (i.e., a layoff or acquired disability).

Interpersonal Style Interactions

To best demonstrate the interactions an artificial group was created as an example of the theoretically predicted interactions with a group. Therapist A, a Caucasian male, is Friendly-Dominant and Therapist B, a Caucasian female, is Friendly-Submissive co-facilitate this group. The group has six members; Member 1 a Latina female is Friendly-Dominant, Member 2 a Caucasian male is Friendly-Submissive, Member 3 an African American female is Hostile-Submissive, Member 4 an Asian male is Hostile-Submissive, Member 5 an African American male is Hostile-Dominant, and Member 6 a Caucasian male is Hostile-Dominant (Figure 4). The group has met for three times, with today's session being their fourth. Of these four times, Member 4 has arrived 20 minutes late twice. The first time the group did not have a problem with the lateness and Member 4 apologized and said it would not happen again. However, today he again arrived 20 minutes late. The group has progressed through the Forming and Norming stages of group development and will enter the Storming stage today.

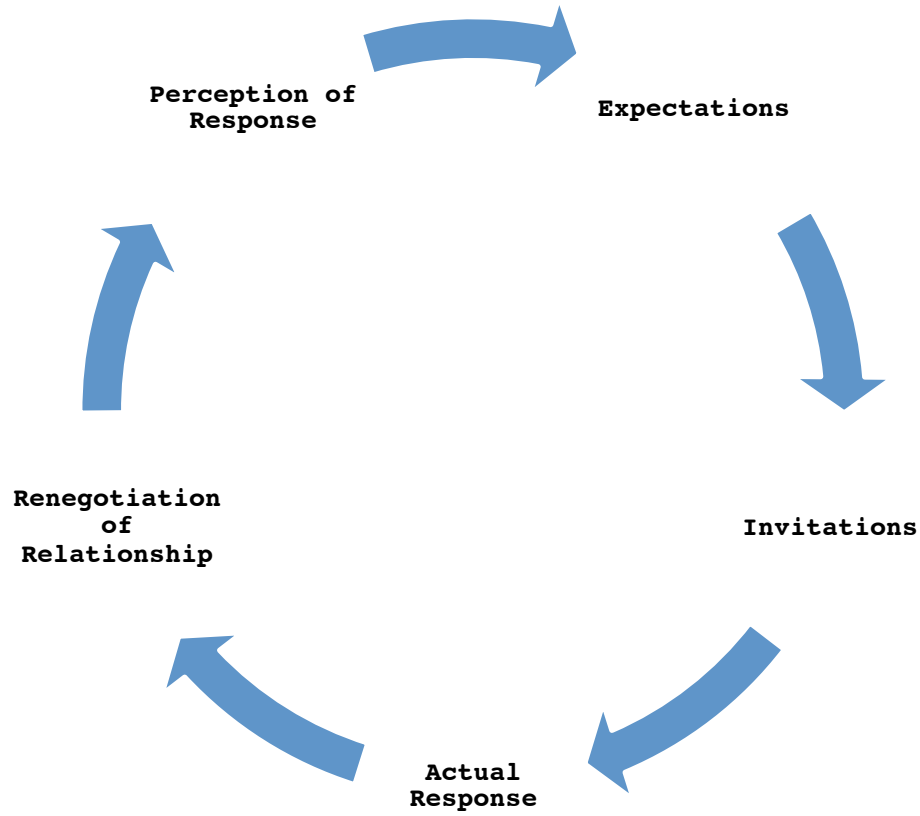


Figure 3. Cyclical Pattern of Interaction.

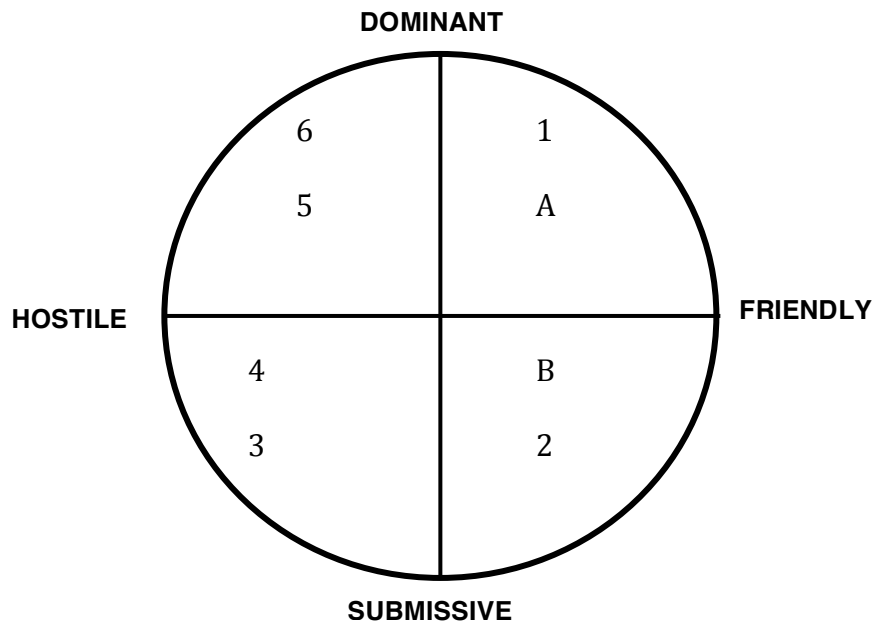


Figure 4. The Demonstration Group.

Hostile-Dominant and Hostile-Submissive.

Hostile-Dominant and Hostile-Submissive styles are interpersonally complementary, with reciprocity on the power dimension and correspondence on the affiliation. This complementarity would be expected to predict an agreeable, but negatively focused relationship. The Hostile-Dominant individual invites the Hostile-Submissive individual to be submissive to him or her, and the Hostile-Dominant person is likely to have their expectancies and schemas reinforced due to style complementarity.

If the Hostile-Submissive individual accepts invitations for submission the Hostile-Dominant individual will likely attempt to form an alliance. If the Hostile-Submissive individual rejects the invitation for submission relationship ruptures are likely to occur. These ruptures could be related to alliances, gender, race/ethnicity, religion, cultural identities, etc. However, it is likely that these two styles will form an alliance and possibly a subgroup.

In the demonstration group, Member 4 arrives 20 minutes late. Member 5 becomes angry that the group leaders let him enter group and turns to Member 4, “This is bull! I think it is crap that you keep coming late!” He then turns to Member 3, “Don’t you think he needs to be coming on time or not come at all?” Member 3 responds, “Yeah! If we all get her on time he should be too!” Member 3 meets Member 5’s invitation to submit but to be hostile and thereby completes the communication set with complementarity. Both of their schemas are reinforced and an alliance has begun to form between the two. Their relationship is primed to move to a deeper level of intersubjectivity.

Hostile-Dominant and Friendly-Submissive.

Hostile-Dominant and Friendly-Submissive styles are complementary, with noncorrespondence on the affiliation dimension and reciprocity on the power dimension. These styles are opposite and represent the Sullivan (1953) “not me” ideals of each other. This means that these styles are equally adverse to each other. These two styles create an unstable relationship with a core conflict that forces one individual to move into complementarity with the other, to escalate the conflict, or to terminate the interaction. Kiesler (1996) suggests that the Hostile-Dominant style is more rigid than the Friendly-Submissive style. Rigidity taken with a focus on status/power indicates that the Hostile-Dominant person will not move to match the Friendly-Submissive person in a complementary fashion.

The Hostile-Dominant person is likely to see the Friendly-Submissive person as weak (a “doormat”). Additionally, due to their propensity to perceive increased amounts of hostility, the Hostile-Dominant individual may see the Friendly-Submissive individual’s friendliness as fake. The Hostile-Dominant person may also assume that the Friendly-Submissive person is holding the morally superior position, which has the potential to subvert the power position, the Hostile-Dominant person is trying to take. Both positions produce the likelihood of the Hostile-Dominant person intimidating or becoming verbally aggressive toward Friendly-Submissive persons. The Hostile-Dominant individual is likely to not realize the amount of pressure they are applying, or to see that they are indeed verbally attacking friendly-submissive individuals. The Friendly-Submissive person may turn to the Friendly-Dominant individual for protection. Additionally, they may overtly and covertly turn to the therapist for shielding.

Alternatively, these two styles may form an alliance with the Hostile-Dominant person serving as “protector” of the “weaker” Friendly-Submissive individual. This is especially more likely to occur if there are not Friendly-Dominant group members and if the two are following traditional gender roles where the man is seen as strong and tough while the woman is supposed to be submissive and nice.

In the demonstration group, Member 5 turns from Member 3 and asks Member 2, “How ‘bout you? You think he should be allowed to keep doing this?” Member 2 responds by saying, “Me? I don’t know? I mean...he probably has a good reason?” Member 2 looks first at Member 1 then at Group Facilitator A. Member 5 pounces on this noncomplementary and noncommittal “weak” response, “Pssshhh, Whatever. This is the second time, and that’s half the time he’s been late!” Member 5 attempts to convince Member 2 to agree with him and escalates the conflict when he does not immediately get what he wants.

Hostile-Dominant and Friendly-Dominant.

Hostile-Dominant and Friendly-Dominant styles are anticomplementary, with noncorrespondence on the affiliation dimension and nonreciprocity on the power dimension. These two styles are likely to produce a disjunctive, unstable relationship, because the Hostile-Dominant person is likely to battle against their antithesis, the Friendly-Dominant person (Kiesler, 1996). They represent the antithesis of each other, because the Friendly-Dominant person has power and popularity. People like them and they are powerful, while the Hostile-Dominant person believes he is acting in the same way, yet he is hated for it.

Competition for power represents the central theme between these two styles. Each is very likely to vie for control of the group. The Friendly-Dominant person may achieve superiority by baiting (“pushing buttons”) the Hostile-Dominant person to lose control and thus to lose face and respect in the group. Power struggles with Hostile-Dominant individuals should be more pronounced when there are Friendly-Dominant group members. These power struggles are likely to be identified through competitive behavior, the forming of alliances and subgroups, and scapegoating. As a result the power struggles will vary with group constellation, and highlights the importance of pre-group planning of the groups constellation.

Member 5 quickly turns from Member 2 and immediately asks Member 1, “How ‘bout you? You gotta agree with me.” Member 1 responds politely “Well, I’d like to hear Member 4 out first, maybe he does have a good reason for being later.” Member 1 has attempted to deescalate the situation, and in the processes partially aligns with Member 2. Member 5 responds angrily, “Hear what? Another excuse? This group has been on all our schedules for four weeks now...” Member 5 quickly turns and addresses Member 6 before Member 1 can respond.

Hostile-Dominant and Hostile-Dominant.

Hostile-Dominant and Hostile-Dominant styles are complementary, with correspondence on the affiliation dimension and nonreciprocity on the power dimension. Interactions between two Hostile-Dominant individuals will likely include a high amount of conflict, which is more likely than other style interactions to escalate to physical violence or aggressive behaviors. Their behaviors are likely to be impulsive with little flexibility, secondary to becoming emotionally reactive at the “like me,” “not me”

dichotomy that is created by their interactions. When two Hostile-Dominant individuals interact they will demonstrate their poor ability to recognize their own and each other's emotions, and show poor tolerance of negative emotion.

Hostile-Submissive and Hostile-Dominant.

As stated above, these two interpersonal styles are complementary. Hostile-Submissive individuals are likely to be most comfortable with Hostile-Dominant individuals as they are mean and negative, but perceived as "real". Hostile-Dominant individuals may influence Hostile-Submissive persons to stay interpersonally rigid as they confirm Hostile-Submissive individuals' perspective on others.

In our group, Member 4 responds to Member 6, "I was speeding to get her on time, because my boss made me redo something before I could leave, and I got a speeding ticket." (sighs). Member 6 responds to Member 5 (continuing their conflict) "See man! That's a pretty good excuse, you should back off." Member 6 in continuing his conflict with Member 5 ignores the affect related to Member 4's hard time getting to group.

Friendly-Dominant and Friendly-Submissive.

As previously discussed, the Friendly-Dominant and Friendly-Submissive styles are complementary. Friendly-Dominant individuals will likely engage and form alliances with Friendly-Submissive members. While Friendly-Submissive individuals are more supportive, Friendly-Dominant individuals are more likely to afford protection for the Friendly-Submissive individuals and to perform an advice-giving role. For example, one might say, "you are a great person, if only you were more confident you would be so much more successful at work."

In our group, Therapist A states, “I’m going to jump in here. Member 2 I noticed that you had a bodily reaction to what just happened in here. Please, tell us about that.” Member 2 responds, “Umm...just got really intense. I don’t like conflict.” He immediately turns and speaks to Member 4 moving the attention away from himself.

Friendly-Submissive and Hostile-Submissive.

As previously stated, the Friendly-Submissive and Hostile-Submissive styles represent an complementary relationship. Friendly-Submissive individuals are likely to attempt to support Hostile-Submissive individuals and may expend a significant amount of their energy in the group attending to the Hostile-Submissive individuals intractable issues. Friendly-Submissive individuals may be easily hurt by rejection of their supportive attempts to help Hostile-Submissive individuals; however, they are not likely to express this anger or displeasure.

Member 2 quickly says to Member 4, “I’ve had bosses that make me stay late too. Sorry you got a speeding ticket.” Member 4 responds, “It’s my own fault.” Member 2 feels rejected by this noncomplementary statement and terminates the exchange by not responding.

Friendly-Dominant and Hostile-Submissive.

As previously discussed, the Friendly-Dominant and Hostile-Submissive styles are complementary. It is likely that Friendly-Dominant individuals will initially attempt to engage and to help Hostile-Submissive individuals, but to quickly tire of the rejection and potentially respond with hostility to actively ignore the Hostile-Submissive group member.

In the group Member 1 tries to fill the hole left by Member 2's silence, "It's not your fault Member 4. It's your boss's fault and he should pay for the ticket!" Member 4 responds, "Yeah, that'd be nice, but he'd never do that." Member 1 feels rejected by this noncomplementary response and lapses into silence not knowing how to proceed.

Friendly-Submissive and Hostile-Dominant.

As previously stated, the Friendly-Submissive and Hostile-Dominant styles represent an anticomplementary relationship. Friendly-Submissive individuals are likely to be highly anxious during interactions with Hostile-Dominant individuals. They will likely agree with the opinions of the Hostile-Dominant person as a way to cope with this anxiety and stay off the radar of the Hostile-Dominant person. Interactions between these two are likely to also produce fear in Friendly-Submissive persons.

Therapist B asks Member 5, "I'm wondering how you are feeling now that you know why Member 4 was late? Does it change anything for you?" Member 5 responds by saying "well, I'm glad he wasn't just out messing about. But, I have to say as a boss, if you had done your job right the first time you wouldn't have gotten the ticket. At this point some nonverbal communication passes between two members.

Hostile-Submissive and Friendly-Submissive.

Hostile-Submissive and Friendly-Submissive styles are anticomplementary, with noncorrespondence on the affiliation dimension and nonreciprocity on the power dimension. Hostile-Submissive individuals are likely to be verbally aggressive and to put down Friendly-Submissive individuals, as they do not believe that the Friendly-Submissive person is being genuine. Their interactions are likely to involve passive-

aggressive comments and nonverbal behaviors, and not to develop into overt aggression such as a shouting match.

After Member 5's comment about being a boss Member 4 looks at Member 2 and rolls his eyes. Member 2 smiles and then quickly looks at the floor to avoid being seen by Member 5.

Hostile-Submissive and Hostile-Submissive.

Hostile-Submissive and Hostile-Submissive styles are complementary, with correspondence on the affiliation dimension and nonreciprocity on the power dimension. Interactions between Hostile-Submissive individuals are likely to include issues related to complaining and help-rejecting. They may influence the group climate, casting a dark shadow on the group's ability to develop.

At this point in our group Member 3 takes a chance and joins with Member 4. She says, "I know how you feel about the ticket I got one last week. Sucks for us." Member 3 responds by saying, "Yeah it does, maybe we'll see each other in court." By commiserating together they are matching complementarily and Member 3 does not have to sacrifice her new alliance with Member 5.

Friendly-Submissive and Friendly-Dominant.

Friendly-Submissive and Friendly-Dominant styles are complementary, with correspondence on the affiliation dimension and reciprocity on the power dimension. As a result of their complementarity, these styles are highly likely to form alliances and subgroups. Within these groups the Friendly-Submissive individuals support their Friendly-Dominant friends. Alternatively, during conflict a Friendly-Submissive person

may align with a Hostile-Dominant person over a Friendly-Dominant person for a variety of reasons including safety from attack.

Therapist B takes this opportunity to begin to process what has happened thus far in group. “So, I think it is safe to say we are having or have had our first conflict. Member 1 what’s going through your mind?” Member 1 responds, “Well, initially I was kinda annoyed that Member 4 was late again, then I was upset with how angry Member 5 was. But I guess that is his way of showing us that he cares a lot about group.”

Friendly-Dominant and Hostile-Dominant.

As previously discussed, the Friendly-Dominant and Hostile Dominant styles are anticomplementary. Friendly-Dominant individuals will likely find themselves pulled into conflict with Hostile-Dominant individuals. Much of the interaction between these two styles will depend on the group constellation of interpersonal styles, and on the interpersonal styles of the group leaders. The Friendly-Dominant individual is likely to engage in conflict covertly through forming alliances, subgroups, or by remaining calm and waiting for the group to reject Hostile-Dominant individual’s harsh behavior.

In the group, Member 1 expects she is right and checks in with Member 5, “Am I right? Is that why you got angry?” Member 5 announces to the group, “Yes! We are all here to work on stuff, and if people are late it messes things up.” Member 1 feels she has deepened her connection with Member 5.

Hostile-Submissive and Friendly-Dominant.

Hostile-Submissive and Friendly-Dominant styles are complementary, with noncorrespondence on the affiliation dimension and reciprocity on the power dimension. Hostile-Submissive individuals will likely have very negative attitudes toward Friendly-

Dominant individuals due to the opposite nature of their styles. Friendly-Dominant individuals will likely increase Hostile-Submissive individual's level of anxiety, which likely reinforces the belief that everyone else in the world is a winner except the Hostile-Submissive person. As a result, the Hostile-Submissive person is likely to avoid the Friendly-Dominant person or to engage in passive-aggressive comments and nonverbal behaviors. If the Friendly-Dominant person is receiving negative feedback from another group member, or if they are involved in a power struggle, the Hostile-Submissive individual will likely join the side against the Friendly-Dominant person.

Back in the group, Member 4 begins to feel like he's wasted everyone's time. "Well I still want to apologize that I was late and now we've wasted so much time talking about this." Therapist A responds, "Waste? No this was really good stuff. This is part of group, working through our differences and learning new ways of responding to each other's needs. I'm sure you expected the group to be angry with you, and I'd guess that you're a little surprised at being supported and finding out you didn't waste the groups time."

Friendly-Submissive and Friendly-Submissive.

Friendly-Submissive and Friendly-Submissive styles are complementary, with correspondence on the affiliation dimension and nonreciprocity on the power dimension. When a Friendly-Submissive individual interact with another person with the same style they are likely to be friendly and to "get along" with each other. The likelihood of two Friendly-Submissive individuals entering into a conflict is low. Their conversations may stay at more of a surface level with neither taking control of the exchange to move the conversation to a deeper level.

Member 2 begins to feel nervous and asks Therapist B, “So is group going to be like this every week?” Therapist B responds by saying, “Well, probably not exactly like this but there will be conflict in here, and that is OK, we’ll work through it together as a group. Other times there won’t be conflict and we’ll be working on other things.”

Friendly-Dominant and Friendly-Dominant.

Friendly-Dominant and Friendly-Dominant styles are complementary, with correspondence on the affiliation dimension and nonreciprocity on the power dimension. When interacting together Friendly-Dominant individuals will compete for both acceptance and power within the group. While they may engage in conflict, their conflicts are more likely to be respectful and model appropriate interpersonal behaviors. When interacting one Friendly-Dominant may be slightly more submissive or may be drawn to a quality the other possess, in which case the two will form an alliance.

Therapist A closes the group by asking everyone to go around the room and say what they learned in group today. He asks Member 1 to start. “I learned to that other people go about things differently, but that isn’t necessarily a bad thing, and that I should wait to judge something until I’ve heard both sides.”

CHAPTER 7

Interpersonal Assessment

Interpersonal assessment provides information regarding a person's interpersonal interactions and difficulties. This information is vital, as it can be used in pre-group preparations for purposes including making decisions regarding group composition, goal formation, and in designing individualized interventions (Burlingame, et al., 2006).

Interpersonal assessment differs from regular psychological assessment in that a complete interpersonal assessment entails ratings of the patient's interpersonal style by the patient and either the therapist or a significant other such as parent(s), sibling(s), or partner who knows the patient well (Horowitz, 2004). MacKenzie (1994) suggested that group researchers utilize a standard array of interpersonal assessment measures.

Another issue related to interpersonal assessment is time. Often psychological tests are designed to provide scores that will be stable over time (i.e., intelligence testing). Additionally, when discussing personality and conceptualizing psychological constructs such as traits, the constructs are thought to remain relatively stable over time. However, the goal of interpersonal therapy is to create greater flexibility in a given person's interpersonal style, so that his or her behaviors are less extreme, rigid, and cyclically self-defeating. As such, one would expect to see scores on measures of traits change over time. Therefore interpersonal assessment measures should be designed to be sensitive to change over time (Kiesler, 1996). The "act-frequency approach" suggested by Buss

(1987) “provides an alternative to trait theory by conceptualizing patterns of interpersonal behavior as cognitive categories of acts that summarize general trends in behavior” (Kiesler, 1996, p. 202). A final challenge of interpersonal assessments is the measurement of covert interpersonal behaviors such as nonverbal communication. At this point relevant interpersonal measures will be outlined with references for more thorough reviews. These measures address a variety of interpersonal issues including, traits, interpersonal problems, interpersonal values and morals, interpersonal self-efficacy, interpersonal impacts, and social support behaviors.

Interpersonal assessment began with the Interpersonal Checklist (ICL) (LaForge & Suczek, 1955). It was a lengthy instrument and therefore time intensive, and it did not provide adequately even coverage of the interpersonal circumplex space. Wiggins (1991), developed the Interpersonal Adjective Scale (IAS) to measure interpersonal traits spread out amongst the eight octants of the circle. While there are three versions (one with a glossary, one with definitions with the items, and one without definitions), Adams & Tracey (2004) found no evidence of differences between the versions when they were administered to a large sample of college students (n=920). Additionally, they found that the three IAS versions adequately described the circumplex, which is consistent with previous research that supported the use of the IAS (Adams & Tracey, 2004; Wiggins, 1995).

The Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP) (Horowitz, Alden, Wiggins, and Pincus, 2000) is the only direct measure of interpersonal problems or distress. The IIP is composed of eight scales that provide an assessment of the individual’s interpersonal behaviors as compared to others and an assessment as compared against the self (ipsatized) (Horowitz et al., 2006). The IIP has received a significant amount of attention

in the literature, and has been found to be a reliable measure; for a review see Woodward, Murrell, & Bettler Jr. (2005). As a result of this attention, 12 different versions of the IIP have been created. Most of the differences are related to length (i.e., IIP-64, IIP-32); however, for a more in-depth review of the differences between the forms see Hughes & Barkham (2005).

Notably, the IIP has been translated into Spanish (Salazar, Martí, Soriano, Beltran, & Adam, 2010), German (Huber, Henrich, & Klug, 2007), and Chinese (Wang & Scalise, 2010; Qi-wu, Guang-rong, Qing-ji, 2010), with positive results regarding the cross-cultural applicability of the measure. Across all studies, the IIP has been used to examine psychotherapy process and outcome, identify psychopathology associated with specific interpersonal problems, and as a guide for therapeutic interventions (Horowitz et al., 2000; Locke, 2005; Locke, 2011). Furthermore, the AGPA recommends using the IIP-32 in group research and practice (Burlingame et al., 2006). The IIP-32 is recommended for use due to (a) good reliability and validity, (b) a quick administration time, and (c) the ability to examine normative and ipsative scores (Horowitz et al., 2006; Burlingame et al., 2006; Locke, 2011).

Much like the IIP, either the Checklist of Interpersonal Transactions-Revised (CLOIT-R) or the Checklist of Psychotherapy Transactions (CLOPT) may be used to describe individual's interpersonal constellation, the combination of dominant, submission, hostile, and friendly scales (Kiesler, Goldston, Schmidt, 1991; Kiesler, 2004). However, the CLOIT-R is a 96 item self-report questionnaire, therefore takes a significant amount of time to complete and score. As a result, it appears that the IIP has become the dominant instrument used to obtain an interpersonal constellation.

Once a picture of the patient's interpersonal style is obtained, additional interpersonal measures may be administered to gain additional information. The Circumplex Scales of Interpersonal Values (CSIV) measures the worth that individuals place on different interpersonal experiences and has been used to examine the effects that emotional reactions can have on interpersonal events (Locke, 2000). The Circumplex Scales of Interpersonal Efficacy (CSIE) assesses how confident a person is in relation to his or her ability to perform certain behaviors throughout the circumplex (Locke & Sadler, 2007). The Chart of Interpersonal Reactions in Close Living Environments (CIRCLE) was developed for use by an observer who is watching a patient in an inpatient hospital or in a forensic setting (Blackburn & Renwick, 1996). The Support Actions Scale-Circumplex measures an individual's outlook regarding providing agentic or communal support to those in need of help (Trobst, 2000). These four measures are relatively new and have not received a great deal of attention in the literature. As a result, future research on the values, self-efficacy, interpersonal behavior in a restricted environment, and interactions around social support will help determine the utility of these new measures.

Next, the Impact Message Inventory (IMI) measures the impact messages that result from interactions with some identified target person (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006; Kiesler, Schmidt, & Wagner, 1997; Locke, 2011). Impact messages are the thoughts, feelings, and action tendencies that the target person evokes or invites. While this measure shows promise and effectively demonstrates circular ordering, it fails to establish equal spacing and consistent vector lengths as compared to other interpersonal measures (Hafkenscheid & Rouckhout, 2009; Schmidt, Wagner, & Kiesler, 1999).

Finally a few efforts have been made to address age differences in interpersonal behavior. Sodano & Tracey (2006) developed the Child and Adolescent Interpersonal Survey and Ojanen, Grouroos, & Salmivalli (2005) created the Interpersonal Goals Inventory for Children by modifying the adult CSIV measure. Time and repeated results will determine if interpersonal principles and propositions are consistent with children and adolescence.

In sum, interpersonal assessment is an important aspect to effectively intervene during conflict within group psychotherapy. It is recommended that clinicians utilize the IIP due to the focus on interpersonal distress, and the comprehensiveness and brevity of the measure. Additionally, it is recommended that the interpersonal assessment be utilized in multiple ways. Data gathered can be used as a pre-group screening tool to gather data on the individual's interpersonal style. Once the interpersonal constellation is obtained, the data can be used with the group member to facilitate goal formation. The data from multiple individuals can be utilized in determining group composition and to plan interventions. Finally, the measures can be re-administered as an outcome measure to determine if there is change in the person's interpersonal constellation.

CHAPTER 8

Suggested Interventions

Intervening in the moment is a difficult thing for therapists to do. Ensuring that those interventions are effective is another task all together. Interventions within group work actually begin before the first meeting. Therapists can help “to inoculate members against a flight response” by spending time preparing the individual for their experience with group therapy (Brabender, 2001). This strategy is applicable for all group members, regardless of their interpersonal style. Discussing an individual’s fears and concerns prior to group will decrease the likelihood that individuals will terminate prematurely., Creating a goal and discussing the chaotic periods he or she can expect to experience during the life of the group will help focus the individual remind him or her why he or she is in group. Pre-group preparation can help inoculate group members to the temptation to quit group after an emotionally intense session. While one can prepare for conflict and other events that members will experience in the life of the group, therapists still need effective interventions to use in the here-and-now.

Now that we have established a general framework for intervening, we will discuss relevant interventions from the group literature. In their review of the literature Morran, Stockton, & Whittingham (2004) discussed two categories of effective leader interventions. One category is a set of interventions designed to protect group members and increase the felt sense of safety within the group. Those interventions include protecting, blocking, and supporting. The second category includes interventions

designed to energize and engage group members. Those interventions include drawing out, modeling, linking, and processing. The interventions of processessing and interpretation, as well as those suggested by Morran et al. (2004), are heavily reliant on the metacommunicative process of giving and receiving feedback. It is recommended that the following interventions be utilized with the previous discussion of the communicative process of providing feedback in mind.

Protecting includes a group of interventions designed to insulate group members from over-disclosing, or taking other unnecessary psychological risks (Capuzzi & Gross, 2002). This intervention can be especially helpful for use during the beginning stages of the group. Submissive individuals may need protection if they feel pushed by more dominant individuals to engage and share as much as others in the group. Conversely dominant people may need to be slowed down from disclosing in order to not overload other group members, and in order to prevent massive disclosures from becoming the norm for the group.

Another way to protect group members is through the use of blocking procedures. Blocking is used to “stop a member from storytelling, rambling, or otherwise talking in a manner that runs counter to the purposes of the group,” or to protect a group member who is being inappropriately interrogated by another group member (Morran, Stockton, & Whittingham, 2004). Blocking may be especially useful with Hostile-Dominant and Friendly-Dominant individuals, and a way to short-circuit unnecessary conflict in the group. Blocking is especially helpful when an individual is monopolizing the group’s time (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005).

On the opposite end of the spectrum from protecting interventions, supporting is used to reassure, encourage, and reinforce group members in appropriate participation (Morran, Stockton, & Whittingham, 2004). Specifically, this intervention is helpful at the beginning of the group's life, as well as during times of crisis or conflict. However, therapists must take care not to foster dependency through the use of this intervention. This is especially true in working with Friendly-Submissive and Hostile-Submissive group members.

The second broad category of effective leader interventions is mean to inject energy into the group to increase appropriate participation. Therapists use drawing out techniques when he or she directly engages with members by inviting participation from specific individuals or the group-as-a-whole. Drawing out is a way to move the process to a deeper level and may not be the most suitable energizing technique to use in the beginning of the group's life. For example, one could use drawing out to encourage a Hostile-Dominant member to explore the emotions below their anger; thereby deepening the process. Drawing out is helpful in working with submissive individuals as a way to balance the participation time for each member. Balancing participation ensures that the group addresses every member's problems and concerns.

Modeling skills, attitudes, and behaviors is a way for the therapist to influence the events in the group. For example, if a group member engages in a conflict with the therapist, the therapist's job is to model for the rest of the group how to appropriately handle conflict in the group, thus setting a norm. Modeling is an essential intervention that Morran, Stockton, & Whittingham (2004) recommended be used in every stage of group development.

One route to include group members who have fallen to the back of the group's awareness is to link them to other group members. Linking is also used to both establish and deconstruct subgroups. Linking is a way to subtly invite participation from a member, without being overwhelming. For example, a therapist could link a member who has remained quiet to a more talkative member in attempt to share in what the other member has vocalized, "Wow John as I listen to you I'm reminded about something Zach said about his reason for joining this group. Zach what do you make of what John just said?" Alternatively, linking can be used to bring two members together who think that they have nothing in common. "So, it seems like John and Zach have something in common after all!"

Processing is another activity used to address subgrouping, as well as much of what occurs during the group's lifetime. Processing is an exploratory discussion of the individual and group experiences in the here-and-now. Processing "capitalizes on significant happenings to help members reflect on the meaning of their experience; better understand their own thoughts, feelings, and actions; and generalize what is learned to situations outside of the group" (Morran, Stockton, & Whittingham, 2004). Processing conflict is an effective way of moving conflict from a damaging experience to a healthy disagreement and discussion. For a detailed exploration of process approaches to therapy see Mitchell (2000), Stern (2004), or Teyber & McClure (2011).

Often used in conjunction with other interventions, interpreting is a way that a therapist or group member can hypothesize about possible explanations for certain situations, events, behaviors, and symptoms. Providing interpretations to group members are one way that therapist can help "members to integrate complex personal and group-

related events, thus encouraging their investment in the group experience” (Morran, Stockton, & Whittingham, 2004). Therapist should be careful as to the timing of their interpretations. Hostile-Dominant and Hostile-Submissive individuals may use the opportunity to undercut the therapist’s authority if the interpretation is not correct. Hedging interpretations, using them judiciously, and asking permission to deliver them are ways to help decrease that possibility.

Last, but not least, self-disclosure by the leader is not only an effective to model self-disclosure, it is also an effective way to increase member self-disclosure (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). However, leaders must be certain to not use self-disclosure too frequently, and must be careful about selecting what information is acceptable to disclose to the group. It should also be noted that some individuals could misperceive the intention behind self-disclosure. Individuals on the Friendly hemisphere of the circumplex may interpret the self-disclosure to be the beginning and make multiple inquiries into the therapist’s life, or push boundaries in another way such as asking the therapist to meet for coffee. Individuals on the Hostile hemisphere of the circumplex may take the self-disclosure and use it against the therapist in a moment of anger. If one is not aware of these issues with self-disclosure there is a heightened risk of the group becoming about the therapist, and increased probability of an ethical violation. Teyber (2011) discusses the difference between two types of therapist self-disclosure, self-involving statements and self-disclosure statements. Self-involving statements are those verbalizations that reflect the therapist’s situation specific current reaction (thoughts and feelings) in the here-and-now of the moment. Alternatively, self-disclosing statements are those verbalizations that pertain to the therapist’s past personal life experience.

Teyber (2011) encourages therapists to think about and judiciously use self-disclosing statements, making sure he or she is not simply involved in playing out a countertransference reaction. He recommends seeking consultation or supervision, and collecting multiple instances of the specific behavior pattern before making such statements. Another issue with self-disclosure is that it is an invitation to take the relationship to a deeper, and more vulnerable, level of intimacy; therefore, therapist must be careful to not invite patients into the space only to respond in an “impersonal, distancing, or judgmental” manner which places the patient in a double bind and does more harm than good (Teyber, 2001, p. 86). Finally, Teyber (2011) recommends recognizing when an issue is related to culture, and to obtain proper information regarding cultures that one is not familiar with, “and tentatively exploring the range of acceptance behaviors, values, and beliefs that may impact intervention with this particular client.”

Group psychotherapy can be effective at helping individuals lead healthy and fulfilling lives. The field of Psychology is at an exciting stage where the literature base has reached a point in which the interpersonal interactions with group-as-a-whole phenomena can be examined and studied. The model presented is a first step toward improving the way in which therapists view group and interact with clients during intense emotional moments such as conflict. By integrating group-as-a-whole and interpersonal theories it is hoped that the model of interactions and suggested interventions are helpful to clinicians in any stage of development. If successful this model may be one way to demonstrate how to intervene in dynamic and complex human systems, improving the way that we live and interact with each other.

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