

Social Group Work

When we speak of Social group work as a method we mean an orderly, systematic, planned way of working with people in groups. A method is a conscious procedure, a designed means of achieving a goal.

Social group work is a mode of serving individuals within and through small face-to-face groups in order to induce desired changes among the client participants. It refers to a way of work with many different kinds of groups. In this method, the members are helped to learn new ideas, develop new skills, change attitude and deepen their personalities through participation in a social process where in they make decisions and take the social action necessary to accomplish the purpose of the group. This arises out of the relationship between the members and the workers who affect the interacting process. We therefore see social group work as a process and a method through which group life is affected by a worker who consciously directs the interacting process toward the accomplishment of goals.

Specialized use of groups procedures is now to be found across a broad range of health, welfare and educational agencies, anti-poverty organizations, child guidance clinics, school social services, correctional institutions and mental hospitals, public welfare agencies, youth development and recreational programs and other. It is generally believed that recreation group activity and group experience all contribute to the satisfaction of some psychological needs. Recreation and group activity provide opportunity for self-expression. Similarly the hunger for cooperation and competition may be satisfied through team or group games. In contrast to recreation, group work is a method by which the group worker enables various types of groups to function in such a way that group interaction and program activities contribute to the growth of the individuals and the achievement of desirable social goals.

The social group worker is seen as primarily an enabler in the group process. By use of his understanding of group and individual needs, he establishes relationship through which he seeks to develop the potentialities of the group to accomplish its purposes and he aids individual members of the group to find

satisfying and socially productive experiences. The group worker must be aware of cultural factors and social forces as they affect and are affected by the group.

If we are to present a clear definition of social group work we must recognize that many factors are involved: agencies, groups, workers, programs and underlying purposes. However, the heart of the definition should be what the worker does and how it is done.

According to **H.B TRECKER:**

“Social group work is a method in social work through which individuals in many groups in a variety of community agency settings are helped by a worker who guides their interaction in program activities so that they may relate themselves to others and experience growth opportunities in accordance with their needs and capacities to the end of individual, group, and community development.”

According to **COYLE:**

“Social group work like case work, community organization, administration and research is now recognized as a basic aspect of social work practice. Its distinct characteristics lie in the fact that group work is used within group experience as a means to individual growth and development and that the group worker is concerned in developing social responsibility and active citizenship for the improvement of democratic society.”

According to **HAMILTON:**

“Social group work is a psychological process which is concerned no less with developing leadership, ability and cooperation than with building on the interest of the group for social purpose.”

Social Group Work is “a broad professional practice that refers to the giving of help or the accomplishment of tasks in a group setting. It involves assisting an interdependent collection of people to reach their mutual goals, which may be personal interpersonal or task-related in nature.”

Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW,1990)