

**The University of Texas at Austin
School of Social Work**

Course Number:	393R26	Instructor's Name:	Laura E. Sovine, LMSW-AP
Unique Number:	63470	Office Number:	3.104A
Semester	Fall 2014	Office Phone & email:	(512) 854-2131, laura.sovine@co.travis.tx.us
Meeting Time & Place	Monday, 2:30-5:30pm Rm.2.130	Office Hours:	By appointment only

Theories & Methods of Group Intervention

I. Course Description

The course will cover current group intervention approaches used with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly across a variety of settings. Students will develop a working understanding of children, adolescents, adults and the elderly from diverse backgrounds, affirming and respecting their strengths and differences in group settings. The course is grounded in the identification, analysis, and implementation of empirically-based intervention strategies for group work with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. This course will focus on using multiple perspectives in the advanced application of theories, models, and skills utilized in short- and longer-term group interventions. The framework of the course is based on social work values and the ethical decision-making process, as illuminated by the [NASW Code of Ethics](#). This is a required course for MSSW students in the Clinical Concentration. It is a specialized group methods course which builds on the Practice I & II courses and Field Practicum I & II.

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, student will be able to:

1. Integrate theories and empirical research knowledge in selecting and using group work approaches with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly **(CL/APB 6 and 10c)**
2. Demonstrate an advanced clinical knowledge of group work intervention and leadership roles and skills as they relates to the strengths, the processes involved in human change, and the capacities and resources of children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly **(CL/APB 4 and 10a)**
3. Adapt group work intervention models, programs, and activities for use with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly to reflect an understanding of persons from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spiritual, physical or mental ability, developmental level, age, and national origin; **(CL/APB 4 and 8)**
4. Evaluate, select, and design group work programs, methods, and activities for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly based upon their empirical base, practice utility, potential, range of applicability and limitations; **(CL/APB 6 and 10c)**
5. Select and design group work programs, methods, and activities, and to then critically evaluate and analyze these group work approaches as to their effectiveness in given situations. This includes: (a) the adequacy of the research and knowledge base; (b) the range of applicability; (c) the value and ethical issues, including the student's own value system; and (d) the policy implications involved in delivery of group work services to children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly; **(CL/APB 2, 6 and 8)**

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6. Integrate and apply core and advanced group work skills and processes, including, but not limited to, creation and maintenance of the group, resolving conflict, dealing with challenging clients, working in the here-and-now, and fostering the therapeutic factors of group work; **(CL/APB 10a)**
7. Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of group work interventions for children, adolescents, adults and the elderly; **(CL/APB 10c)**
8. Demonstrate the ability to tailor group work interventions for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly based on the context in which they are delivered; **(CL/APB 4 and 8)**
9. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of social work values and ethical decision-making processes as they relate to ethical dilemmas in group work with children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. **(CL/APB 2)**

The School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, we engage in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Several required courses in our curriculum are part of this ongoing assessment, including this course. Below is a list of the specific Educational Policies (EP) and Practice Behaviors (PB) that are assessed in this course. The complete EPAS can be optioned from your Student Handbook.

EP2.1.2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

CL/APB2 Refine ability to manage value differences and ethical dilemmas

Objectives 5, 9

Assignment: Class discussion, midterm exam, group project, critical reflection paper

EP2.1.4. Engage diversity and difference in practice.

CL/APB4 Utilize needs, values, and strengths in applying appropriate interventions for diverse client systems

Objectives 2, 3, 8

Assignment: Class discussion, midterm exam, group project

EP2.1.6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

CL/APB6 Apply empirically supported evidence to practice

Objectives 1, 4, 5,

Assignment: Group project, critical reflection paper

EP2.1.8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

CL/APB8 Identify and evaluate agency programs and/or practices in relation to client needs

Objectives 3, 5, 8

Assignment: Class discussion, midterm exam, group project

EP2.1.10a. Engagement.

CL/APB10a Integrate theory-based relational skills in all areas of client engagement

Objectives 2, 6

Assignment: Class discussion, midterm exam, group project, critical reflection paper

EP2.1.10c. Intervention

CL/APB10c Critically apply interventions to design, implement and evaluate effective practice

Objectives 1, 4, 7

Assignment: Midterm exam, group project, critical reflection paper

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III. Teaching Methods

This course will focus upon lecture and guest presentations, as well as experiential exercises and group simulations. Some video material may be used as well. Exercises to promote self-awareness in relation to group process will be stressed in both written assignments and in class interactions. Students will be asked to engage in informed discussion of the class assigned readings and be asked to apply these readings to the experiential exercises and group simulations. Teaching and learning will be collaborative and interactive, with the instructor modeling group work principles and strategies. The class will be organized to utilize small group context and role play for development of group facilitation skills, and for the integration of these skills with researched and validated group work theory.

IV. Required and Recommended Texts and Materials

Required

Yalom, I. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Various readings uploaded to CANVAS

V. Course Requirements

Greatest value will be attained by completing the assigned reading before each class session and will be the basis for class discussion. Students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments during lectures. Student's questions and comments provide the instructor with an important assessment tool for whether or not the readings are being completed outside of class.

All of your work in this class, particularly small group work, must be governed by the ethical standards published by NASW, including very strict application of the rules governing confidentiality. It is important to familiarize yourself with these standards, and see your instructor immediately if you should encounter any problems or concerns related to these standards.

VI. Course Assignments

A. Class Attendance and Contribution

Class contribution grade will be determined in two ways:

First, due to the format and content of this course, regular and punctual attendance is imperative. Students are expected to be in class, or in extenuating circumstances, to notify the instructor and at least one other group member (if applicable) that they will be absent. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class period. Students absent after the break will be considered absent for the entire class, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.

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Second, there will be ample opportunities for students to take part in experiential in-class and role-play exercises, both as group members and as group facilitators. Students are encouraged to get “out of their comfort zone” a bit, as they take part in some of the exercises. In order to more completely evaluate experiential learning, group role play members will have an opportunity to evaluate each other’s contributions to their group’s role-play preparation. This will assist the instructor in evaluating class contribution.

These two methods will be combined and assessed for a total of 20% of your grade.

B. Mid-Term Exam

One exam based on the readings, lectures, speakers, and discussions will be given in the course. The exam will be given as scheduled on the course outline, and may include multiple choice, true-false, short answer, and essay questions. It will be worth 25% of the final grade. MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL NOT BE GIVEN UNLESS THERE ARE UNUSUAL EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES, at discretion of instructor.

C. Researched Group Role Play OR Student Therapy Group

Students will self-assign to small groups of 7-10 members based on selected theory or type of group or both. Students will alternate in task and treatment leadership roles. Each group will present 1 treatment session (approximately 45 minutes) in front of the class utilizing one of the group theory modalities provided by the instructor (alternative options may be available; this will be discussed in class). Each group will reflect adherence to social work values and ethics, and should demonstrate techniques appropriate to the “middle” group developmental stage and the developmental life cycle of the treatment population. Following the presentation, group members will facilitate an interactive information and feedback session with the class regarding their theoretical framework.

The role play groups should reflect application to a specific (child, adolescent, adult, or family group) context, and should target a population that is diverse, at-risk, or disadvantaged.

The student therapy groups should reflect real concerns related to the everyday pressures of being a Social Work graduate student. Utilize issues that have importance to you, but are not so personal as to cause you or your fellow group members emotional trauma. Appropriate topics might include communication with significant other, boss, parent, or child; anxiety related to school; unexpressed emotions; unrealized goals or dreams; or lack of personal awareness. These are just a few examples. Topics to avoid include issues of past or present physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or any other topics that might cause trauma to you or your fellow group members. If you have questions about the appropriateness of group topics, please check with your instructor. Keep in mind that there are risks inherent in any group that involves self-disclosure. If you feel uncomfortable sharing at this level with your colleagues, you may be better served by participating instead in a role play group. Your performance and participation as it relates to the structure and modality of the group will be graded, not the content of a personal nature which you may share.

The group presentation will be worth 25% of the total course grade. Evaluation components will include:

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- Evidence of preparation (demonstrated from the presentation itself and from the meeting-to-meeting summaries)
- Appropriate modality for the type of group being demonstrated (as supported by evidence-based research)
- Appropriate demonstration of the modality as evidenced by the types of interventions shown
- Creativity demonstrated in the role-play
- Post-presentation class discussion and interaction

Additionally, each group is to prepare for dissemination to the class a brief handout (2 to 3 pages) of their role-play and relevant research conducted that should include, but is not limited to:

- Type of group
- Theoretical model being implemented
- Brief description of techniques or interventions that are specific to this model
- A list of references (5-10 citations of relevant, evidence-based research, APA format) that your group used to prepare this presentation so that others interested have a starting list of resources

In addition, one group member should keep an ongoing brief summary (one page) of each group meeting (hand-written is fine). The summaries will include who attended; general discussion and planning; and outcomes/decisions reached. These can be very helpful to all group members when reflection papers are written. The meeting summaries will also be turned into the instructor on the date of the role-play presentations. Some time will be allotted to this project during class time, but this active learning may also require **out-of-class group meetings and preparation time.**

D. Individual Critical Reflection Paper

Papers should include the following four components:

a) An analysis of some aspect of a group theory, perspective, or issue as discussed in class assignments and readings. Examples might be: Yalom's (2005) concept of "universality;" or Yalom's (2005) discussion of "transference and counter-transference;" Schiller's (1996) "relational model of conflict" in women's groups; or Perls (1965) concept of "polarities" in dealing with life conflicts. *(These examples are not inclusive – please feel free to pick a group perspective or concept of your own choosing if you wish).*

b) Your *personal* reflections on this issue as it relates to your values, ethics, beliefs, professional, and/or personal experiences. What are the elements of this concept you agree/disagree with, and why? How is this concept relevant to your understanding of group process, and your own past experience in groups, including in other classes or in groups outside the school setting? What relevance might the concept have to issues of gender, age, sexual orientation, spirituality, culture or ethnicity, or to disadvantaged, oppressed, or at-risk populations?

c) Include an analysis of how the issue was (or was not) demonstrated in your group's experiences, either in the presentation itself or in the preparation for the presentation. Did the concept seem to fit with your group's experience, and if so, how? What other related group process issues did you observe in your group and were these concepts or stages supported in our class readings?

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d) Finally, conclude with a synthesis of what self-awareness you gained in this group work experience, including the role(s) you played in this group, how this compares with roles you usually play in other groups, and what you might want to do the same or differently in future groups. (There will be in-class time given after all group role plays are complete, and after all reflection papers have been turned in and graded, to meet with your group, and give each other confidential constructive feed-back related to the role play experience.)

Reflection papers should be between 10-12 pages, use APA (5th ed) citation style, and include a reference list. Papers are due one week after class presentation for each group.

VIII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Student Performance Evaluation

Course Requirement	% of grade
Mid-Term Exam	25%
Role Play/Demonstration	25%
Critical Reflection Paper	30%
Class Attendance and Contribution	20%
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TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale

94.0 and Above= A
90.0 to 93.999= A-
87.0 to 89.999= B+
84.0 to 86.999= B
80.0 to 83.999= B-
77.0 to 79.999= C+
74.0 to 76.999= C
70.0 to 73.999= C- (Class failed/no credit: 73 and below)
67.0 to 69.999= D+
64.0 to 66.999= D
60.0 to 63.999= D-
Below 60.0= F

Grading of all written assignments will take into account the quality and content of the writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) – 5th edition format should be used when relevant. Written material should be carefully proofread and errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling) corrected.

IX. General University Policies:

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each

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member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN CLASS. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

CLASSROOM CIVILITY. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues.

UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the instructor. The instructor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students can contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image. Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to

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involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including any information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in any way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

USE OF CLASS MATERIALS. The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students.

DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS. Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their

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email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

SAFETY. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL). If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

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Date	Description	Text/Readings <i>read by date shown</i>
Session 1 September 8	Overview of Course – Syllabus, Assignments, Due Dates, Introduction to Group Work	Yalom – Preface (pp. xi-xix) Yalom – Ch. 1 - The Therapeutic Factors
Session 2 September 15	The Therapeutic Factors Interpersonal Learning	Yalom – Ch. 2 – Interpersonal Learning
Session 3 September 22	Overview: Cognitive Behavioral Theory Gestalt Theory Psychodynamic Theory *Assigning small groups	CANVAS: Cognitive Behavioral Theory CANVAS: Gestalt Theory CANVAS: Psychoanalytic Theory
Session 4 September 29	Stages of Group Development Group Cohesiveness Integrating the Therapeutic Factors Guest Lecturerr: Sarah Kyle, PhD, LCSW (Sovine out at conference) Small group time	Yalom – Ch. 3 – Group Cohesiveness Yalom – Ch. 4 – The Therapeutic Factors: An Integration
Session 5 October 6	Tasks of the Group Worker Working in the Here and Now Small group time	Yalom – Ch. 5 – The Therapist: Basic Tasks Yalom – Ch. 6 – The Therapist: Working in the Here-and-Now
Session 6 October 13	Tasks of the Group Worker, cont. Planning and Composing Groups Small group time/prep for midterm	Yalom – Ch. 7 – The Therapist: Transference and Transparency Yalom – Ch. 8 – The Selection of Clients
Session 7 October 20	***MID-TERM EXAM *** The Exam will cover the assigned required readings and lecture material from Class Sessions 1 - 6	
Session 8 October 27	Diversity, Social Justice, Special Populations Guest Speaker: Jennifer Hernandez, LMSW	Yalom – Ch. 9 – The Composition of Therapy Groups Yalom – Ch. 10–Creation of the

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		Group: Place, Time, Size and Preparation CANVAS: Race, Color, Ethnicity, and Class...
Session 9 November 3	Group Work with Women Guest Speaker: Rebecca Roth, RN-BC, LMFT, LPC Small group time	CANVAS: Rethinking Stages of Development in Women's Groups
Session 10 November 10	Beginning Groups Group Work with Children and Adolescents Guest Speaker: TBA Small Group Time	Yalom – Ch. 11 – In the Beginning CANVAS: The Power of Group Work with Kids
Session 11 November 17	Group Work with Older Adults ***Student Group Presentations - Psychodynamic*** ***Student Group Presentations – Cognitive Behavioral***	Yalom – Ch. 12 – The Advanced Group
Session 12 November 24	Problem Group Members ***Student Group Presentations - Gestalt*** ***Student Group Presentations – Alternate theory if needed*** Psychodynamic Group and CBT Group Critical Reflection Papers Due	Yalom – Ch. 13 – Problem Group Members Yalom – Ch. 14 – The Therapist: Specialized Formats and Procedural Aids Yalom – Ch. 15 – Specialized Therapy Groups
Session 13 December 1	Termination in Group Therapy Small group feedback Course Evaluation, Closure, Recap Gestalt and Alternate Theory Group Critical Reflection Papers Due	Yalom – Ch. 16 – Group Therapy: Ancestors and Cousins Yalom – Ch. 17 – Training the Group Therapist CANVAS: Termination Activities

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Bibliography

The following list of readings include both required reading noted in the syllabus calendar as well as supplemental readings that are optional but may be of interest and enhance your learning.

Albert, A. (1994). Talking like real people: The "straight-ahead prison group" In *Mutual aid groups, vulnerable populations, and the life cycle* (Gitterman & Shulman, Eds. 2nd ed). New York: Columbia University Press.

Bilides, D. (1991). Race, color, ethnicity, and class: Issues of biculturalism in school-based adolescent counseling groups. *Social Work with Groups*. 12 (4), 43-48.

Corey, M., and Corey, G. (1997). *Groups: Process and Practice*. (5th ed.) Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole

Corey, G. (2000). Ethical and professional issues in group practice. *Group counseling* (5th Ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole

Corey, G. (2000). Final Stage: Consolidation and Termination. *Group counseling* (5th Ed). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole

Corey, M.S. (2002). *Groups: Process and practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole

Donigian, J. & Hulse-Killacky, D. (1999). *Critical incidents in group therapy*. (2nd ed). New York: Brooks/Cole- Wadsworth.

Gold-Steinberg, S. and Buttneheim, M (1993). Telling one's story in an incest survivor's group. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*. 43(2) 173-189.

Irizarry, C. and Appel, Y. (1994). In double jeopardy: Adolescents in the inner city. In *Mutual aid groups, vulnerable populations, and the life cycle*. (Gitterman and Shulman, Eds. 2nd Ed.) New York: Columbia University Press.

Malekoff, A. (1997). *Group work with adolescents: Principles and practice*. New York: Guilford Press.

Nadelman, A. (1994). Sharing the hurt: Adolescents in a residential setting. In *Mutual aid groups, vulnerable populations, and the life cycle* (Gitterman and Shulman, Eds. 2nd Ed.) New York: Columbia University Press.

Poynter-Berg, D. (1994). Getting connected: Institutionalized schizophrenic women. *In Mutual aid groups, vulnerable populations, and the life cycle*. (Gitterman & Shulman, Eds. 2nd Ed.) New York: Columbia University Press.

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Yalom, I. (1998). *The Yalom reader*. New York: Basic Books.