



The Brooks/Cole Social Work E-Communicator

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Welcome to the Brooks/Cole Social Work E-Communicator. The goal of our quarterly newsletter is to communicate with you, our valued customer. Our intent is to provide you with informative news, announcements, great ideas in teaching, and an opportunity for you to find out more about us.

Announcements

- We'll be at SSWR in January – please stop by our booth!
- News Release: August 28, 2003

BHMS** and Health Ed Agree to Present Nine Regional Seminars based on "Real World Treatment Planning" HEALTH Education Network, LLC a leading provider of continuing education services for professional individuals, and Behavioral Health Management Services have agreed to a joint series of seminars on behavioral health treatment planning.

The seminars, based on "Real World Treatment Planning" have been tentatively scheduled for October, November, and December of 2003. Mr. Dan Johnson, Chairman and CEO of BHMS will be the featured presenter.

Although the specific locations have not been finalized, the workshops will be presented in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, North and South Carolina and Florida.

Please check our website www.bhmsgroup.com at a later date for a posting of seminar locations and dates or check for information and registration at the Health Ed website at www.health-ed.com. Health Ed is based in Eau Claire, WI.

**Behavioral Health Management Services

* Dan Johnson is co-author of the Brooks/Cole title, *Real World Treatment Planning, 2003*©

- Do you have any announcements that you would like us to include in our next edition?
Please e-mail Caroline with your announcement by 1/15/04 at caroline.concilla@thomson.com

Great Ideas in Teaching

We'd like to highlight and share great ideas in teaching social work... whether it's an activity, a unique lesson, or a self-created web component, we'd love to showcase your great teaching efforts. To submit a "Great Ideas in Teaching" Social Work example, please e-mail Caroline at caroline.concilla@thomson.com OR, if you have a text proposal in mind that reflects YOUR great teaching, please email Executive Editor, Lisa Gebo at lisa.gebo@thomson.com

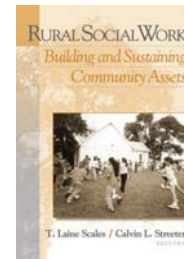


Spotlight On

Asset Building in Rural Communities

Brooks/Cole Publication

Co-editors T. Laine Scales and Calvin L. Streeter of
**Rural Social Work: Building Assets to Sustain Rural
Communities 2004©**



Imagine you have just returned home from a brisk walk through the countryside on a warm and sunny spring day. You are hot, tired, and very thirsty. As you enter your home you see a glass of cool refreshing water sitting on the kitchen table. The glass is filled to the halfway mark. How do you see the glass? Is it half-full or is it half-empty? In this case, whether you view the glass as half-full or half-empty probably doesn't matter. But how one answers the age-old question, "Is the glass half-empty or half-full?" may suggest how one perceives the world. When we view the glass as half-empty, we focus on the negative aspects of life and we can become consumed with negativity and overcome with despair. But when we see the glass as half-full, we focus on the positive elements in our life and the world around us.

John Kretzmann and John McKnight (1993), in their book *Building Community From the Inside Out*, challenged us to view the glass as half-full rather than half-empty. They contend that our focus on the half-empty glass leads us to see only the deficiencies and problems facing our communities. In rural areas this often means we see communities where few opportunities exist to retain young people, where we are too spread out to afford hard-surface roads, internet access, or cable television for everyone, where residents must leave town to acquire many goods and services, and where farms and local businesses are controlled by big corporations from afar.

By viewing the glass as half-full, we begin to see the depth of the human spirit and the richness of the creative potential that exists in rural communities. We see people who are talented and experienced in a variety of areas. We see strong social networks and associations. We see that with rural services the lines are short, the hassles are few, and our business is easy to take care of. We see beautiful landscapes where we can easily enjoy nature. We see people getting things done that need to be done by using what is available. In other words, we see the strengths and assets rather than the problems and deficiencies.

As social workers, it is easy to become overwhelmed with a sense of despair because of the serious personal problems and societal conditions we are called upon to address. We see the child who has been verbally and physically abused. We witness the terrible toll that alcohol and drug abuse can take on a family. Daily we confront the reality of poverty, prejudice, and oppression in our society. Because our professional lives are wrapped up in the misery and trauma of the less advantaged in our community, it is no wonder that social workers are sometime accused of seeing the glass as half-empty. For social workers in rural communities where resources are scarce, it may be even more difficult to view the glass as half-full.

The asset-building framework, however, allows helping professionals to see people as citizens of the community, not just as clients. Every citizen has capacities that can be tapped to make life in the community better. Rural communities contain a wide range of assets and strengths, such as voluntary associations, close personal relationships between people, local institutions, histories and traditions, land and property. Models of professional practice that focus on asset building can empower rural people to use their resources in innovative ways to create new assets. It can help them determine their own direction, set their own priorities, and leverage both internal and external resources in ways that make sense for their community.



Scales/Streeter Article Continued

Three Streams of Thought on Asset Building

There are at least three significant streams of work during the last decade that have helped shift our focus from deficiencies to assets. Although somewhat different in their approach to asset building, they share a common theme. All three embrace and celebrate the strengths and capacities of individuals and communities.

The first of these is the work of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), mentioned above. A second stream of work focused on asset building is located at the Search Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In an effort to identify the elements of a strength-based approach to healthy youth development, the Search Institute devised a framework of developmental assets for children and youth. This framework identified 40 critical factors for young people's growth and development. These assets focus on helping young people develop a commitment to learning, positive values to guide their choices, social competencies to build relationships, and a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise. (Benson, 1997). The work of Mike Sherraden and his colleagues in the Center for Social Development at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis represents a third exciting area of work focused on the asset-building framework. With a focus on developing economic resources for poor families, Sherraden (1991) outlined his ideas about asset-based welfare policy in his seminal book *Assets and the Poor: A New American Welfare Policy*.

Exploring Asset Building in Rural Communities

We believe that practice models that keep us focused on the strengths, assets, and capacities of people are critical for social work practice in rural communities. That belief led us to create a new resource, *Rural Social Work: Building and Sustaining Community Assets*. This resource for the classroom is designed to assist social work students and teachers as they integrate themes of asset building and social work practice in the rural context. We have emphasized the depth of the human spirit and the richness of the creative potential that exists in rural communities. We introduce new research tools, such as asset mapping, and new theoretical models, like asset-based community development. The readings highlight the tremendous resources that exist in rural communities and demonstrate ways to integrate them into contemporary social work practice. No matter how students, teachers, and practitioners might choose to use this resource, we are confident that they will find good readings, discussion questions and assignments to help them think about rural social work in new ways.

References

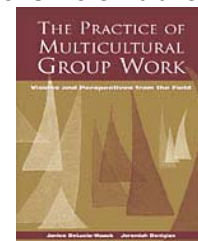
Benson, P. L. (1997). *All kids are our kids: what communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
 Kretzmann, J. P. and McKnight, J. L. (1993). *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. Chicago: ACTA Publications.
 Sherraden, M. (1991). *Assets and the Poor: A New American Welfare Policy*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Spotlight On

Suggestions For Best Practices In Multicultural Group Work

Brooks/Cole Publication

By Jeremiah Donigian, Professor Emeritus, SUNY Brockport and
 Janice DeLucia-Waack, University at Buffalo, SUNY; authors of
***The Practice of Multicultural Group Work: Visions and
 Perspectives from the Field 2004***©





Donigian/DeLucia-Waack Article Continued

We would like to make some suggestions for best practices related to multicultural group work. We all make mistakes and we all make assumptions about other people. People are different and some of these differences are the results of individual uniqueness, while other differences result from cultural backgrounds or worldviews. When differences in interpersonal style or preference manifest themselves, group members need to discuss the differences and still find a way to be respectful. Safety, cohesion, and universality are essential. Effective group counseling skills and group work interventions from a multicultural perspective have received little attention. Our book is an integration of what the literature recommends about multicultural counseling competencies and effective group work with what our 11 experts in both group work and multicultural counseling have shared with us in their cultural autobiographies and reactions to different group work scenarios. Based on the integration of group practice and current research and theory, we make the following suggestions:

1. Group Leaders must have an Awareness Of Different Cultural Worldviews And Their Impact Of Group Work Interventions

It is essential for group leaders to have a good understanding of the diversity of cultural worldviews, and their potential impact on relationships, behaviors, and willingness to participate in a therapeutic group work. The message clearly is that it is not essential to have researched every potential worldview and its implications for behavior, but more so the absolute importance of understanding as a group leader that each person approaches participation in a group from their own unique perspective.

Dyche and Zayas (1995) emphasized very eloquently the importance of cultural knowledge intertwined with understanding each group member as a unique individual: "A case might be made that the major benefit to therapists from the study of other cultures is less to understand their clients than to understand themselves. A thoughtful reading of cross-cultural literature can open therapists to the diversity of answers to life's universal questions, and arouse a curiosity that competes with their native ethnocentrism. In the end, the most important application of cultural theory to practice is self-discipline: never assume with a client; always inquire" (p. 391).

We suggested beginning the process of cultural exploration by figuring out who you were as a cultural person, what your cultural traditions are, and how they influence who you are as person. Part of the reason that we suggested this examination process is that most of us have been influenced by a variety of cultures and it is important to analyze how we have integrated these different experiences.

2. Groups Counselors must have an Awareness Of Their Personal Beliefs And Attitudes, Knowledge And Skills For Effective Group Work Practice

Our current use of group work is often based in Eurocentric models of counseling. In order to avoid imposing Eurocentric beliefs about counseling and your own cultural values onto group members, we suggest considering the following questions: What are your cultural beliefs related to relationships, healing, and mental health? What are your beliefs as mental health practitioners and group leaders related to relationships, healing, and mental health? And how much of those beliefs are influenced by and based on the Eurocentric perspective? The next step is to examine the similarities and differences between your own cultural and therapeutic beliefs, and potentially those of group members from other cultures.

3. Group Leaders Must Provide Culturally Relevant Group Work Interventions

The third area of emphasis is on the group leaders' ability to provide ethical and culturally relevant group leadership. Several things must be considered: What is the focus of the group? Psychoeducational, task, counseling, or therapeutic in nature? Are the goals culturally consonant with the cultural values of potential group members? Are similarities desirable among group members in terms of cultural background, problem, and experiences desired? Are there advantages to the group being homogeneous in terms of race or culture? If so, should levels of acculturation need to be attended to? The possible impact of different levels of racial identity development on willingness to participate in group and attainment of group goals must also be



Donigian/DeLucia-Waack Article Continued

examined. The content of the screening interviews needs to then be tailored to assess factors that may impact group member success and goals in a specific group.

The incorporation of traditional methods of healing and wellness into current group work practices is another way to utilize effective practices and integrate culture. Indigenous cultural specific healing methods and rituals have been used successfully for centuries. One bias group leaders may often overlook in themselves is the promotion of Western models of counseling over more indigenous healing methods.

4. Group Leaders must identify and address Specific topics and issues in multicultural groups.

The acknowledgement of group members' thoughts' and feelings. Each person's uniqueness within the group must be acknowledged. Some general suggestions to group leaders include:

Treat each group member as an individual.

Be aware of within group differences.

Consider the group members' level of acculturation.

Make no assumptions.

Learn about group members' culture from multiple sources.

Acknowledge that you and your members come to group with different perspectives and that all perspectives are valued.

Admit that sometimes you are ignorant and that you will ask questions to gain knowledge.

Be aware of multiple sources of oppression such as race, class, nation of origin, and gender.

Be aware of the differences in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to the concepts of respect and equality in different cultures.

The exploration of cultural values and worldviews on the definition of the problem and suggestions for change. Regardless of the specific type of group, population, or setting, all multicultural groups have three goals in common: (1) Help members conceptualize problems within a personal and conceptual concept so the plan of action can be formulated consistent with an individual's belief system. (2) Approach all events and behaviors in the group from a functional perspective. Individuals must examine the behavior in terms of how it helps them function in relationships. What would make their relationships better? The emphasis within the group must be on exploring cultural differences without assuming that one way of behaving is necessarily better than others. Each member's perspective must be valued or the group may function as a way to assimilate minority clients (Leong, 1992). Recognizing that directly communicating wants, needs, strengths and weaknesses is a Eurocentric value means that group leaders need to be creative in helping their group members communicate in a way in which they feel comfortable. Metaphors, narratives, and storytelling may all be useful techniques. (3) Help members make sense of new behaviors, beliefs, and skills within a cultural context. As members change and/or learn a new behavior, it must be examined within the cultural framework. What are the cultural implications for this changed and/or new behavior? Group leaders and members need to learn that they have choices; and that "to act inconsistently with their cultural values may not necessarily mean a denial of a unique cultural heritage. Some members may rationally choose to change their patterns of behavior because new behaviors better align with the kind of person they desire to be, and not necessarily because the changes merely conforming to the majority culture's codes" (Greeley et al., 1992; p. 207).

The importance of the group leader in modeling humanness and that people make mistakes. Group work helps people to learn relationship skills so that they can develop new relationships and enhance current relationships in their lives. The group leaders' role in this process is to model mediation, risk-taking, and communication skills; and to encourage members as well. Group leaders will make mistakes, will make assumptions, will ask members to do things that they do not want to do; and it is up to group leaders to model how to appropriately respond to challenges, take feedback, and make changes in their behavior as requested by group members.

Group leaders need not be afraid to raise the issue of racial and cultural differences. These differences are inherent in any group and must be addressed. Conflict and differences between people are key themes in



Donigian/DeLucia-Waack Article Continued

the transition stage of group. Members need to realize the importance of acknowledging differences between each other and the impact of differences on relationships within the group. Finally, group leaders need to model for members how to introduce and address the issue of cultural differences, and how to respond in a sensitive and open way.

Self-awareness as a multicultural person and a multiculturally sensitive group leader is the beginning of the journey toward competence as a multicultural group leader. We hope that this book will serve as a guide for fellow group leaders as they explore and appreciate multicultural differences and their impact on group work as they struggle with and try to reconcile who they are as persons and as group leaders in a multicultural world.

Brooks/Cole News

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- *Counseling Process with Children and Adolescents: Developing Your Clinical Style*, by **Deanna S. Pledge**
- *The Practice of Multicultural Group Work: Visions and Perspectives from the Field*, by **Janice L. DeLucia-Waack/Jeremiah Donigian**
- *Counseling Diverse Clients: Brining Context into Therapy*, by **Jeanne M. Slattery**
- *Clinical Supervision: What to Do and How to Do It*, by **Robert I. Cohen**
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- *Promoting Community Change: Making It Happen in the Real World*, 3/e by **Mark S. Homan**
- *Writing with Style: APA Style for Social Work*, 2/e by **Lenore T. Szuchman/Barbara Thomlison**
- *Social Work Practice and People of Color: A Process Stage Approach*, 5/e by **Doman Lum**
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We know that preparing for accreditation or re-accreditation requires an enormous amount of time, research, and resources to complete the process. In an effort to support this process, we have created this website to help you and your program access various resources.

Disclaimer: We did not ask CSWE to endorse this site. Our intention is just to provide you with easy access to Brooks/Cole information. We believe that a number of our books reflect content consistent with EPAS, but interpretation is obviously up to each program and site visitor.

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