
The Exploration of the Therapeutic Value of a Group Spiritual Direction Program with Mental Health Clients

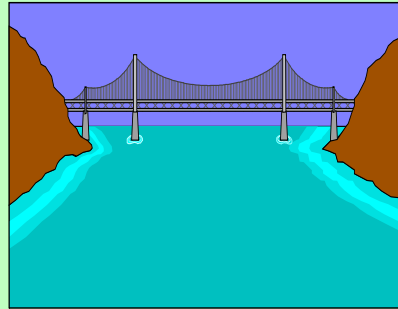
Dr. Peter Barnes
January 13th, 2009

Agenda

- An Overview
- Presentation: “Group Spiritual Direction for the Depressed: Theory and Experience”
- Group Spiritual Direction Session
- Discussion and Summary
- Evaluation

Bridge Construction

- Surveying
- Foundation
- Building - Mortar
- Bridge to New Life
- Testing
- Bridge - Strong and Solid



Surveying the Horizons

Themes:



Surveying the Landscape

- Ministry Perspective
- Theological Perspective
- Spirituality
- Spiritual Direction
- Depression
- Group Process

“God’s creativity stirs human creativity and imagination and empowers action in ministry, relationships in community, and interpretation of meaning.”

John Patton, Ministry to Theology: Pastoral Action and Reflection, 1990, p. 18

Ministry to the Depressed

“The needs of depressed persons are so intense that it inspires ministry which has to be creative and liberating.”

Peter Barnes, Group Spiritual Direction Program for Depressed Persons, 1998, p.10

“Ministry acknowledges the spiritual dimension of life and encourages people to make sense of their experiences, relationships and creation in general.”

Barnes, p. 15

Theological Perspective

Theologies	Biblical
Liberation Theology --> inclusivity --> empowerment	Isaiah 63: 7-10
Communal Theology --> community	Mark 10: 52
Ecumenical Theology --> universalism	John 4: 4 - 12
Theology of Hope --> hope	
Process Theology --> growth	
Incarnational Theology --> Group Spiritual Direction Experience	

Spirituality

“Spirituality is the specifically human capacity to experience, be conscious of, and relate to a dimension in the particularities of a given historical and social context, and leads towards action congruent with its meaning.”

Kenneth Leech, Spirituality and Pastoral Care, 1989, p. 55

“Spirituality consists of an experience and interpreted relationship among human beings and the mystery of creation.”

Gerald May, Will and the Spirit: A Contemplative Psychology, 1982, p. 23.

Spiritual Direction

“The arm of spiritual guidance becomes that of helping persons get the various parts of their life in tune with the larger mystery as it flows throughout the whole.”

Carolyn Gratton, *The Art of Spiritual Guidance*, 1995, p. 5

“At times the strength of spiritual community lies in the love of people who refrain from getting caught in the trap of trying to fix everything for us, who pray for us and allow us the pain of our wilderness, our wants, so that we might become more deeply grounded in God.”

Rose Mary Dougherty, *Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment*, 1995, p. 13

Depression

DEPRESSION

MILD

MODERATE

SEVERE

TESTS: 1. Beck Depression Inventory
2. Self-Rating Depression Scale

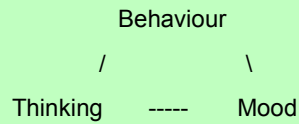
TREATMENT

Psychotherapy
Life-Style Change

Psychotherapy
Life-Style Change
Drug Therapy

Drug Therapy
Psychotherapy
Life-Style Change

Cognitive Therapy



“Cognitive therapy empowers depressed persons because they are taught to accept challenge or challenge their thinking.”

Peter Barnes, Group Spiritual Direction Program for Depressed Persons, 1998, p. 37

“His (David Burns) self-help book, The Feeling Good Handbook, teaches that changing the way we think will change the way we feel..”

Barnes, p. 36.

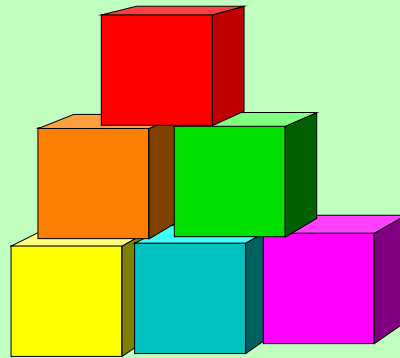
Group Process

“Kaplan and Saddock in Comprehensive Group Psychotherapy, (p. 185), contend that in the group experience, members receive support and useful input, feel potent and useful when they can offer help and are reassured to discover that others are suffering similar ailments.”

Peter Barnes, Group Spiritual Direction for Depressed Persons, 1998, p. 27.

The Foundation: The Building Blocks

- Treatment of Depression
- Group Spiritual Direction
- Transformative Learning



Transformative Learning

“In transformative learning, people are taught to revise their previous views through the practice of reflection.”

Peter Barnes, *Group Spiritual Direction Program for Depressed Persons*, 1998, p. 44.

“Reflective learning involves assessment or reassessment of assumptions, and reflective learning becomes transformative whenever assumptions or premise are found to be distorting, inauthentic, or otherwise, invalid.”
(Mezirow, 1991, p. 6)

Patricia Cranton, *Understanding and Promoting Transformative Learning*, 1994, p. 27.

Spiritual Direction Program - Description

- Sessions 1 and 2 - "Group Building". Getting Acquainted, Instruction in Journaling and Spiritual Direction and Story Telling.
- Sessions 3 to 5 - "Knowing Self"
- Sessions 6 to 10 - "Knowing God"
- Sessions 11 and 12 - "Termination Sessions"

Spiritual Mortar: Theological Perspectives

- Biblical Connection
- Theological Perspective
- Theologies Address Depression

"Whenever we offer acceptance, love, forgiveness, or a quiet word of hope, we offer health. When we share each other's burdens and joys, we become channels of healing"

Dr. Eric Ram, from Healing Community by Karin Granberg-Michaelson, 1991, page 7.

Testing the Structure

- Qualitative Analysis
- Themes
- Quantitative Analysis
- Results

The Bridge Strong and Solid - Conclusion

- Persons of God
- Community
- Self-Image
- Learning and Integration