

BOEKE/BOOKS

BECKER, Lily. Working with groups

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Reviewed by Herman Strydom

This valuable addition to the group work literature focuses on the integration of theory and practice of group work in the South African context. The communication network that is set up in groups, be it be conflict resolution groups, therapeutic groups or support groups, becomes a vital channel through which the work of the group is done. The important facet of group work practice, namely the interface between individuals, families, communities and the broader society, also receives attention in this book. The learning objectives formulated for every chapter give an indication of what can be expected in a particular chapter, and this can be regarded as an excellent way of adding to the scientific value of the book.

The book has been written with the following three aims in mind, namely:

- to inform practitioners and students on some depth insights of groups and group work practice,
- to promote group work as a valuable commodity in pursuing therapeutic and community goals, and
- to capture the essence of group work that is practised in South Africa today.

This handbook succeeds in rethinking group work practice in a fresh manner and contextualises groups and group work for application in the Third World, and especially the South African context. The discussion on community groups in the South African context forms a valuable addition to existing literature on group work. The chapters on groups and organisational life and the analysis of groups add to the contribution made by this book.

The application of group work in various settings in the South African situation can be regarded as excellent. In this respect special reference can be made of the chapters on group work in HIV and AIDS settings, young adolescents, single mothers, mental health, substance dependence and health settings. The book is concluded with a discussion on group work as a unifying language with the focus on a thematic analysis of the central principles and values of group work emerging from the text, such as connectedness, transformation, restoration, restitution and social healing as well as collective reflection, communality, mutuality and social action.

In the light of the above, this publication can be regarded as excellent and a valuable aid in the course of academic study and general practice.