GROUP APPLICATION OF A "CLOCK" METAPHOR AS A PSYCHO-EDUCATION TOOL

The objective is to have the group of participants appreciate how their feelings, thoughts, behaviors and reactions to others are interconnected. Moreover, have group members consider what and how these processes are in common and the implications for change. Group cohesion is the best predictor of treatment outcomes. The therapist should use a Socratic discovery-oriented approach when asking these questions.

The CLOCK metaphor has the following features

* 12 O'Clock refers to both External and Internal Triggers
* 3 O'Clock refers to Primary and Secondary Feelings
* 6 O'Clock refers to the Thinking Processes (Automatic thoughts and images, Habitual Thinking patterns, Beliefs and developmental schemas)
* 9 O'Clock refers to specific behaviors and reactions of others

Using this framework, the therapist can ask each of the various group members about their 12 O'Clock triggers (“What were the triggers that set them off?"; " What got each of them going?";

"What increased their levels of stress?")

The therapist can have the group members explore what, if anything, these various triggers have in COMMON across the various group members.

The therapist can then ask the group members discuss how did they FEEL in this situation or when this happened? Most important, the therapist can ask each member, "What, if anything, did they do with their feelings?")

In short, the therapist is helping the group member's view their feelings as a COMMODITY that they do something with. The therapist can then ask the group the following questions:

"If they do this with their feelings, then What is the IMPACT, What is the TOLL, What is the PRICE that they and others PAY? Is this what they want to have happen?"

If the members say, “I do NOT know", then the therapist can say, "I do NOT know either and how can WE go about finding out and how will finding out be helpful in your achieving your treatment/training goals?"

The therapist can now move onto the 6 O'Clock mode and have the group members consider what thoughts preceded, accompanied and followed the particular stressful incident and what is common and shared by the group members?

Finally, the therapist can have the group members share what they DID in this situation and how did others respond and, in turn, how did they respond? Once again, the therapist can have group members discuss what is similar and different on how they each behaved and how others reacted

At this point, the therapists can say, “It sounds to me that this is just a VICIOUS ......” without finishing the sentence, and let the group members complete the sentence with the words VICIOUS  .... CYCLE or CIRCLE..

Once again, if they are caught up in this "VICICOUS CYCLE ", as they each describe it, then "What is the IMPACT, What is the TOLL, What is the PRICE they and others PAY?

The therapist can help the group members gain insight (increased awareness) of how they inadvertently, unwittingly and, perhaps unknowingly, behave in ways that exacerbate their stress levels?

This will provide the basis to help the group members explore ways to BREAK THEIR VICIOUS CYLCES.

Moreover, the therapist can ask, "How are they presently each going about breaking this CYCLE, and if they are doing so in this manner, then what is the IMPACT, what is the TOLL, what is the PRICE they and others are paying?

The goal of this line of questioning is to have group members learn better, more adaptive and effective ways to BREAK THEIR CYCLES and how can group members help each other be of assistance (Use of BYSTANDER INTERVENTION)?

The therapist now helps group members learn how to use a variety of EXECUTIVE  FRONTAL LOBE

META-COGNITIVE VERBS (identify triggers, anticipate high risk situations ahead of time, notice,

catch, interrupt, use their plans and their back up plans, learn from any failures or setbacks, take

credit for behavioral changes they were able to perform).

Group members may require deliberate practice of intra- and interpersonal skills training (See the

description of Stress inoculation on the Melissa Institute Website, especially look at the Generalization

Guidelines on ways to increase the likelihood that group members will indeed use any of these skills.)

Finally, have group members can share what they did with the group and the therapist "WHAT THEY DID THEY EACH DO THAT WORKED?" Have them tell their story using the CLOCK metaphor and how they were able to create a VIRTUOUS CYCLE or CIRCLE.

What does this say about them as a person and their ability to cope with stressors in their lives?