Group Supervision: Process Description

Group supervision is the fuel that keeps strengths model practice alive and strong on a team level. The structure is designed to keep the team focused on generating creative strategies, rather than digressing into venting or rehashing of problems. Group supervision consists of six steps; each is distinct and critical to the success of the process. Each discussion of a client situation should take no more than 20-30 minutes so that four to five clients can be covered during a typical two-hour supervision.

Step 1: Hand Out Strengths Assessments – The presenting staff person makes copies of a strengths assessment for every team member and hands them out. The process will NOT work unless each team member has his or her own copy of the strengths assessment for the person being presented.

Step 2: What Do I Need? – The presenting staff person states very precisely what he or she needs from the team (i.e., I need ideas on how to engage with Mary; I need help on how to assist Joe to reach his goal, etc.). This keeps the provider and team focused on what is to be accomplished in this meeting.

Step 3: Thumbnail Sketch – The presenting staff person gives a brief description of the situation and a few things that have already been tried.

Step 4: Questions Only – For five to ten minutes the team asks questions of the staff person to further clarify things written on the strengths assessment. For example, "It says here that the grandmother is supportive. Tell me more about her role in the person's life." No advice can be given in this section, only questions based on the material in the strengths assessment.

Step 5: Brainstorming – For ten to fifteen minutes the team brainstorms ideas. The presenting staff person MUST write down every idea without speaking (i.e., no evaluation of the ideas or "yes, buts"). For example, "The client could ask the grandmother to call her every Saturday to see how she is doing." The list should include 20 to 40 ideas.

Step 6: Top Ideas – The presenting staff person reviews the ideas and identifies the three that are the most useful and asks for clarification on any ideas if necessary. Depending on the nature of the goal being reviewed, the provider may present the list to the client (at their next meeting) as possible strategies to help him or her reach the goal, or may choose two or three strategies he or she will try in order to make progress toward the goal.

MEETING PROCEDURE

1. What do you want from the group?

2. Strengths & assessment

3. What have you tried?

4. Questions

5. Brainstorming

6. PICK THE BEST