**AGPA Connect 2023 Presenter Information**

**Course Code:** 67 (Virtual)

**Course Title:** Fear of Falling Apart: Therapist Reactions to Group Member Terminations

**Course Times:** 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM

**Course Dates:** Saturday, March 11

**Instructors:** Alissa Kimmel

**Course Description:** This workshop will explore the following questions: How do we feel as a leader when a group member ‎leaves or contemplates leaving? How does our family history and social cultural identities impact the ‎way we experience changes in group composition? How might our countertransference reactions to ‎terminations be a goldmine of information about dynamics in our group? Through group process and ‎guided exercises, we will explore the therapist experience of different types of group terminations: ‎graduations, sudden departures, deaths etc.‎

**Learning Objectives**

The attendee will be able to:‎

1. ‎‎‎‎‎‎‎‎‎Analyze how family/personal/social history of the group therapist plays a role in group dynamics and ‎‎experiences of termination.‎
2. ‎Critically evaluate proposed differences between objective and subjective countertransference.‎
3. ‎Identify how power dynamics and sociocultural identities may color therapist experiences of and ‎‎group member communications about termination.‎
4. ‎Discuss the varied impact of termination on therapists and ways in which therapists’ relationship to ‎‎endings may interfere with their ability to help their group have "good goodbyes".‎

**Significant Articles:**

1. Cancelmo, J. A. (2019) Unconscious Communication in the Intersubjective Analytic Field at Times of ‎Separation, Loss, and Termination. Psychoanalytic Inquiry 39:198-212‎
2. Kantrowitz, J.L. (2014). Myths of Termination: What patients can teach psychoanalysts about endings ‎‎(1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315761534‎
3. Liegner, E. (2003). The Question of Termination in Modern Psychoanalysis. Mod. Psychoanal., ‎‎28(1):119-131‎
4. Ormont, L. (1992). What the therapist feels. In The group therapy experience (pp. 51-82). New York:‎
5. St. Martin’s Press.‎
6. Rosenthal, L. (2005). Castouts and Dropouts: Premature Termination in Group Analysis. Mod. ‎Psychoanal., 30B(2):40-53‎

**Agenda**

Introductions to topic, objectives, and each other (10 min)

Didactic portion on Modern Analytic model related to objective vs. subjective countertransference (Objective 1 lecture - Kimmell-10 min)

Guided Visualization exercise to explore past experiences of termination (Objective 3 - small group activity -25 min - Kimmell-)

Group process to reflect on exercise (Objective 2 - discussion - 35 min, - Kimmell-)

Explore current and impending client terminations (Objective 4 - case study and discussion - 25 min, - Kimmell)

Participant evals (10 min)

**Assessment Questions**

Question 1 (include possible answers)

Patient terminations should have little to no effect on the group leader. (T/F)

Correct Answer 1

False

Question 2 (include possible answers)

Does countertransference impact group therapist's experiences of group member termination? (sometimes/always/never)

Correct Answer 2

Always

Question 3 (include possible answers)

What factors can occlude therapists' clear sight of their group during times of termination? a. Power dynamics present in the group and society b. Sociocultural identity c. Therapist's own history of endings in their family of origin d. all of the above

Correct Answer 3

d

Question 4 (include possible answers)

Group therapists are (always/never/sometimes) trained to handle terminations.

Correct Answer 4

Sometimes

Question 5 (include possible answers)

A group member terminating: a. can be an important stage of group development b. are always a sign that person should not have been in group treatment. c. is always a failure on the therapist's part

Correct Answer 5

A

Question 6 (include possible answers)

In regarding their own history of endings in their family of origin, while running their groups therapists should A. Suppress those feelings so they don't interfere with their group interventions. B. Be aware of their own history so they can sort through what is theirs and what is the groups. C. Seek supervision and personal therapy. D. B and C

Correct Answer 6

D

Question 7 (include possible answers)

Being affected by a group member termination is always a sign that: A. The therapist has not had enough personal therapy B. The therapist has bad professional boundaries C. The therapist is a human

Correct Answer 7

C

Question 8 (include possible answers)

Possible sources of premature group member terminations include: A. Microaggressions without sufficient repair B. Inadequate mirroring or joining of important aspects of identity C. Cultural enactments that privilege some members internal life and comfort over others D. All of the above

Correct Answer 8

D

Question 9 (include possible answers)

When dealing with the aftermath of a premature termination following a sociocultural power dynamic enactment depending on their positionality, therapists may feel: A. Shame and guilt B. Narcissistic vulnerabiltiy C. Exposure around their own non-dominant identities D. All of the above

Correct Answer 9

D

Question 10 (include possible answers)

Family history of terminations can cause therapists who are facing a possible group member termination to: A. Overfunction B. Prematurely withdraw C. React with anger D. Feel abandoned E. all of the above depending on history

Correct Answer 10

E