

Module 5: Stages of Treatment

Based on material in Chapter 5 of
TIP 41, *Substance Abuse
Treatment: Group Therapy*



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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
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Module 5 Goal and Objectives

Goal:

Provide an overview of adjustments that can be made in the early, middle, and late stages.

Objectives:

- Discuss the importance of making adjustments.
- Explain the three stages of treatment.
- Describe the conditions of the early, middle, and late stages of treatment.
- Identify leadership characteristics in the early, middle, and late stages of treatment.

Three Stages of Treatment

- In the early stage of treatment, strategies focus on immediate concerns.
- In the middle stage of treatment, clients recognize that their substance abuse causes many problems and blocks them from getting the things they want.
- In the last stage of treatment, clients identify the treatment gains to be maintained and risks that remain.

Condition of Clients in Early Stage of Treatment

- Some enter treatment because of health problems.
- Others begin treatment because they are referred or mandated by the criminal justice system or others.
- Group members are often in extreme emotional turmoil.

Therapeutic Factors in Early Stage of Treatment

- Instilling hope
- Universality
- Imparting information
- Altruism
- Corrective recapitulation of the primary family group
- Developing socializing techniques
- Imitative behavior
- Interpersonal learning
- Group cohesiveness
- Catharsis
- Existential factors

Leaders in Early Stage of Treatment

- Stress that clients have some things in common.
- Are spontaneous and engaging.
- Are not overly charismatic.
- Focus on helping clients:
 - Achieve abstinence.
 - Prevent relapse.
 - Learn ways to manage cravings.

Condition of Clients in Middle Stage of Treatment

- Clients experience some stability.
- Self-knowledge and altruism can be emphasized.
- Emotions of anger, sadness, terror, and grief may be expressed more appropriately.
- Clients use the group to explore their emotional and interpersonal world.

Therapeutic Strategies in Middle Stage of Treatment

- Cognitive-behavioral interventions provide tools to modulate feelings and to express and explore them.
- Interpersonal groups are helpful.

Leaders in Middle Stage of Treatment

- Help members see how continued drug or alcohol use interferes with what they want out of life.
- Help clients join the culture of recovery.
- Support the process of change by drawing attention to positive developments.
- Assess the degree of structure and connection clients need as recovery progresses.

Condition of Clients in Late Stage of Treatment

- Clients work to sustain the achievements of previous stages.
- Clients may discover and acknowledge that some goals are unrealistic, certain strategies are ineffective, and environments deemed safe are not conducive to recovery.
- Significant underlying issues emerge (e.g., poor self-image, relationship problems, shame, past trauma).

Therapeutic Strategies in Late Stage of Treatment

- The focus of group interaction broadens.
- A process-oriented group may become appropriate for some clients who can confront painful realities.
- The group can be used to settle difficult and painful old business.

Leaders in Late Stage of Treatment

- The leader shifts toward interventions that call on clients to take a clear-headed look at their inner world and system of defenses.
- Late-stage interventions permit more intense exchanges.
- The leader allows clients to experience enough anxiety and frustration to identify destructive and maladaptive patterns.