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The Views of Rhode Island Junior and Senior High School Directors of Guidance Regarding Group Counseling

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THE VIEWS OF RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR
AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE REGARDING
GROUP COUNSELING

BY

ANN MARIE NUNES

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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1965

Abstract

Guidance directors in the junior and senior high schools of Rhode Island were surveyed regarding group counseling as an integral part of a complete guidance program. Items in the questionnaire dealt with barriers to, topics for, and basic issues in group counseling. Fifty-six responses were obtained from thirty-four high school and twenty-two junior high school directors of guidance, 73.7 percent of the total population.

The respondents considered most important for the innovation of group counseling, a willingness of counselors to initiate group counseling programs and that they obtain the additional professional training necessary for competence in the use of this method. The directors also felt that a reduction in counselor load was necessary to free time for engaging in group counseling. The understanding and support of school administration was stressed. An essential condition for developing the program was the voluntary participation of students.

Having emphasized the importance of identifying the problem areas adaptable to group counseling, the directors were concerned with the critical "drop-out" problem as well as with apathy of students toward academic work, a lack of concentration on schoolwork, violation of community laws, and the impact of pressures caused by accelerated courses. Topics of a social-personal nature, as "sexual morality among adolescents" and "teacher-pupil personality conflicts," resulted in strong ambivalence.

Group counseling was almost unanimously considered to be an essential part of a complete guidance program; however, there was no evidence that any such programs were in operation in the schools. The concept that group counseling might be used as a means of saving time by serving more students was rejected.

Recommendations were developed concerning the role of the counselor in initiating group counseling programs. Considered most important to the establishment of group counseling was the relating of a general understanding of the program by counselors to students, administrators, teachers, and parents. Colleges and universities might provide more opportunities for training counselors in group counseling procedures and practices, assisting the counselors in demonstrating professional proficiency in the endeavor of improving guidance programs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I

THE PROBLEM

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this thesis was to determine the conditions supporting or inhibiting the establishment of group counseling as an integral part of a total guidance program in the secondary schools of the State of Rhode Island.

Three sections of a survey questionnaire were considered of major importance and were explored in the review of literature, as well as being compiled in the presentation of data. These problems are, the conditions that are of importance to the establishment of group counseling programs, the topics most appropriate to the group counseling approach, and certain critical issues related to current philosophies in group counseling.

The first attempted to prescribe some of the necessary requirements basic to the successful introduction of group counseling to guidance programs. Discussion includes the purposes of group counseling, the establishment of a program based on the needs of the school, the role of the counselor and his plans for a successful beginning, the involvement of administrators, teachers, parents and students, and the importance of each of these to the development of such a program.

The types of problems most appropriate for beginning a group counseling program, if it is to be successful, and the types of problems most conducive to group counseling once the program is established was next discussed.

For many years teachers have been working with groups of students in such situations as activities in geography class, brass section solos in band, first string plays in football, group exhibitions at science fairs, and other combinations which cover almost every other subject in the secondary school curriculum. Guidance workers have found that junior and senior high school students are often confronted with some of the same problems and decisions. Recently a group of twenty high school students were asked to briefly jot down some thoughts or questions they would like to discuss with their peers or with a guidance counselor.

Indicative of the breadth and value of problems that might be caused are responses of twenty juniors in high school:

"I can't go into the occupation I want because my marks are not good enough and now I think I took the wrong course."

"I find it hard to agree with anything my parents have to say."

"How do you (meaning "does one") get along with your (one's) sister?"

"When or in what grade should you have all your plans made about college?"

"Is secretarial work going out of date?"

"Should girls and boys go steady or not?"

"How do you politely refuse a date?"

"If I depend too much upon the suggestions and decisions of others, how can I become an individualist?"

"I don't know if I should get married after high school, or go to hairdressing school."

"The decision of which gown to buy."

"I have to decide whether I want to work as a hairdresser or to work as a secretary."

"Is it hard to find a job after high school?"

Some of these problems suggest certain categories of topics worthy of consideration for group counseling because, however minute they may appear on the surface, they occupy much time in the thoughts of high school students and if left in abeyance might possibly cause academic failure, social discomfort, unrewarding employment, poor attitudes, and other unsatisfactory results in life.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Rapidly changing times have resulted in new and better methods of learning brought about by remodeling and adding to old, traditional methods and the use of some wholly new methods. Experimentation in the science field and other fields has encouraged creative learning procedures in the schools. Public agencies and private industry are seeking to employ specially educated people in most of the well-known professions and occupations as well as in many newly created fields of specialization. Many talented, as well as those not so fortunately endowed, are finding themselves lost in the shuffle of matching their talents and abilities with their goals. Some are fortunate enough to be helped by trained guidance personnel, rehabilitation and social workers and state employment agents.

In our traditional educational system it is impossible to compartmentalize various phases of an individual's growth. Problems of a personal nature often inhibit the quality of learning in the classroom as well as decisions regarding vocational choice. The purpose of counseling is to alleviate some of the anxieties that result. Because many students find themselves with similar concerns in learning and decision making and sometimes turn to their peers for help, it would seem natural that group counseling would have its place in guidance programs.

Warters suggests:

. . . many counselors have found that working in small groups with students who show similar symptoms of maladjustment (truancy, underachieving in school work, excessive restlessness in class, belligerency, etc.) may prove far more effective than working with them individually.¹

¹Jane Warters, Group Guidance Principles and Practices (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), p. 171.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

For the purposes of this thesis the following definitions will be used:

Group counseling. The term group counseling, used synonymously with multiple counseling, is the voluntary coming together of about six to eight students for the purposes of sharing common concerns for educational, vocational, and personal development and is generally employed with normal persons.

Group guidance. The procedure used in group guidance usually is to structure an involuntary group of more than fifteen students, as in a classroom of students or a number of classrooms with as many as fifty to one hundred or more. Generally, its purpose is for information giving for occupational or vocational purposes.

Group psychotherapy. This term is more psychiatrically oriented and involves intensive work with neurotic and/or psychotic personalities.

II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Certain literature dealing with current theories and practices of group counseling has been reviewed. Much of this literature deals with patterns in establishing group counseling programs. Although an abundance of literature in group counseling is not readily available, a sufficient number of books have been written which suggest methods, procedures, and factors helpful in the establishment of a group counseling program.

Some basic principles in the development of a group counseling program are set forth as Mahler cites Gilbert:

1. Each school needs to develop its own group counseling program.
2. Teachers need to be active in and concerned with the group counseling program.
3. It is important that the people concerned with the school develop an understanding of the purposes and methods of group counseling.
4. Group counseling is vitally concerned with changing attitudes.

5. Good relations between the group counselor and those with whom he works is basic to his success.

6. A group counseling program develops slowly.¹

A possible reason for the limited writing in this field might be that counseling has been defined as a one-to-one relationship; and because most subscribe to this concept, it is not generally believed that counseling can be done with groups.

Kemp feels that group counseling is probably meeting opposition without opportunity:

Preoccupation with the problem of whether or not group counseling should be considered counseling appears to have interfered with the evaluation of its usefulness.²

Counseling Objectives

Some objectives of counseling whether individual or group are to help the individual evaluate himself, learn to make wise choices, and show growth in assuming responsibility, thus resulting in a change of attitude or behavior. An objective of group counseling is to help each group member

¹Clarence A. Mahler and Edson Gates, Group Counseling in Secondary Schools (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1961), pp. 33-36.

²C. Gratton Kemp, Perspectives on the Group Process (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964), p. 141.

make his own decisions in a group setting and as a result of being a group member. In clarifying the purposes of group counseling one might turn to Warters:

Group counseling is not individual counseling applied to groups, although it is a group method designed to help individuals with problems--the normal emotional problems of everyday living, as well as severe or serious problems. It is a planned, not an incidental, process that includes, among other things, identification with, analysis by, and support from the group. It involves permissiveness, protection, privileged communication, and changes in personality and behavior that take place more rapidly in group counseling than in life in general.³

The purpose of group counseling is not to replace individual counseling or group guidance or any other phase of a guidance program, but rather, to answer the cry of students, who, in the chaos of secondary school classes and other activities, are in need of friends, a place, time, and counselor to express some of their principal concerns. Not only adolescents, but people of all ages are in need of others who are willing and able to share ideas, feelings and solutions to common everyday problems as well as those of a more serious nature.

Warters describes the similar objectives of group and individual counseling:

³Warters, op. cit., p. 170.

The purposes or objectives in group counseling differ little from those in individual-centered counseling. They are, in general, to help the counselees to achieve increased maturity in terms of integration, acceptance of reality, happiness, sociality, realistic goals, adaptability, and responsibility for self. Group counseling is intended to help participants appraise themselves so that they may gain self-understanding, achieve a broad perspective of themselves in relation to others, and acquire insight into social factors affecting personality development. It is directed toward helping the group members gain release from feelings of frustration, anxiety, and guilt so that they may attain objective acceptance of their thoughts, feelings, and impulses.⁴

While it is true that all members will not benefit equally, each has an opportunity to develop social skills, self-confidence, and relief from other pressures bringing him closer to his own goal. It is important, therefore, to consider some of the advantages group counseling offers individuals in a therapeutic manner that individual counseling does not.

Warters best describes this in the following:

In group counseling individuals explore and analyze their problems together so that they may understand them better, learn to cope with them, and learn to make valid choices and decisions. The group experience helps them to feel closer to others, to find and give emotional support, and to understand and accept themselves and others. There is no group goal; there are only individual goals. Even so, feelings of common direction and singleness of purpose develop as group cohesiveness develops.⁵

⁴Warters, op. cit., p. 173.

⁵Ibid.

Warters concludes:

Not all group members profit to the same degree. Some may gain relatively little insight regarding the nature of their difficulties and little understanding of themselves; but they may gain an increase in self-confidence, an improvement in social skills, and a reduction in tensions. These are not unimportant gains.⁶

Some authors agree that a combination of group counseling and individual counseling may be effective but not always necessary. However, even a highly skilled and experienced counselor may wish to interview each group member sometime before the group meets in its first session. This may help him to foresee some of the individual needs of each.

Warters describes the value of the interview:

Probably the most frequently used induction procedure is a private interview with each member prior to group assignment. The initial interview gives the counselor an opportunity to establish identification with the member so that feelings of respect, acceptance, and assurance may be experienced from the start.⁷

Sometimes group and individual counseling may complement each other, as a member may wish to counsel more fully with the group leader or counselor in the one-to-one relationship. Group counseling sometimes offers an opportunity to reinforce individual counseling, thus the one-to-one relationship

⁶Warters, op. cit., pp. 173-4.

⁷Warters, op. cit., p. 182.

becomes more meaningful. Likewise, some situations undoubtedly lend themselves to individual counseling more naturally than group counseling. Conversely, group counseling may be the process most beneficial to an individual because of the nature of his particular problem. Glanz suggests as the counselor's role:

The need is to determine differentially the problems or issues that may be handled by individual methods and those to be served through group procedures.⁸

Group counseling as compared with individual counseling has some of its own characteristics. The group members share a common concern, however, not necessarily for the same reasons; but all members share in the thinking of the group. The counselor provides a permissive atmosphere but functions from within the group as its leader.

Similarities between group and individual counseling are found in the "counseling" part of the term. Like individual counseling, group counseling procedure is determined by the counselor or group leader who may use directive or non-directive methods of counseling.

⁸Edward C. Glanz, Groups in Guidance (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1962), p. 296.

Warters compares these counseling methods as well as recommending counselor functions:

Group-counseling methods, like those of individual counseling, may be grouped along a continuum between the extremes of directive or leader-centered counseling and non-directive or group centered counseling. Most of the counseling offered in schools and colleges probably falls within the middle area. In directive counseling the emphasis is upon rational solution of problems. The counselor assumes major responsibility for appraising the problem situation, recommending solutions, and planning application of his suggestions. He plays a highly active role, directing the group's thinking by asking questions, giving information, diagnosing, interpreting, explaining, and advising.⁹

Small groups of about two or three to eight or ten are preferable because in large groups some members become listeners and the "talking out" theory as in one-to-one counseling holds true in group counseling if members are to be relieved of feelings of anxiety, guilt, frustrations and other feelings that bring on tensions and create emotional and health problems. In small groups, members are able to learn to know each other, feel a closeness or cohesiveness, give each other emotional support in exploring their problems, understand their basic reasons or motivations for their attitudes and finally achieve the ability to accept themselves and others.

⁹Warters, op. cit., p. 223.

Establishment of Group Counseling

Group counseling programs, as with probably any other program, educational or otherwise, should be established on the basis of need. The main function of the secondary school is to provide for the needs of the members of the community in which it is located. A good guidance program provides for the emotional, personal, vocational, and educational development of the student. These four phases of development are woven into the individual personality and all too often the growth is stunted by the demands of society itself.

It is because of this that we should again consider Warters's suggestions:

The schools are established to serve, not as clinics, but as society's special agency for providing instruction and guidance to all boys and girls, the vast majority of whom, let us hope, are normal. Hence, in school counseling programs the major objective is to aid good development. With respect to maladjustment the chief (but not only) objective is to prevent it by helping to keep normal boys and girls normal.¹⁰

and

Group-centered counseling is focused upon personality integration and growth rather than the solution of particular problems. The emphasis is upon the emotional rather than the intellectual aspects of understanding.¹¹

¹⁰Warters, op. cit., p. 171.

¹¹Warters, op. cit., pp. 223-4.

Consideration should be given to the ways and means of introducing a group counseling program. Basically it should develop out of need, when the need is evident, as if a certain number of students are continually truant and are willing to participate. Then it should continue steadily but probably slowly as Mahler advises:

No program springs into full bloom overnight. Most group counseling projects should begin with one, two, or three exploratory groups. This is better than trying to leap into a program involving thirty groups totaling three hundred youth in a particular school or grade level. Even when new programs are patterned after well-established, successful group counseling plans in other schools, it is still advisable to bring one's own progress along slowly.¹²

Mahler's forewarning can apply to the introduction of a group counseling program:

Many a good project has failed, not because it was not an improvement over existing practices but because the timing and methods of introducing it were poorly conceived.¹³

Sadly enough, all too often guidance personnel have a tendency to wait and follow the dictates and requests of administrators and too readily appear to perform menial tasks, such as clerical duties, which are often demanded of them. They, unfortunately, have a tendency to use such excuses as

¹²Mahler, loc. cit.

¹³Mahler, loc. cit.

lack of time, insufficient monies, and, as has been the tradition with some teachers, they fear the responsibility involved with initiating new and better concepts in education. While it is true that the philosophy of education held by administrators and boards of education determines to a degree what guidance directors can do in developing programs, it is more than likely that much more can be done if a guidance counselor is willing to present proposals of programs to the board of education, administrators, and department heads for review at such times when these groups may meet and after a time for study of the data has been allowed. The personal contact here is a necessity for clarification of purposes.

Mahler suggests a method of showing the value of group counseling to administrators:

One of the best ways of establishing and broadening the guidance function in the high school is to have counselors who are alert to the problems faced by both teachers and administrators, and who then design methods of alleviating the behavior problems of these youngsters.¹⁴

The Role of the Counselor

The term "guidance oriented" has often been used to describe whether or not a particular school or school system has and efficiently uses all guidance and counseling

¹⁴Mahler, op. cit., p. 37.

possibilities. All too often the administration is "blamed" if it has not, when the actual causes may stem from the under-oriented counseling staff.

Typical graduate programs in guidance and counseling offer a variety of courses in various guidance services. Many programs offer a smattering of courses in administration of guidance services, vocational information, group procedures, testing and counseling techniques; however, intensive study on the graduate level should be provided to eliminate uneasiness of counselors in establishing adequate services to include group counseling. Some authors feel, as Mahler, that counselors avoid actual counseling situations because they are not adept in this area:

Small group counseling, for two to ten class members, is to be chosen mainly on the basis of the relative seriousness of the problem area that concerns the students selected. This factor alone requires that the counselor be better trained in handling emotional feelings and in helping youth learn more effective methods of solving their developmental problems. In a small group the members will more often test the limits of acceptable group conduct, and a counselor must have the skill and knowledge to handle such situations.¹⁵

With this training, counselors might be willing to spend more time with students by using counseling methods in guidance of an educational, social, and vocational nature.

¹⁵Mahler, op. cit., p. 62.

The secondary school counselor is the educator in a position to be most cognizant of the fact that personal problems can interfere with the quality of learning in the classroom as well as decisions concerning vocational choice. The counselor's role then, however indirect it may seem, is to alleviate personal anxiety and to assist in facilitating self-direction. This very important role requires different methods than those usually associated with the teacher-class or teacher-student relationship. Mahler believes the role of the counselor to be:

Counselors for the more difficult student groups must be warm and accepting in nature if they are to be effective. At the same time, the counselor must not be weak and over-permissive. Passivity, however, should not be confused with permissiveness. The very passive counselor is not truly permissive if he is afraid of entering more actively into an interpersonal relationship. A deep, growing faith in the ability of a student to work things out for himself, regardless of how ineffective his behavior may be at the time, seems to be more significant in building helpful relationships than any particular technique.¹⁶

The role of the group counselor or leader bears many similarities to those of the counselor of individuals; however, his role is on somewhat of a continuum with all members of the group as he is aware of the individual within the group.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Warters further maintains:

A chief function of the group counselor is to help the group establish a friendly atmosphere in which the members can explore problems and relationships. Through his calmness and consistency, impartial interest and objectivity, permissiveness and acceptance, confidence and respect of the leader helps the members to feel comfortable with one another and thereby helps to strengthen member-member relations. He shows confidence in the group's capacity to direct itself by relinquishing to it such leadership responsibilities as information giving, clarifying, summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting.

Again one might turn to Warters as she describes the role of the group counselor as somewhat eclectic:

The counselor does not dominate the group, but neither is he a passive onlooker. He participates actively by listening attentively, conveying understanding and acceptance; at times by offering clarification or synthesis of the feelings expressed; by helping a member to express his feelings; and by asking questions to help the group understand what a member is trying to express.¹⁸

Basically, it is necessary that any new idea or product have a market or buyer. It is, therefore, necessary that new programs in education, especially guidance programs because guidance is relatively new in some educational systems, be "sold" to the administration responsible for sound curriculum and facilities in local communities.

¹⁷Warters, op. cit., p. 222.

¹⁸Warters, op. cit., p. 223.

Values must be discussed because of the nature involved in such programs. Consequently, competent, skilled, experienced and confident guidance personnel must be prepared to use vision and tact as well as diligence in demonstrating to administrators the practicality of a creative guidance program to include group counseling. However, as Mahler feels, other factors concerning administrative proficiency should be present:

A part of the school climate that is particularly important in promoting a group counseling program is the extent of administrative readiness for such an innovation. The administrator should have shown an interest in trying out new and better ways of helping youth. He should have shown a good degree of resistance to undue community pressure. In addition, his attitude toward youth is of vital importance. If an administrator is basically afraid of the behavior of youth, he is likely to be easily upset by reports of group counseling sessions in which students were allowed to talk about teachers.¹⁹

The cooperation, understanding and assistance of teachers is invaluable to the group counselor. Teachers know their students. Educationally, they often know more about them than do their parents. Because they are imparting knowledge to a group and have the opportunity on a day-to-day basis to watch the growth of the individual closely and are able to

¹⁹Mahler, op. cit., p. 33.

tell what he is not doing as well as what he probably should be doing to improve, teachers can be most informative in clarifying possible causes of problems. The counselor's role is to facilitate learning by counseling, either individually with the student or in a group setting.

The ultimate success of any educational program probably rests on the desires of the participants or students for its continuance. Students readily admit that they need to improve study habits, have to work with their hands, are ready for college, are offered nothing practical by the school--they could be correct in these admissions. If, however, the school provides for their needs, they will have no sound reason to justify their dropping out of school, failing to meet course requirements because of lack of interest, or decide on other unsatisfactory solutions to their problems. Teachers, counselors, and teacher-counselors in group situations can discover students who need to be invited or encouraged to participate in group counseling sessions.

It is therefore necessary that students in a group counseling program be selected carefully, for the results of this initial group may mean the success of the total program. It is probably better, as Mahler believes, to start with groups of students who have an educational and vocational orientation

or with those who are giving minor trouble and gradually build with counselor competency:

If a school is beginning a group counseling program and all the counselors have had training in counseling techniques but have not had actual experience in group counseling, it is very important that the selection of the youngsters to participate in the groups be made carefully. It is recommended that those selected be students who are most likely to profit from a discussion of the problem that confronts them.²⁰

and -

The more difficult cases, which involve rather deep personal and cultural conflicts, should not be attempted until the counselors are prepared to handle group counseling competently and the school administration is prepared to accept responsibility for such problem children.²¹

A trained counselor who is aware of the possibilities of group counseling will be alert to recognize situations arising in the secondary school which will easily lend themselves to this type of learning. Sometimes a counselor will be confronted with three or four students who wish, for example, to drop out of school and in individual one-to-one counseling sessions with these students he finds their attitudes toward school more and more unfavorable. If, as in most high schools, postgraduate students and/or dropouts returned to school are

²⁰ Mahler, op. cit., p. 37.

²¹ Ibid.

willing to join in a group counseling section with these potential dropouts, more may readily be learned from this experience than in individual counseling.

Topic Appropriateness

Mahoney and Engle in their book Points for Decision felt that the following topics present themselves often enough to discuss each in a separate chapter: getting along with the crowd, relations at home, boy-girl relations, choosing a vocation, learning about jobs, health, delinquency, getting and holding a job, continuing education after high school, entering the armed forces, in-school problems and some personal problems as with feelings of inferiority and frustration. These chapter headings seem to be of general concern to junior and senior high school students and might be appropriate in beginning a group counseling program.²²

²²Harold J. Mahoney and T. L. Engle, Points for Decision (New York: World Book Company, 1957).

III

PROCEDURE OF INVESTIGATION

A questionnaire (pages 28-30), in three parts, was devised and mailed with a covering letter (page 31) to seventy-six directors of guidance of all the junior and senior high schools in the State of Rhode Island. It was entitled "Survey of Group Counseling in Guidance Programs." Information requested at the top of the first page of the questionnaire included the name of the school, the name of the director of guidance, the number of full-time and part-time counselors and the number of students in the school. The purpose of this request was to estimate whether or not similar replies would be returned from school directors working with about the same number of students per counselor, whether city school counselors had similar points of view, and the like; this information has some significance to the total reply of the questionnaire.

Section A listed sixteen items, each describing a condition or factor deemed necessary or practicable to the establishment of a group counseling program by leading authorities of guidance. Six of the items concerned the counselor--his role in establishing the program, his readiness and

preparation, his current duties as a counselor, including his schedule. Some of the other items indirectly involve the counselor. Three of the items involved the participation of others in the programs--teachers, administrators and parents. Six items concerned the philosophy and theory of group counseling, the physical factors such as availability of rooms, and the structures of the program itself.

Along side the list of sixteen items, a columned box was drawn to allow the directors to rate the items by placing a check mark in one of five columns. A weighted scoring system was devised to rank the factors. A rating of four was given to the total at each item considered G (great importance), three to C (considerable importance), two to S (some importance), one to L (little importance), and zero to N (no importance). In order to obtain a final score, the rating figure was multiplied by the total at each item. The final score determined the order of importance of each item or factor.

Topic items were listed in Section B on page two of the questionnaire. These topics might be generalized as concerning vocational and educational problems, health problems, personal problems and discipline problems. The directors were asked to rate the topics to five degrees of appropriateness--H (highly appropriate), G (generally appropriate), S (somewhat appropriate), Q (quite inappropriate), and C (completely inappropriate). A table similar to that of Section A was provided.

Because the heading "completely inappropriate" relates a totally negative consideration, a weighting of zero was assigned to this category, and "quite inappropriate" became one, "somewhat appropriate" became two, "generally appropriate" became three, and "highly appropriate" became four. As in the same manner of procedure in Section A, the rating figure was multiplied by the total at each item, and the final score determined the order of importance of each topic item.

In the third section of the questionnaire, Section C, five statements relating to basic issues in the establishment of group counseling were presented. Space was provided for additional comments. The directors were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with these statements in the following manner: F (fully agree), G (generally agree), U (undecided), M (moderately disagree), and S (strongly disagree). In order to determine a weighted score in this Section, it was necessary to assign zero to "undecided," and a plus one to "generally agree," plus two to "fully agree," minus one to "moderately disagree," and minus two to "strongly disagree;" the total of the minus side was then subtracted from the total of the plus side.

Final results of this survey are shown in table form in the Presentation of Data and in the Appendix of this thesis.

Preferences to receive the results of the survey were

indicated by encircling either "yes" or "no" at the end of page three and by filling in on the lines provided the correct mailing address of the participant.

On November 27, 1964 the questionnaire and covering letter were mailed to seventy-two directors of guidance of the junior and senior high schools of the State of Rhode Island. The names of the directors were found in the 1963-1964 edition of the "Directory of Guidance Counselors" published by the Rhode Island State Department of Education. Four more names were added to the list when the 1964-1965 edition was received on December 18, and a letter and questionnaire were mailed to each, thus bringing the total to seventy-six participants.

Postal card reminders were mailed to forty-two directors from whom no reply had been received by January 2, 1965.

A letter and another questionnaire were mailed to thirty-one directors who had not replied by January 22, 1965.

School _____ Director of Guidance _____

Number of Counselors: Full time _____ Part time _____ Number of Students _____

Section A

Please indicate by a check mark in the proper column how important you think the following factors are to the establishment of group counseling in a guidance program. Key: G - Great importance, C - Considerable importance, S - Some importance, L - Little importance, N - No importance.

	G	C	S	L	N
1. Identification of problem areas which are adaptable to group counseling.					
2. Availability of counselors on the staff who are professionally trained in group counseling principles and practices.					
3. Understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.					
4. Willingness of counselors on the staff to engage in group counseling.					
5. Ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions.					
6. Readiness of counselors to accept the decisions of small groups of students.					
7. Understanding and cooperation of parents.					
8. Flexibility of schedules to enable counselors to form group counseling units.					
9. A reasonable counselor - counselee ratio to permit the establishment of small groups when needed.					
10. Understanding and voluntary participation of students.					
11. Physical facilities appropriate for small group sessions.					
12. A philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students.					
13. Freeing of counselor time from clerical routines.					
14. Understanding and support of the administration.					
15. Necessity for the slow and steady development of a group counseling program.					
16. Ability of adolescents to evaluate their own life situations.					
Other factors not mentioned above:					

Section B

Please specify by a check mark in the proper column to the right the extent to which each topic seems to you to be appropriate for group counseling.

Key: H - Highly appropriate, G - Generally appropriate, S - Somewhat appropriate, Q - Quite inappropriate, C - Completely inappropriate.

1. College entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships.
2. The breakdown of family communications.
3. Destruction of school property by students.
4. Pressures of the accelerated program.
5. Why students drop out of school.
6. Effects of smoking upon health.
7. The socially rejected student.
8. Teacher-pupil personality conflicts.
9. Using good grooming habits.
10. Part- and full-time job opportunities.
11. Sexual morality among adolescents.
12. Failure to comply with school rules.
13. Inability to concentrate on studies.
14. Failure to comply with class procedures.
15. Violation of community laws by students.
16. Choosing a vocation.
17. Lack of interest in academic work.

Other topics:

	H	G	S	Q	C
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					

Please indicate by a check mark in the proper column to the right the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

Key: F - Fully agree, G - Generally agree, U - Uncertain, M - Moderately disagree, S - Strongly disagree.

1. Group counseling is an essential part of a complete secondary school guidance program.

	F	G	U	M	S
1.					

Comments: _____

2. The same principles of the helping relationship apply equally to group and individual counseling.

	F	G	U	M	S
2.					

Comments: _____

3. Some problems and concerns of adolescents are more appropriate for group counseling than for individual counseling.

	F	G	U	M	S
3.					

Comments: _____

4. Group counseling is more valuable than individual counseling because more people can be served in the limited time available.

	F	G	U	M	S
4.					

Comments: _____

5. In a competently conducted group counseling session the interaction and involvement of participants can be more productive in producing attitudinal and behavioral changes than individual counseling.

	F	G	U	M	S
5.					

Comments: _____

Please indicate your desire to receive the results of this survey by encircling either yes or no.

Yes

No

Send results to: _____

73 Church Street
Bristol, Rhode Island
November 27, 1964

This letter is being sent to you as one of the directors of guidance in the Rhode Island public schools. Its purpose is to enlist your help in a study of group counseling which I am making as a graduate student at the University of Rhode Island.

We are interested in finding out what the guidance directors of Rhode Island think about the proper function of group counseling with junior high and senior high school students. It would be gratefully appreciated if you could take the time to respond to the items on this questionnaire.

A statement of guidelines for the future development of group counseling will be compiled from the results of this survey. This is available to all participating schools. Please indicate your desire for this follow-up information by checking on page three of the questionnaire.

Thank you for your kind assistance in helping to make the results of this study possible. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience. I would appreciate your responding within the next ten days.

Very truly yours,

(Miss) Ann Marie Nunes
Guidance Counselor
Westerly Senior High School

Enclosures: 3

P. S. -- Group counseling, as distinct from group guidance, is the voluntary coming together of six to eight students for the purposes of sharing common concerns for educational, vocational and personal development. Group counseling, sometimes used synonymously with multiple counseling, is generally employed with normal persons. Group psychotherapy, a more medically oriented term, involves intensive work with neurotic or psychotic personalities.

IV

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The data presented in this chapter, and used in the tabulation of tables, were compiled from the return of fifty-six questionnaires (73.7 percent) from seventy-six mailed to all directors, department heads or administrators responsible for guidance programs in the junior and senior high schools in the State of Rhode Island. Of these returns thirty-four were from senior high school directors and twenty-two from junior high school directors. Of the fifty-six questionnaires one was partially filled out. An additional four questionnaires were returned blank.

The returns after the first mailing totaled thirty-five; eleven more were received once postal card reminders were mailed; and the final ten were received when the final letter and additional questionnaire were mailed.

Shown in this chapter are certain tables derived from the tabulation of the results of the questionnaire. Descriptions and comparisons of these tables follow.

Table 1 (page 34) showing six factors considered to be of most importance to the establishment of group counseling by fifty-six directors of guidance of the Rhode Island junior and senior high schools lists the factors in rank order. Three

of the six ranked in fourth place. If one were to consider similarities in these six factors, one might find that all contain an element thought by some educators to be the work or role of the counseling and guidance staff. They believe it is the counselor who should engage himself in counseling activities, who should inform and involve administrators of and in their program, who should be willing to become better educators by seeking the necessary professional training, who should make group counseling opportunities available to students by becoming alert to the needs of students.

It is interesting to note that forty-six directors felt that it was of great importance that counselors be willing to engage in group counseling and that thirty-four felt the "understanding and voluntary participation of students" as important. In reference to the review of literature concerning the orientation and philosophies of administrators toward guidance, one might also consider that forty-four directors placed great weight on "the understanding and cooperation of the administration" in public secondary schools; ten others weighted it of considerable importance and no one regarded this factor of no importance.

TABLE 1

FACTORS CONSIDERED OF MOST IMPORTANCE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY FIFTY-SIX DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		G	C	S	L	N		
1	Willingness of counselors on the staff to engage in group counseling.	46	8	2	0	1	57*	212
2	Understanding and cooperation of administration.	44	10	1	1	0	56	209
3	Availability of counselors on the staff who are professionally trained in group counseling principles and practices.	43	7	3	2	1	56	201
4	A reasonable counselor-counselee ratio to permit the establishment of small groups when needed.	34	14	5	1	0	54*	189
4	Understanding and voluntary participation of students.	34	14	4	3	0	55*	189
4	Identification of problem areas which are adaptable to group counseling.	31	16	8	1	0	56	189

Key: G weighted 4 = of great importance; C weighted 3 = of considerable importance;
S weighted 2 = of some importance; L weighted 1 = of little importance;
N weighted 0 = of no importance.

*One respondent chose to mark both great importance and some importance; others chose not to react to certain factors.

A separation of Table 1 was drawn comprising the distribution of response of the senior high directors (Table 2, page 36) from the response of junior high directors (Table 3, page 37). Senior high school directors considered five factors to be of primary importance, whereas junior high school directors supported seven. It seems important in junior high schools that problem areas adaptable to group counseling be identified, whereas in senior high schools there is less apparent need. Of interest on the senior high school table is that both factors ranking in second place resulted in an equal distribution of response.

It is interesting to note that while junior high school directors regard the "necessity for slow and steady development of a group counseling program" in rank four, only nine considered it of great importance, although twelve supported it considerably.

In comparatively reviewing these two tables one might observe that in the weighted value column of Table 2 there is a fifteen-point range, but only an eight-point range is evident in Table 3.

TABLE 2

FACTORS CONSIDERED OF MOST IMPORTANCE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY THIRTY-FOUR DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		G	C	S	L	N		
1	Willingness of counselors on the staff to engage in group counseling.	29	5	1	0	0	35*	133
2	Understanding and support of the administration.	29	4	1	0	0	34	130
2	Availability of counselors on the staff who are professionally trained in group counseling principles and practices.	29	4	1	0	0	34	130
4	A reasonable counselor-counselee ratio to permit the establishment of small groups when needed.	23	8	2	0	0	33*	120
5	Understanding and voluntary participation of students.	22	8	3	0	0	33*	118
5	Flexibility of schedules to enable counselors to form group counseling units.	20	10	4	0	0	34	118

Key: G weighted 4 = of great importance; C weighted 3 = of considerable importance;
S weighted 2 = of some importance; L weighted 1 = of little importance;
N weighted 0 = of no importance.

*One respondent chose to mark both great importance and some importance; others chose not to react to certain factors.

TABLE 3

FACTORS CONSIDERED OF MOST IMPORTANCE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY TWENTY-TWO DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		G	C	S	L	N		
1	Willingness of counselors on the staff to engage in group counseling.	17	3	1	0	1	22	79
1	Understanding and support of the administration.	15	6	0	1	0	22	79
3	Identification of problem areas which are adaptable to group counseling.	12	7	2	1	0	22	74
4	Necessity for the slow and steady development of a group counseling program.	9	12	0	1	0	22	73
5	Availability of counselors on the staff who are professionally trained in group counseling principles and practices.	14	3	2	2	1	22	71
5	Understanding and voluntary participation of students.	12	6	1	3	0	22	71
5	Understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.	10	9	1	2	0	22	71

Key: G weighted 4 = of great importance; C weighted 3 = of considerable importance;
S weighted 2 = of some importance; L weighted 1 = of little importance;
N weighted 0 = of no importance.

The factors considered of least importance to the establishment of group counseling of the fifty-six directors and rated of some importance by eighteen respondents as shown in Table 4 (page 40) was "a philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students." It seems that some thought might be given to this result, for if by this lowest rating the directors are implying that the philosophies of administrators are somewhat permissive, then ambiguity appears evident because why then would "understanding and cooperation of administration" rank so near the top as shown in Table 1.

In fifteenth place was "ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions." From this outcome it might be surmised that guidance directors feel adolescents quite able to make responsible decisions; however, this study does not reflect the perceptions of school administrators of this factor.

Another curious result was the low ranking of "readiness of counselors to accept decisions of small groups." In retrospect, one might review the position of "the willingness of counselors to participate in group counseling activities" as shown in Table 1.

Surprisingly low is "the understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers," a factor supported by evidence in the literature. However, this rating is probably not quite as

it is evidenced in Table 4, if one were to consider that twenty-one directors rated it of great importance, twenty-one rated it of considerable importance and that in terms of weighted value there is a forty-four point margin between it and the factor in sixteenth place.

TABLE 4

FACTORS CONSIDERED OF LEAST IMPORTANCE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY FIFTY-SIX DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		G	C	S	L	N		
16	A philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students.	13	14	18	7	4	56	127
15	Ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions.	16	19	10	6	3	54*	147
14	Understanding and cooperation of parents.	21	18	12	2	3	56	164
13	Physical facilities appropriate for small group sessions.	18	18	17	2	1	56	166
12	Readiness of counselors to accept the decisions of small groups of students.	24	20	5	2	3	54*	168
11	Understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.	21	21	11	2	1	56	171

Key: G weighted 4 = of great importance; C weighted 3 = of considerable importance;
S weighted 2 = of some importance; L weighted 1 = of little importance;
N weighted 0 = of no importance.

*Some directors chose not to respond to certain factors.

In similar fashion to the procedure used with tables and descriptions of factors considered to be of most importance to the establishment of group counseling programs, a division was made of factors valued of least importance.

Although six factors were found worthy of illustration in both Tables 5 and 6, only four of the same appeared in each. Senior high school directors rated "understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers" and "ability of adolescents to evaluate their own life situations" in twelfth and eleventh place, respectively, while junior high school directors considered "readiness of counselors to accept the decisions of small groups of students" (rank 13) and "freeing of counselor time from clerical routines" (rank 11) of lesser importance. The response on Table 6 is more evenly distributed than that on Table 5.

TABLE 5

FACTORS CONSIDERED OF LEAST IMPORTANCE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY THIRTY-FOUR DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		G	C	S	L	N		
16	A philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students.	10	7	13	2	2	34	89
15	Ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions.	11	13	5	3	1	33*	96
14	Physical facilities appropriate for small group sessions.	10	11	12	1	0	34	98
13	Understanding and cooperation of parents.	14	13	7	0	1	35*	99
12	Understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.	11	12	10	0	1	34	100
11	Ability of adolescents to evaluate their own life situations.	16	12	3	2	0	33*	108

Key: G weighted 4 = of great importance; C weighted 3 = of considerable importance;
S weighted 2 = of some importance; L weighted 1 = of little importance;
N weighted 0 = of no importance.

*One respondent chose to mark both great importance and some importance; others chose not to respond to certain factors.

TABLE 6

FACTORS CONSIDERED OF LEAST IMPORTANCE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY TWENTY-TWO DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		G	C	S	L	N		
16	A philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students.	3	7	5	5	2	22	48
15	Ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions.	5	6	5	3	2	21*	51
14	Understanding and cooperation of parents.	7	5	5	2	2	21*	55
13	Readiness of counselors to accept the decisions of small groups of students.	7	9	1	1	2	20*	58
11	Freeing of counselor time from clerical routines.	9	6	4	2	1	22	64
11	Physical facilities appropriate for small group sessions.	8	7	5	1	1	22	64

Key: G weighted 4 = of great importance; C weighted 3 = of considerable importance;
S weighted 2 = of some importance; L weighted 1 = of little importance;
N weighted 0 = of no importance.

*Some directors chose not to respond to certain factors.

Procedure similar to that used in the presentation of factor tables is used in illustrating topic appropriateness.

The so-called "drop-out problem" has been of great concern to many educators, so it is not such an astonishing result that the topic "why students drop out of school" should head the list of topics judged most appropriate for group counseling. Fifty from the possible fifty-six responding considered this topic either highly or generally appropriate. Fourth on the list is "violation of community laws by students." Although on the surface this may seem highly out of place because the other topics concern themselves with academic progress, one might wonder if a cause and effect relationship exists between this topic and the others.

TABLE 7

TOPICS CONSIDERED MOST APPROPRIATE FOR GROUP COUNSELING
BY FIFTY-SIX DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		H	G	S	Q	C		
1	Why students drop out of school.	35	15	5	1	1	57*	196
2	Lack of interest in academic work.	35	13	4	2	2	56	189
3	Inability to concentrate on studies.	31	17	6	1	1	56	180
4	Violation of community laws by students.	29	16	5	5	2	57*	179
5	Pressures of the accelerated program.	33	8	8	4	2	55*	176

Key: H weighted 4 = highly appropriate; G weighted 3 = generally appropriate;
S weighted 2 = somewhat appropriate; Q weighted 1 = quite inappropriate;
C weighted 0 = completely inappropriate.

*Two respondents chose to mark both highly appropriate and generally appropriate;
one chose not to react.

The drop-out problem and the inability of students to concentrate on studies are apparently the only two with which the junior and senior high school directors are in general agreement of topic appropriateness. Senior high directors by rating in third place "the socially rejected student" imply some special value for group counseling with problems of a personal-social nature. On the other hand, the junior high school directors show more concern with problems of college entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships. A possible reason for this could be that much of their work involves arranging student schedules as a foundation for high school and college programs.

TABLE 8

TOPICS CONSIDERED MOST APPROPRIATE FOR GROUP COUNSELING
BY THIRTY-FOUR DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		H	G	S	Q	C		
1	Why students drop out of school.	22	9	3	0	1	35*	121
1	Lack of interest in academic work.	25	5	3	0	1	34	121
3	The socially rejected student.	24	5	4	0	1	34	119
4	Pressures of the accelerated program.	19	10	3	2	0	34	114
5	Violation of community laws by students.	17	12	2	4	0	35*	112
6	Inability to concentrate on studies.	18	12	2	1	1	34	111

Key: H weighted 4 = highly appropriate; G weighted 3 = generally appropriate;
S weighted 2 = somewhat appropriate; Q weighted 1 = quite inappropriate;
C weighted 0 = completely inappropriate.

*Two respondents chose to mark both highly appropriate and generally appropriate.

TABLE 9

TOPICS CONSIDERED MOST APPROPRIATE FOR GROUP COUNSELING
BY TWENTY-TWO DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		H	G	S	Q	C		
1	College entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships.	13	4	4	0	1	22	82
2	Why students drop out of school.	13	6	2	1	0	22	75
2	Inability to concentrate on studies.	13	5	4	0	0	22	75
4	Failure to comply with school rules.	12	6	3	0	1	22	72
5	Destruction of school property by students.	11	5	6	0	0	22	71

Key: H weighted 4 = highly appropriate; G weighted 3 = generally appropriate;
S weighted 2 = somewhat appropriate; Q weighted 1 = quite inappropriate;
C weighted 0 = completely inappropriate.

"Sexual morality among adolescents" was rated least appropriate for group counseling by the fifty-six directors as shown on Table 10 (page 50). Curiously enough, however, the distribution of response shows that as many (thirteen) directors believed it to be highly appropriate as those who felt it to be completely inappropriate, and seventeen more thought it to be generally appropriate. It could be that the personal-social nature of this topic and that of "teacher-pupil personality conflicts" in sixteenth place might have some bearing on this low rating.

The topics in fifteenth and fourteenth place, respectively--"part- and full-time job opportunities" and "effects of smoking upon health"--could be more conducive to other methods of guidance and counseling, as one director commented in Section C, "I think information giving is group guidance material."

TABLE 10

TOPICS CONSIDERED LEAST APPROPRIATE FOR GROUP COUNSELING
BY FIFTY-SIX DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		H	G	S	Q	C		
17	Sexual morality among adolescents.	13	17	5	5	13	53*	118
16	Teacher-pupil personality conflicts.	23	8	11	4	10	56	142
15	Part- and full-time job opportunities.	20	15	10	7	4	56	152
14	Effects of smoking upon health.	19	14	16	4	2	55*	154
13	The breakdown of family communications.	20	18	9	5	2	54*	157

Key: H weighted 4 = highly appropriate; G weighted 3 = generally appropriate;
S weighted 2 = somewhat appropriate; Q weighted 1 = quite inappropriate;
C weighted 0 = completely inappropriate.

*Six respondents chose not to react to certain topics.

In complete agreement with the total picture presented in Table 10 are the opinions of junior and senior high school directors in Tables 11 and 12 (pages 52 and 53) regarding the topic "sexual morality among adolescents." Similarly, the response was somewhat evenly distributed. Whereas the junior high school directors seem to reject topics of a personal problem type, directors in the senior high schools repudiate a variety including job opportunities, using good grooming habits, and college entrance requirements. Again it seems reasonable to assume that other guidance procedures may be more appropriate to senior high school directors.

TABLE 11

TOPICS CONSIDERED LEAST APPROPRIATE FOR GROUP COUNSELING
BY THIRTY-FOUR DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		H	G	S	Q	C		
17	Sexual morality among adolescents.	9	13	2	1	8	33*	80
16	Part- and full-time job opportunities.	11	8	7	5	3	34	87
15	Using good grooming habits.	11	4	16	3	0	34	91
14	Failure to comply with class procedures.	10	11	9	1	3	34	92
13	College entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships.	12	10	4	7	1	34	93

Key: H weighted 4 = highly appropriate; G weighted 3 = generally appropriate;
S weighted 2 = somewhat appropriate; Q weighted 1 = quite inappropriate;
C weighted 0 = completely inappropriate.

*One respondent chose not to react to this topic.

TABLE 12

TOPICS CONSIDERED LEAST APPROPRIATE FOR GROUP COUNSELING
BY TWENTY-TWO DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Distribution of Response</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		H	G	S	Q	C		
17	Sexual morality among adolescents.	4	4	3	4	5	20*	38
16	Teacher-pupil personality conflicts.	7	4	2	3	6	22	47
15	The breakdown of family communica- tions.	5	8	3	4	1	21*	54
14	The socially rejected student.	9	3	4	4	1	21*	57
13	Effects of smoking upon health.	9	3	6	2	1	21*	59

Key: H weighted 4 = highly appropriate; G weighted 3 = generally appropriate;
S weighted 2 = somewhat appropriate; Q weighted 1 = quite inappropriate;
C weighted 0 = completely inappropriate.

*Five respondents chose not to react to certain topics.

Thirty-eight out of the fifty-six directors (67.8 percent) fully or generally agreed that group counseling is an essential part of a secondary school guidance program. Senior high school directors lowered this to a second rank position whereas the junior high directors considered it most valuable. Two other differences in rank order appeared; first, the statement "the same principles of the helping relationship apply equally to group and individual counseling" was rated third by senior high directors and second by junior high directors, and, second, the directors in the senior high felt that "some problems and concerns of adolescents are more appropriate for group counseling than for individual counseling" deserved first rating.

In both tables the factor suggesting the use of group counseling as a timesaver produced negative results.

TABLE 13

RESPONSES OF THIRTY-FOUR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGARDING FIVE STATEMENTS OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES CONCERNING GROUP COUNSELING

	Statement in Rank Order	Distribution of Response--Senior High Directors					Number Responding	Weighted Value
		F	G	U	M	S		
1	Some problems and concerns of adolescents are more appropriate for group counseling than for individual counseling.	15	12	2	1	1	31	+35
2	Group counseling is an essential part of a complete secondary school guidance program.	12	11	3	5	0	31	+30
3	The same principles of the helping relationship apply equally to group and individual counseling.	13	11	2	4	2	32	+25
4	In a competently conducted group counseling session the interaction and involvement of participants can be more productive in producing attitudinal and behavioral changes than individual counseling.	5	10	14	2	2	33	+14
5	Group counseling is more valuable than individual counseling because more people can be served in the limited time available.	1	4	6	12	9	32	-24

Key: F weighted +2 = fully agree; G weighted +1 = generally agree; U weighted 0 = uncertain; M weighted -1 = moderately disagree; S weighted -2 = strongly disagree.

Note: Possible total is 34; highest weighted total assuming a +2 for F is +68..

TABLE 14

RESPONSES OF TWENTY-TWO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGARDING FIVE STATEMENTS OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES CONCERNING GROUP COUNSELING

	<u>Statement in Rank Order</u>	<u>Distribution of Response--Junior High Directors</u>					<u>Number Responding</u>	<u>Weighted Value</u>
		<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>S</u>		
1	Group counseling is an essential part of a complete secondary school guidance program.	7	8	5	1	0	21	+21
2	The same principles of the helping relationship apply equally to group and individual counseling.	8	8	3	2	1	22	+20
3	Some problems and concerns of adolescents are more appropriate for group counseling than for individual counseling.	6	11	2	2	1	22	+19
4	In a competently conducted group counseling session the interaction and involvement of participants can be more productive in producing attitudinal and behavioral changes than individual counseling.	3	9	5	3	2	22	+8
5	Group counseling is more valuable than individual counseling because more people can be served in the limited time available.	1	5	3	4	10	23	-17

Key: F weighted +2 = fully agree; G weighted +1 = generally agree; U weighted 0 = uncertain; M weighted -1 = moderately disagree; S weighted -2 = strongly disagree.

Note: Possible total is 22; highest weighted total assuming +2 for F is +44..

Section three of the questionnaire, besides requesting that the directors indicate by a check mark the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement as shown on Tables 13 and 14 (pages 55 and 56), also provided space for additional comments.

The statement listed first in the questionnaire and rated second by senior high school directors and first by junior high school directors, "group counseling is an important part of a complete secondary school guidance program," was met quite favorably. One counselor felt group counseling is "O. K. (when used) on a when and as needed basis." Concerned with the needs of students were two directors who commented, "it helps individuals to know they are not the only ones with the same problems," and "essential part of an effective program when more of student needs can be adequately answered." Six of the comments were somewhat concerned with the role of the counselor and the involvement of others, as teachers and administrators. Although otherwise upholding the importance of group counseling, one comment added "if you have trained personnel, as this type of counseling calls for more training than is required to certify as a guidance counselor (in Rhode Island)."

In commenting on whether or not the same principles of the helping relationship apply equally to group and individual counseling (rated third by senior high school directors and second by junior high school directors),

a senior high school counselor believed: "one may gain more from another counselee much more than from the counselor." The need for further training was suggested: "counselor needs more skills in group dynamics for group counseling."

Six other comments seemed to favor individual counseling, as "individual problems may be of a very personal nature" and "individual counseling is more effective in many cases."

The third statement in Section C--"Some problems and concerns of adolescents are more appropriate for group counseling than for individual counseling."--was rated first by the senior high directors and third by the junior high directors. The general feeling among the counselors in commenting on this statement was concerned with the therapeutic values of group counseling and topic appropriateness. They had the following remarks to make: "phases of adjustment to adolescence, personal hygiene, social life, would be well suited to group work," "maybe the only way the individual can handle the problem without being threatened," and "they may be, depending on the situation; sometimes peer relationships in counseling and opinions of peers has great influence," "when support of peers seems to be important or when counselee needs to know his problem is not unique," "sometimes they accept from their peers what they wouldn't from adults," "something to be gained from exchange of ideas."

Statement four, "group counseling is more valuable than individual counseling because more people can be served in the limited time available," encouraged more comments than each of the other four statements and was weighted fifth by all directors and negatively. The directors basically felt that the "time" factor was not an important one in considering whether or not group counseling was important. They believed "time should not enter the situation; a change to 'equally valuable' would make this statement agreeable," "group counseling becomes more valuable only when the expected results depend upon group interaction; group counseling is not necessarily a short cut to seeing more students," "results not numbers is what is significant," "I think it is stretching a point to say 'more valuable' just because of time limits," "the advantage is not in time savings but a means of helping some better in this way," and "rather a lame reason; as a learning experience, it is or can be invaluable."

Statement five, "in a competently conducted group counseling session the interaction and involvement of participants can be more productive in producing attitudinal and behavioral changes than individual counseling," brought about a variety of comments. Emphatically one director remarked: "yes, this has always been recognized; attitude changes can be made more easily and effectively in group sessions; much in the literature available supports this." Supplementing this

support of literature in reference to the influence of peer groups are two additional comments: "positive use of the dynamics of peer acceptance and social pressures can be highly fruitful and durable," and "a student's attitude can be influenced by that of his peers."

General information requested at the top of page one of the questionnaire had no special significance when the response from large schools was compared with the response from smaller schools.

In the thesis proposal it was anticipated that selective visits and personal interviews would be held in school systems where group counseling was already being established. Although no specific item in the questionnaire requested this information directly, it was expected that the comments in section three of the questionnaire would provide some evidence that group counseling was being conducted as a regular part of guidance programs in the responding schools. In none of these comments was there any evidence of such group counseling programs in operation. The lack of group counseling was further substantiated in the discussions held in the six weeks Workshop on Problems and Theory of Small Group Counseling sponsored by the State Department of Education (March 4 to April 7, 1965). Participants in this workshop were about ninety guidance directors and school counselors from most of the school systems in Rhode Island.

It was disappointing that there were no programs which could have been visited, since such firsthand evidence might have strengthened conclusions of this study.

V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

It is of much concern to educators in terms of effective methods of counseling to determine what directors of guidance, as key persons in the continued improvement of guidance programs, believe applicable from current research in psychology and sociology, which has led to the use of the group approach. For this reason and because secondary school educators are striving to develop and improve methods of meeting the emotional needs of students as well as their educational needs, this thesis was developed.

This study was basically a survey of the perceptions and views of guidance directors in the State of Rhode Island of the establishment of group counseling as part of a guidance program in junior and senior high schools; however, certain literature concerning group counseling was reviewed and in addition to being presented in this thesis was used as a foundation for devising a survey questionnaire mailed to seventy-six directors of guidance in the junior and senior high schools in Rhode Island. A substantial percentage of returns (73.7 percent) were received from this survey.

From the literature it was found that group counseling programs should be established and developed on the basis

of emotional, personal, vocational and educational needs of students. The basis could be a means of introducing such a program by counselors who are alert to the needs of students and who are willing to present proposals of a group counseling program to administrators. It was discovered that by meeting some of the needs of students, certain group problems evident to administrators might be alleviated, and that it is part of the role of the counselor to take the initiative to establish group counseling programs. Secondary school counselors, with the proper professional training through graduate programs in guidance and counseling, would probably have little difficulty developing a program in group counseling.

The literature strongly suggested involving administrators, teachers, and parents in the program, and that participation of students be voluntary. However, it was believed that the selection of youngsters planning to participate in the group be made carefully and that problem areas be confined to the unemotional and impersonal types.

Factors sometimes considered barriers to the use of group counseling, topics deemed appropriate for group counseling, and some basic issues in group counseling were presented in the questionnaire.

In total, the fifty-six directors who responded felt that the factors most important to the establishment of group counseling were (in order of importance) that counselors on

guidance staffs be willing to engage in group counseling, that it is important to create understanding and encourage cooperation of administrators, that counselors need to be professionally trained in group counseling principles and practices, that counselors be assigned a reasonable counselee load to provide the time necessary to work with small groups of students when necessary, that counselors create understanding and encourage voluntary participation by students, and that identification be made of problem areas which are adaptable to group counseling.

In addition to a table describing the total results, separate tables were drawn to describe the results of the data compiled at the junior and senior high school levels. Senior high school directors considered the counselor-counselee ratio and flexibility of schedules of counselors factors more important, whereas, junior high school directors were more concerned with identification of problem areas adaptable to group counseling, the necessity for the slow and steady development of the program, and the understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.

Rated of least importance (in order of least importance) to the development of group counseling programs were the following factors: a philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students, ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions, understanding and

cooperation of parents, physical facilities appropriate for small groups of students, readiness of counselors to accept the decisions of small groups of students, and understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.

Tables separating the responses of the two secondary levels showed that the junior and senior high directors considered two different factors each to be less important. Understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers and ability of adolescents to evaluate their own life situations appeared on the senior high table, and readiness of counselors to accept decisions of small groups of students and freeing of counselor time from clerical routines appeared on the junior high table.

The second section of the questionnaire depicting topics appropriate for group counseling brought about the following ranked response from all the directors:

1. Why students drop out of school.
2. Lack of interest in academic work.
3. Inability to concentrate on studies.
4. Violation of community laws by students.
5. Pressures of the accelerated program.

However, much difference of opinion was evident from the division of tables. Senior high school directors were more concerned with lack of interest in academic work, the socially rejected student, pressures of the accelerated program, and

violation of community laws by students, while junior high school directors emphasized the need for group counseling in the areas of college entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships, failure to comply with school rules, and destruction of school property by students. All were in complete agreement with the importance of topics one and three above, although they were not listed in the same rank order in the tables.

In order of least appropriate for group counseling as considered by the fifty-six directors are the following topics:

1. Sexual morality among adolescents.
2. Teacher-pupil personality conflicts.
3. Part- and full-time job opportunities.
4. Effects of smoking upon health.
5. The breakdown of family communications.

The topic "sexual morality among adolescents" was also considered to be least appropriate for group counseling by both the junior and senior high school directors. However, the senior high school directors rated lower part- and full-time job opportunities, using good grooming habits, failure to comply with class procedures, and college entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships, while the junior high school directors considered as least appropriate teacher-pupil personality conflicts, the breakdown of family communications, the socially rejected student, and the effects of smoking upon health.

The third section of the questionnaire which presented five statements of principles concerning group counseling required positive and negative responses from full agreement to strong disagreement. Rated negatively by both junior and senior high school directors was "group counseling is more valuable than individual counseling because more people can be served in the limited time available." The other four principles were rated positively and with the following ranks: "some problems and concerns of adolescents are more appropriate for group counseling than for individual counseling" was rated first by senior high directors and third by junior high directors; "group counseling is an essential part of a complete secondary school guidance program" was rated second by senior high school directors and first by junior high school directors; "the same principles of the helping relationship apply equally to group and individual counseling" was rated third by senior high school directors and second by junior high school directors; both groups ranked "in a competently conducted group counseling session the interaction and involvement of participants can be more productive in producing attitudinal and behavioral changes than individual counseling" in fourth place.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon data from this study and the review of literature as well as from the author's own experience, eight recommendations were developed as guidelines to the establishment of group counseling programs in the junior and senior high schools of Rhode Island. These recommendations are not necessarily listed below in order of importance:

1. That guidance directors and school counselors be more persevering in an effort to include group counseling in secondary school guidance programs.
2. That guidance directors and school counselors strive to improve relationships between themselves and their professional peers (teachers) in order to relate a general understanding of basic principles and practices involved with group counseling and to provide a successful working relationship.
3. That guidance directors and school counselors "sell" the group counseling approach to administrators by demonstrating professional proficiency and gaining respect and cooperation.

4. That guidance directors and school counselors seek the assistance of students in developing group counseling programs by arousing their interest and curiosity in helping to meet their needs.
5. That guidance directors and school counselors inform parents who seek the aid of professional counselors of the availability of group counseling and its value in providing assistance in helping students to make responsible decisions.
6. That guidance directors and school counselors improve their professional status by seeking the necessary training to enable themselves to provide group counseling.
7. That guidance directors and school counselors carefully plan and develop a group counseling program, beginning on steady ground according to the needs of the students in the school.
8. That guidance directors and school counselors in their planning strive to show positive results of group counseling in helping students realize their maximum potentialities in the development of favorable attitudes.

Because of the almost unanimous response of guidance directors that group counseling should be an essential part of a guidance program in secondary schools, the feasibility of initiating pilot programs in the State of Rhode Island might be investigated. The effectiveness of the group counseling could be evaluated by guidance directors and their staffs by tape recording counseling sessions with student volunteers in the school setting.

Future studies of group counseling might include direct interviewing, observation, and visitation of those conducting such programs as supplements to the mailed questionnaire. As a part of the preparation of the school counselor, the practice of group counseling might be included in the field work of the student. Such an innovation might stimulate school systems to further expand group counseling programs.

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APPENDIXES

FACTORS NECESSARY TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY THE DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOLS OF RHODE ISLAND

1. Willingness of counselors on the staff to engage in group counseling.
2. Understanding and support of the administration.
3. Availability of counselors on the staff who are professionally trained in group counseling principles and practices.
4. A reasonable counselor-counselee ratio to permit the establishment of small groups when needed.
4. Understanding and voluntary participation of students.
4. Identification of problem areas which are adaptable to group counseling.
7. Flexibility of schedules to enable counselors to form group counseling units.
7. Necessity for the slow and steady development of a group counseling program.
9. Freeing counselor time from clerical routines.
10. Ability of adolescents to evaluate their own life situations.
11. Understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.
12. Readiness of counselors to accept decisions of small groups of students.
13. Physical facilities appropriate for small group sessions.
14. Understanding and cooperation of parents.
15. Ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions.
16. A philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students.

FACTORS NECESSARY TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY THE DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOLS

1. Willingness of counselors on the staff to engage in group counseling.
2. Availability of counselors on the staff who are professionally trained in group counseling principles and practices.
2. Understanding and support of the administration.
4. A reasonable counselor-counselee ratio to permit the establishment of small groups when needed.
5. Understanding and voluntary participation of students.
5. Flexibility of schedules to enable counselors to form group counseling units.
7. Identification of problem areas which are adaptable to group counseling.
7. Freeing of counselor time from clerical routines.
9. Necessity for the slow and steady development of a group counseling program.
10. Readiness of counselors to accept the decisions of small groups of students.
11. Ability of adolescents to evaluate their own life situations.
12. Understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.
13. Understanding and cooperation of parents.
14. Physical facilities appropriate for small group sessions.
15. Ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions.
16. A philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students.

FACTORS NECESSARY TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUP COUNSELING
BY THE DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE OF THE RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR
HIGH SCHOOLS

1. Willingness of counselors on the staff to engage in group counseling.
1. Understanding and support of the administration.
3. Identification of problem areas which are adaptable to group counseling principles and practices.
4. Necessity for the slow and steady development of a group counseling program.
5. Availability of counselors on the staff who are professionally trained in group counseling principles and practices.
5. Understanding and collaboration of classroom teachers.
5. Understanding and voluntary participation of students.
8. Flexibility of schedules to enable counselors to form group counseling units.
8. A reasonable counselor-counselee ratio to permit the establishment of small groups when needed.
8. Ability of adolescents to evaluate their own life situations.
11. Physical facilities appropriate for small group sessions.
11. Freeing of counselor time from clerical routines.
13. Readiness of counselors to accept the decisions of small groups of students.
14. Understanding and cooperation of parents.
15. Ability of adolescents to make responsible decisions.
16. A philosophy of discipline in the school which permits free expression by the students.

VIEWS OF THE DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE
IN RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
ON THE ORDER OF APPROPRIATENESS OF CERTAIN TOPICS
FOR GROUP COUNSELING

1. Why students drop out of school.
2. Lack of interest in academic work.
3. Inability to concentrate on studies.
4. Violation of community laws by students.
5. The socially rejected student.
5. Pressures of the accelerated program.
7. Destruction of school property by students.
8. Choosing a vocation.
9. Failure to comply with school rules.
10. College entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships.
11. Using good grooming habits.
11. Failure to comply with class procedures.
13. The breakdown of family communications.
14. Effects of smoking upon health.
15. Part- and full-time job opportunities.
16. Teacher-pupil personality conflicts.
17. Sexual morality among adolescents.

VIEWS OF THE DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE
IN RHODE ISLAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
ON THE ORDER OF APPROPRIATENESS OF CERTAIN TOPICS
FOR GROUP COUNSELING

1. Why students drop out of school.
1. Lack of interest in academic work.
3. The socially rejected student.
4. Pressures of the accelerated program.
5. Violation of community laws by students.
6. Inability to concentrate on studies.
7. Destruction of school property by students.
8. The breakdown of family communications.
9. Choosing a vocation.
10. Failure to comply with school rules.
11. Teacher-pupil personality conflicts.
12. Effects of smoking upon health.
13. College entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships.
14. Failure to comply with class procedures.
15. Using good grooming habits.
16. Part- and full-time job opportunities.
17. Sexual morality among adolescents.

VIEWS OF THE DIRECTORS OF GUIDANCE
IN RHODE ISLAND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
ON THE ORDER OF APPROPRIATENESS OF CERTAIN TOPICS
FOR GROUP COUNSELING

1. College entrance requirements and opportunities for scholarships.
2. Inability to concentrate on studies.
2. Why students drop out of school.
4. Failure to comply with school rules.
5. Destruction of school property by students.
6. Choosing a vocation.
6. Lack of interest in academic work.
8. Violation of community laws by students.
8. Using good grooming habits.
10. Failure to comply with class procedures.
11. Part- and full-time job opportunities.
12. Pressures of the accelerated program.
13. Effects of smoking upon health.
14. The socially rejected student.
15. The breakdown of family communications.
16. Teacher-pupil personality conflicts.
17. Sexual morality among adolescents.