

DEFINITIONS OF GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

Definition 1: "A method which protects and stimulates the self-regulating mechanism of natural groupings. It attacks the problem through the use of one man as the therapeutic agent of the other, of one group as the therapeutic agent of the other." From *Application of the Group Method to Classification*, p. 104, 1932.

Definition 2: "The groups function for themselves and the therapeutic process streams through their mutual interrelationships." From the same publication, p. 61.

Definition 3: "Group psychotherapy is the result of well calculated, spontaneous therapy plus proper social assignment. . . . The leader is within the group, not a person outside." Same publication, p. 94.

Definition 4: "Group therapy will be advantageous for persons who do not recover by themselves or through some form of psychological analysis or medication, but only through the interaction of one or more persons who are so coordinated to the patient that the curative tendencies within are strengthened and the disparaging tendencies within checked, so that he may influence the members of his group in a similar manner." *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Definition 5: "Spontaneous formation of social groups based on the enthusiasm of the participants or on common interests and aims achieves often miraculous results, but cannot be called grouping in our sense as most of the interrelations remain unanalyzed." *Ibid.*, 1932, p. 72.

Definition 6: "Group psychotherapy treats not only the individual who is the focus of attention because of maladjustment, but the entire group of individuals who are interrelated with him." *Who Shall Survive?*, 1934, p. 301.

Definition 7: "A truly therapeutic procedure cannot have less an objective than the whole of mankind." *Ibid.*, p. 3.

DEFINITIONS OF THE TRANSFERENCE-TELE RELATION

There is a tendency to ascribe many irrational factors in the behavior of therapists and patients in group situations to transference and countertransference.

I. It takes *tele* to choose the right therapist and group partner, it takes transference to misjudge the therapist and to choose group partners who produce unstable relationships in a given activity.

II. The greater the temporal distance of an individual patient is from

other individuals whom he has encountered in the past and with whom he was engaged in significant relations, direct or symbolic, the more *inaccurate* will be his perception of them and his evaluation of their relationship to him and to each other. The dynamic effect of experiences which occur earlier in the life of an individual may be greater than the more recent ones but it is the inaccuracy of perception and the excess of projected feeling which is important in transference; in other words, he will be less perceiving the effect which experiences have on him the older they are and less aware of the degree to which he is coerced to project their images upon individuals in the present.

III. The greater the social distance of an individual patient is from other individuals in their common social atom, the more inaccurate will be his evaluation of their relationship to him and to each other. He may imagine accurately how A, B, C whom he chooses feel towards him, but he may have a vague perception of how A feels about B, A feels about C, B feels about A, B feels about C, C feels about A, or C feels about B. (Analogous to transference we may call these vague, distorted sociometric perceptions—"transperceptions.") His transperceptions are bound to be still weaker or blank as to how people whom he has never met feel for E, F, or G, or for A, B, or C or for how these individuals feel about each other. The only vague line of inference he could draw is from knowing what kind of individuals A, B, and C are.

IV. The degree of instability of transference in the course of a series of therapeutic sessions can be tested through experimental manipulation of the suggestibility of subjects. If their sociometric status is low, they will be easily shaken up (sociometric shock) by a slight change, actual or imagined, in the relationships of the subjects around him. It is evident that transference has, like tele, besides psychodynamic, also sociodynamic determinants.

CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF THE TERMS GROUP THERAPY AND GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY*

Editor, THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY:

SIR: In a review of Corsini's *Methods of Group Psychotherapy*, in the March 1959 issue of this Journal, p. 840, Mr. Illing says: "Moreno

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